

The CEFR in English Language Teaching in Türkiye: A Systematic Review of Research and Practices (2001-2024)

REVIEW ARTICLE

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Abstract:

English language teaching, CEFR, curriculum and assessment, teacher training, systematic review

Abstract

This systematic review synthesises research and practice on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts in Türkiye, adhering to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. By analysing the characteristics, methodologies, and key findings of CEFR-related studies, this review maps the research landscape and highlights potential gaps. To achieve these aims, the search was conducted across five databases, including DergiPark, National Thesis Centre, SOBIAD, EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate, and ERIC without date restrictions. Reference tracking, together with free-text searches, supplemented this search to encompass both Turkish- and English-language research. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion criteria, 70 studies, including articles, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations from 2001 to 2024, were included. Inductive content analysis using MAXQDA 22 guided data analysis. The inter-rater reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa, which yielded 0.82 and 0.89 across the two rounds of coding, respectively. These reliability coefficients confirmed coding consistency. The descriptive analysis points to an uneven distribution of research across educational levels, with undergraduate education overrepresented while preschool as well as postgraduate levels remain understudied. The metropolitan areas, particularly Ankara, play a central role in CEFR-related studies. Most studies adopt integrated, or multi-skill, approaches without discrete listening-focused research. From the thematic analysis, issues emerge regarding curricula, coursebooks, and assessments. In addition, teachers have insufficient familiarity with CEFR principles and inadequate professional development on the CEFR. These converging findings suggest that CEFR adoption in Türkiye remains predominantly superficial and constrained by structural, pedagogical, coupled with institutional barriers.

Türkiye’de İngiliz Dili Öğretiminde D-AOBM: Araştırma ve Uygulamaların Sistematik Bir Derlemesi (2001-2024)

DERLEME MAKALESİ

Anahtar Kelimeler:

İngilizce dil öğretimi, D-AOBM, öğretim programı ve değerlendirme, öğretmen eğitimi, sistematik derleme

Öz

Bu sistematik derleme, PRISMA 2020 ilkelerine uygun olarak Türkiye’de İngiliz dili öğretimi bağlamında Diller için Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni (D-AOBM) ile ilgili araştırma ve uygulamaları sentezlemektedir. D-AOBM ile ilgili araştırmaların betimsel özelliklerini, metodolojik yaklaşımlarını ve temel bulgularını analiz eden bu derleme; ilgili alana kapsamlı bir bakış sunmakta ve olası boşlukları öne çıkarmaktadır. Bu amaçlar doğrultusunda DergiPark, Ulusal Tez Merkezi, SOBIAD, EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate ve ERIC olmak üzere beş veri tabanında tarih sınırlaması olmaksızın tarama yapılmıştır. Hem Türkçe hem de İngilizce yazılmış araştırmaları kapsayacak şekilde kaynakça taraması ve serbest metin taramaları yapılmıştır. Yinelenen kayıtların çıkarılması ve dâhil etme kriterlerinin uygulanmasının ardından, 2001-2024 yılları arasında yayımlanmış 70 çalışma (makale, yüksek lisans tezi ve doktora tezi) araştırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Veri analizi, MAXQDA 22.0 yazılımı kullanılarak tümevarımsal içerik analiziyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirlik, Cohen’in kappası ile değerlendirilmiş olup iki kodlama sonucunda sırasıyla .82 ve .89 değerleri elde edilmiştir. Betimsel analiz eğitim kademelerine göre araştırmalar dengesiz bir dağılım sergilemiş, lisans düzeyi çok yoğun temsil edilirken okul öncesi ve lisansüstü düzeyleri i araştırmalar yeterince dâhil edilmemiştir. Başta Ankara olmak üzere büyükşehirler, D-AOBM ile ilgili çalışmalarda merkezi bir role sahiptir. Çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu bütünlük veya çoklu dil becerisini temel almakta olup bağımsız dinleme becerisine dayanan bir araştırmaya rastlanamamıştır. Tematik analiz, D-AOBM ile öğretim programları, ders kitapları ve ölçme değerlendirme arasında sorunlar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin D-AOBM ilkelerine yönelik bilgilerinin yetersiz olduğu ve D-AOBM konusunda mesleki gelişim olanaklarının sınırlı kaldığı tespit edilmiştir. Bütün bulgular, Türkiye’de D-AOBM uygulamalarının büyük ölçüde yüzeysel kaldığını ve yapısal, pedagojik ve kurumsal engellerle kısıtlandığını göstermektedir.

Introduction

Since its first publication and subsequent expansion as a companion volume by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2018, 2020), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) has influenced language standards, curricula, and educational reform across Europe and beyond (Nagai et al., 2020). Although the framework is European in origin, it now serves as a widely recognised global benchmark for teaching, learning, and assessment, underpinned by core approaches such as action-oriented, task-based, and communicative teaching (Byram & Parmenter, 2012; North & Piccardo, 2019). “can-do” descriptors in the framework not only inform proficiency assessment but also shape curriculum development, teaching strategies, and assessment practices across contexts, thereby fostering communicative language competences, plurilingualism, and intercultural understanding (Little, 2006; North, 2014). Beyond assessment, the framework supplies a shared reference point for cross-national and cross-institutional discussions of language competence and offers clear, specific guidance for pedagogical implementation (Council of Europe, 2018).

Structurally, the CEFR characterises language proficiency through a descriptive scale with reference levels from pre-A1 to C2 (Council of Europe, 2018). As such, it functions as a straightforward guide for curriculum development and assessment (Green, 2012; North, 2014). Versatile and adaptable across various linguistic and cultural settings, the framework is descriptive rather than prescriptive or normative (Council of Europe, 2011). Additionally, the CEFR clarifies key concepts such as the action-oriented approach, mediation, and plurilingualism, especially as outlined in the expanded CEFR/CV (Council of Europe, 2020). Emphasising a comprehensive view of mediation, this expanded version integrates linguistic, cultural, social, and pedagogical elements (North & Piccardo, 2016). Such mediation techniques, including translation, intralinguistic processes, and the strategic use of multilingual resources, aid in bridging linguistic and cultural divides among learners (Beacco et al., 2016; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

At the core of the CEFR’s philosophy lies an action-oriented approach that treats language users and learners primarily as social agents responsible for completing specific tasks in particular environments and through particular actions (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020; North & Piccardo, 2019). Marking a notable shift from traditional language education models, this perspective provides a more dynamic view of language learning that emphasises active communication over passive knowledge acquisition (Little, 2007; Thorne & Lantolf, 2007). In essence, it focuses more on what learners can do with language (action-oriented) than on what they know about it (knowledge-oriented) (Schmidt & Bower, 2024). In practice, the approach advocates curricula and courses built around ‘can-do’ statements, with guidance and practice provided through pedagogical tasks that mirror real-life situations (Council of Europe, 2020).

Within the CEFR, learners are positioned as social participants engaged in joint, collaborative activities to co-construct meaning (Council of Europe, 2020). To offer a more detailed understanding of communicative language use, it identifies four modes: reception, production, interaction, and mediation (Council of Europe, 2018; Little, 2009). By framing language users as social actors engaged in goal-setting and reflection, the CEFR promotes learner responsibility and foregrounds autonomy (North & Piccardo, 2019; Schmidt & Bower, 2024). Importantly, communicative tasks are designed to actively engage learners in meaningful communication, be relevant to the context, and be both challenging and achievable, with clear outcomes (Council of Europe, 2001). Connecting tasks to real-world situations or cases boosts learners’ communicative competence (Ellis, 2009).

Viewing the framework solely as a tool to support and design communicative language teaching, without updating the “can-do” descriptors to align curricula and coursebooks (North, 2021), underestimates its deeper value. Introducing a paradigm shift in language education, the CEFR considers learners as social agents (Leung, 2023) and shifts focus from four isolated skills to an integrated approach encompassing reception, production, interaction, and mediation, while also supporting plurilingual education (North, 2021). Moreover, the CEFR/CV advocates plurilingualism as a key educational aim, as plurilingual individuals possess an interconnected repertoire that blends with their general competences and diverse strategies to achieve language tasks (Council of Europe, 2020). Beyond establishing common reference levels and descriptors, the CEFR proves crucial for promoting learner agency, authentic communicative competence, and plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire (Alderson, 2002).

Revolutionary in its scope, the CEFR aims to transform language learning, teaching, and assessment in increasingly diverse and multilingual educational environments. A cohesive educational philosophy underpins the framework, emphasising learner agency, practical language use, and plurilingual competence. Though many stakeholders employ level labels and descriptors, the deeper philosophical principles are still only partly realised in classroom practice (Figueras, 2012; Little, 2013; Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007). Effective integration of CEFR principles into curricula, coursebooks, tests, or classroom practices largely depends on stakeholders’ understanding, willingness, and ability to leverage its strengths while recognising its limitations (North, 2014). To fully harness the CEFR’s transformative potential, it is essential to achieve constructive alignment across all educational components, from policy development and curriculum design to classroom implementation.

Literature Review

Emerging as a pivotal reference framework in language education research, the CEFR guides the design, implementation, and assessment of language-teaching and evaluation practices across diverse contexts. As its influence has expanded, scholars have increasingly explored the reliability, validity, and practical implications of CEFR-aligned assessment, particularly regarding how proficiency descriptors function within actual rating contexts. Within this body of research, a significant focus concerns how well CEFR-based rating scales ensure consistent judgments across different assessors and skill areas, and how effectively the framework differentiates between neighbouring proficiency levels.

In the domain of written performance, assessment-related research indicates that function-oriented rating scales tend to produce lower inter-rater reliability than scales grounded in discrete linguistic criteria (Kuiken & Vedder, 2014). The limited specificity of CEFR descriptors presents a recurring challenge, potentially hindering raters’ ability to distinguish between adjacent proficiency levels (Alderson et al., 2006; DiezBedmar, 2012). Empirical findings on CEFR-aligned rating practices remain mixed; for instance, studies of the Cambridge FCE show notable variation across skills, with rater accuracy reaching 100% for writing and 78% for speaking, but dropping to 60% for reading and 54% for listening. Such discrepancies suggest that the CEFR aligns more reliably with productive skills, where performance is more directly observable than with receptive skills, which require inference and therefore pose greater challenges for consistent classification (Weir, 2005).

To minimise discrepancies among assessors, rater training should be systematic and include preparation with rating scales and criteria (Alderson et al., 2006; Lumley, 2005; Weigle, 2007). Typically, effective training includes familiarisation with benchmark texts, blind rating, and group norming sessions (Kuiken & Vedder, 2014). Reliability is further strengthened through the use of

exemplars, explicit criteria, and structured consensus-building (Alderson et al., 2006; Alanen et al., 2012; Weigle, 2007). In line with this, Harsch and Martin (2012) demonstrate that revising rating scales through a combined process of statistical analysis and rater consultation can substantially enhance validity. Following scale refinement, their data-driven adaptation of CEFR ‘can-do’ descriptors for local contexts yielded notably high levels of rater agreement.

These principles have been operationalised in various national contexts. The development of CEFR-J in Japan stands as a prominent example of CEFR localisation, an adapted version of the original framework designed to support English learning, teaching, and assessment within the Japanese educational context (Negishi, 2022; Negishi et al., 2012). Creating, scaling, and validating additional can-do descriptors tailored to local learner profiles and curricular needs, the project systematically localised the framework. Most notably, CEFR-J has gained international recognition by incorporating several Pre-A1 descriptors into the official CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020; Negishi, 2022). More recently, the CEFRJ × 28 initiative has extended this localisation model to 28 additional languages at the tertiary level, broadening its applicability beyond English to include German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, and others (Negishi, 2022). What this trajectory illustrates is how principled localisation can enhance the relevance and usability of the CEFR while preserving its core conceptual foundations.

Similar systematic adaptation efforts have emerged in Europe. Five key functions for effective classroom implementation emerge from insights into CEFR-related initiatives in Austria. To begin with, these initiatives strengthen curriculum design and goal setting by translating broad aims into specific, sequenced targets that pave the way for a clear trajectory from basic to advanced competence. A data-informed foundation for organising instruction is also provided, aligning with learners’ developmental progressions. In addition, they enhance formative assessment by guiding the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence on learner performance to support instructional adjustments (Berger, 2022; Black & Wiliam, 2009; Heritage, 2013). Furthermore, these initiatives contribute to summative assessment by providing benchmark criteria that promote coherence and consistency. Most importantly, these reference points facilitate the integration of CEFR principles into everyday classroom practice, enabling educators to distinguish meaningful implementation from more superficial or inconsistent applications (Berger, 2022; Little, 2013).

Bridging the gap between CEFR policy intentions and classroom realities calls for a deliberate focus on teacher involvement and long-term professional development. Teacher engagement and professional development largely determine the effectiveness of CEFR curricula localisation (Nagai et al., 2020; Schmidt et al., 2017). Although alignment demands both top-down and bottom-up strategies, its success ultimately hinges on teachers’ classroom implementation (Nagai et al., 2020; Schmidt et al., 2017). Targeted training from institutions is necessary; however, such top-down initiatives often conflict with teachers’ need for autonomy, which is regarded as a key factor in successful CEFR-based instruction (Nagai et al., 2020). For introducing CEFR-informed innovations through systematic inquiry, the CEFR-focused Action Research Model (CARM) offers a structured framework (Birch et al., 2021; Schmidt & Bower, 2024). Three core phases constitute CARM: planning to identify CEFR-related issues, implementing and monitoring interventions, and reviewing outcomes to inform future steps. Across areas such as course design, classroom practice, and language portfolio development, CARM’s application demonstrates its adaptability to diverse contexts (Birch et al., 2021).

Localising CEFR curricula needs balancing standardisation with contextual adaptation. From initiatives such as Japan's CEFR-J and Austria's local reference points, evidence emerges that principled localisation can enhance the framework's relevance while preserving its role as a benchmark. However, effective localisation requires careful management of implementation challenges, including selecting and prioritising descriptors, ensuring robust yet accessible evidence standards, and providing professional development for teachers. Increasingly, scholars underscore action research as a promising approach for designing and evaluating context-sensitive CEFR applications, as it aligns with the framework's principles of reflection, adaptation, collaboration, and iterative reform.

These localisation experiences and issues find support in broader review literature. A substantial body of review literature identifies challenges in CEFR implementation, particularly the disconnect between policy aspirations and classroom realities (Alwi & Halim, 2024; Eyup et al., 2021; Jeon, 2022; Kayhan et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022; Mohtar & Sadhasivam, 2022; Runnels & Runnels, 2019; Smith & Battistuzzi, 2023). Among the challenges identified, Lee et al. (2022) underscore limited communication between policymakers and teachers, insufficient professional development, and teachers' frequent return to traditional practices. Further, Smith and Battistuzzi (2023) demonstrate that although CEFR training improves theoretical knowledge and assessment literacy, it does not reliably translate into classroom enactment. From a linguistic standpoint, Eyup et al. (2021) accentuate structural mismatches between the CEFR, designed for Western languages, and the grammatical and morphological characteristics of Turkish. In a parallel argument, Jeon (2022) advocates culturally and linguistically adapted CEFR models in Korea, citing Japan's CEFR-J initiative. A similar pattern of challenges emerges from the literature on CEFR-aligned course materials. Reporting on coursebook alignment, Kayhan et al. (2022) find that although Turkish coursebooks generally align with their intended proficiency levels, English coursebooks display greater inconsistency. Across both sets of materials, they identify uneven skill coverage, limited task diversity, insufficient cultural representation, as well as a notable absence of studies on C1–C2 English coursebooks.

Corroborating these issues, additional reviews highlight specific gaps: Eyup et al. (2021) note the marked lack of listening-focused research in Turkish language education, while Kayhan et al. (2022) underline that coursebook evaluations overwhelmingly prioritise basic skills, with 71.4% in Turkish studies and 37.5% in English studies, at the expense of cultural competence and broader communicative abilities. In South Korea, as Jeon (2022) observes, nearly half of CEFR-related studies focus on evaluation, with minimal attention to teaching methods or coursebook development.

Given these patterns, conducting a systematic review specifically focused on the Turkish EFL context is both timely and necessary. Largely concentrating on Malaysia, South Korea, and broader Asian education systems, existing reviews have left Türkiye strikingly underrepresented despite its long-standing adoption of the CEFR and its unique position at the intersection of European and Asian educational traditions. Representing a significant gap in the literature, the absence of a comprehensive synthesis of CEFR research in Türkiye warrants attention. Addressing this gap offers an opportunity to provide context-sensitive insights into teacher training, curriculum alignment, assessment practices, and materials development, which are essential for informing evidence-based policy and pedagogical decision-making in Turkish EFL education.

Accordingly, the present review examines the following questions:

- How are CEFR-related studies in Türkiye characterised by education level, region/city, language skill, and CEFR level?
- What methodological approaches and data collection tools are used in these studies?
- What are the key findings and implications presented in the existing research?

Methodology

To ensure transparency and methodological rigour, this review adhered to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021), aiming to identify and synthesise research on CEFR practices in Turkish EFL contexts through a systematic, reproducible search and analysis process. Since the review exclusively relied on publicly accessible academic literature and did not involve human participants, ethical approval was deemed unnecessary. The methodology integrated comprehensive coverage with targeted precision by employing explicitly defined inclusion criteria, systematic search procedures, and organised data analysis (Booth, 2016).

Database Selection

Five databases were selected to comprehensively represent the national research landscape: DergiPark, the National Thesis Centre, SOBIAD, EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate, and ERIC. DergiPark is Türkiye's primary academic publishing platform, providing access to most of the national education journals. The National Thesis Centre offers extensive coverage of postgraduate theses and dissertations, while SOBIAD provides broad national representation in the social sciences. By contrast, EBSCO and ERIC provide access to international and education-focused scholarly publications, thereby aligning the search strategy with established standards for conducting systematic reviews in educational research (Davies, 2000; Gough et al., 2017).

Search Strategy

The search strategy was developed through an iterative process informed by methodological guidance in applied linguistics and educational research (Plonsky, 2015). Initial scoping indicated considerable variation in terminology across Turkish- and English-language CEFR literature, which informed subsequent pilot testing and the analysis of indexing patterns in relevant studies. Based on these procedures, the final search strategy incorporated a comprehensive set of English terms (CEFR, CEF, Common European Framework, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) and their Turkish counterparts (AOBM, ADOÇEP, D-AOBM, Avrupa Dilleri Öğretimi Ortak Çerçeve Programı, Avrupa Ortak Çerçeve Metni, Diller için Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni). A bilingual approach was essential given Türkiye's dual-language academic publishing environment (Selvi, 2014). Boolean operators were applied to combine search terms, and no date restrictions were imposed, ensuring the inclusion of all CEFR-related research performed in Turkish ELT contexts. To further minimise the risk of missing relevant studies, reference tracking and free-text searches were employed (Greenhalgh & Peacock, 2005).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were deemed eligible if they focused on CEFR implementation in Turkish EFL/ESL contexts, were written in English or Turkish, covered any educational level from primary through postgraduate, were peer-reviewed articles, master's theses, or doctoral dissertations, and were published before June 1, 2024. Grey literature (non-peer-reviewed sources such as theses and dissertations) was included because it often provides detailed empirical data unavailable in journal articles, thereby reducing publication bias (Mahood et al., 2013).

Studies that focused on non-English language instruction, addressed non-Turkish contexts, were conference papers, editorials, or other non-peer-reviewed formats, or were written in languages other than Turkish or English were excluded. Studies with major methodological problems, such as missing methodology sections, unverifiable data, or inconsistencies between stated and actual methods, were also excluded. For example, a study labelled as a meta-analysis but using meta-synthesis methods was excluded for methodological misalignment. Similarly, conceptual papers without original contributions (e.g., Çelik et al., 2020; İşisağ, 2008; Tanrikulu & Şihanlıoğlu, 2019) were excluded. These criteria align with the quality standards for systematic reviews in applied linguistics (Norris & Ortega, 2006).

Screening Process

Study selection followed a two-stage screening process consistent with PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Liberati et al., 2009). Two reviewers independently screened titles and abstracts using Citavi 6. The search yielded 643 records; after removing 415 duplicates, 228 records remained for screening. Full-text reviews were conducted for all potentially eligible studies, and reasons for exclusion were documented at each stage. Disagreements were resolved through discussion, and a third reviewer was consulted when necessary (McHugh, 2012). Following full-text assessment, 158 studies were excluded for the following reasons: studies focused on teaching languages other than English ($n = 128$), studies carried out in EFL/ESL contexts in countries outside the scope of this review ($n = 18$), other study types that did not meet the inclusion criteria ($n = 8$), studies published in languages other than English ($n = 3$), and studies with methodological issues ($n = 1$). After applying all exclusion criteria, 70 studies were included in the qualitative synthesis. These comprised 26 peer-reviewed journal articles, 34 master's theses, and 10 doctoral dissertations.

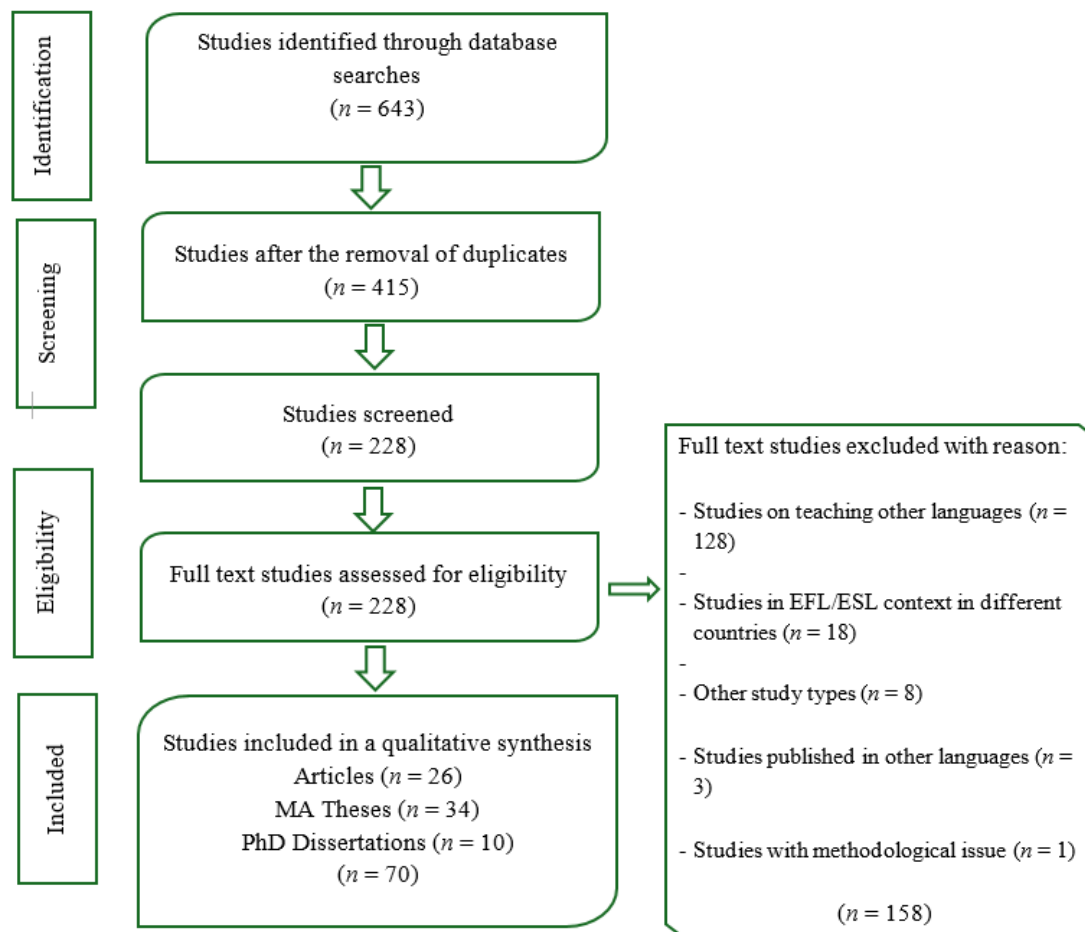
Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data extraction and synthesis were conducted using qualitative content analysis in MAXQDA 22.0, a validated tool for systematic reviews (Saldaña, 2021). An inductive approach was adopted to allow patterns and themes to emerge from the data rather than imposing predefined categories (Bengtsson, 2016). Both reviewers independently read all included studies multiple times before initiating formal coding. Sentences served as the unit of analysis to capture nuanced insights, consistent with best practice in content analysis (Kynğäs et al., 2020). The initial coding framework was developed through open coding of 10% of the studies and refined during pilot coding of 25% ($n = 18$), with adjustments to enhance clarity and coverage (Silver & Lewins, 2014).

Cohen's kappa was used to assess inter-rater reliability (McHugh, 2012). The first coding round produced $\kappa = 0.82$, indicating substantial agreement according to Landis and Koch (1977), while the second round, focusing on findings and conclusions, yielded $\kappa = 0.89$. Both values exceed accepted thresholds for qualitative synthesis, confirming coding reliability (Belur et al., 2021). Discrepancies were resolved through a structured process: reviewers independently re-examined disputed codes, discussed them to reach consensus, and consulted a third reviewer for three unresolved cases. The final thematic synthesis addressed the research questions while remaining open to emergent insights. This approach combined deductive alignment with inductive flexibility, ensuring a comprehensive and adaptable synthesis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Figure 1

PRISMA Search Methodology



Findings

Descriptive Findings

RQ1: How are CEFR-related ELT studies in Türkiye characterised in terms of education level, region/city, language skill, and CEFR level?

Characteristics of CEFR-Related ELT Studies

A descriptive analysis of 70 CEFR-related studies conducted in Türkiye brings to light varied research foci across educational contexts. Tertiary education is particularly prominent, with undergraduatelevel studies comprising 30% ($n = 21$) of the corpus. This can be attributed to factors such as the ease of access to participants, the presence of established research infrastructure, and the central role of university preparatory programmes in Turkish higher education. Research at the undergraduate level predominantly examines the evaluation of preparatory programmes and the implementation of department-specific curricula (Avcı, 2019; Büyükkalay, 2016; Büyükkınacı, 2011; Erol, 2013; Özdemir, 2015). For example, within the tertiary education focus, Terzi (2006) investigated advanced reading courses with 102 second-year ELT students, whereas Arslan (2011) employed expert sampling with 22 specialists to explore the CEFR’s applicability in higher education curriculum design. Research in this area ranges from studies on placement testing in EFL preparatory

programmes (Çolakoğlu, 2019) to comprehensive programme evaluations (Yapar, 2018), collectively illustrating the multifaceted and complex nature of CEFR implementation in Turkish universities.

Secondary education follows, accounting for approximately one-sixth of the corpus ($n = 11$; 15.71%). In a related study, Baydal (2016) surveyed 527 eighth-grade learners to analyse vocabulary alignment with student interests, while further research by Yıldırım and Sümengen (2023) performed document analysis of two A2-level coursebooks. Coursebook analysis is a recurring theme in secondary-level research (Balıcı, 2017; Güdücü, 2020; Kızıltan & Baydal, 2018), with a focus on eighth-grade materials. Teacher perspectives were also explored using varied sampling methods; Yüce and Mirici (2019, 2022) engaged 11 volunteer EFL teachers in consecutive studies of ninth-grade programmes. Curriculum and assessment evaluation have also been a research focus, as evidenced by Zorba and Arıkan's (2016) comparison of Anatolian high school documents and by Kiriş's (2016) study of assessment practices among eight teachers across four schools.

In contrast to the more extensively studied educational levels, preschool and postgraduate education are markedly underrepresented, together accounting for only 1.43% ($n = 1$) of the corpus. Şimşek (2021) undertook the sole preschool-level study, examining early childhood English education among kindergarten learners aged 60–72 months in a private school. Likewise, Mirici and Kavaklı (2017) conducted the only postgraduate-focused study, investigating CEFR-related practices among M.A. students in ELT programmes. This pronounced scarcity of research at both the early and advanced ends of the educational continuum results in substantial gaps in understanding CEFR implementation across the full trajectory of language learning, particularly with respect to early language development and advanced academic English proficiency.

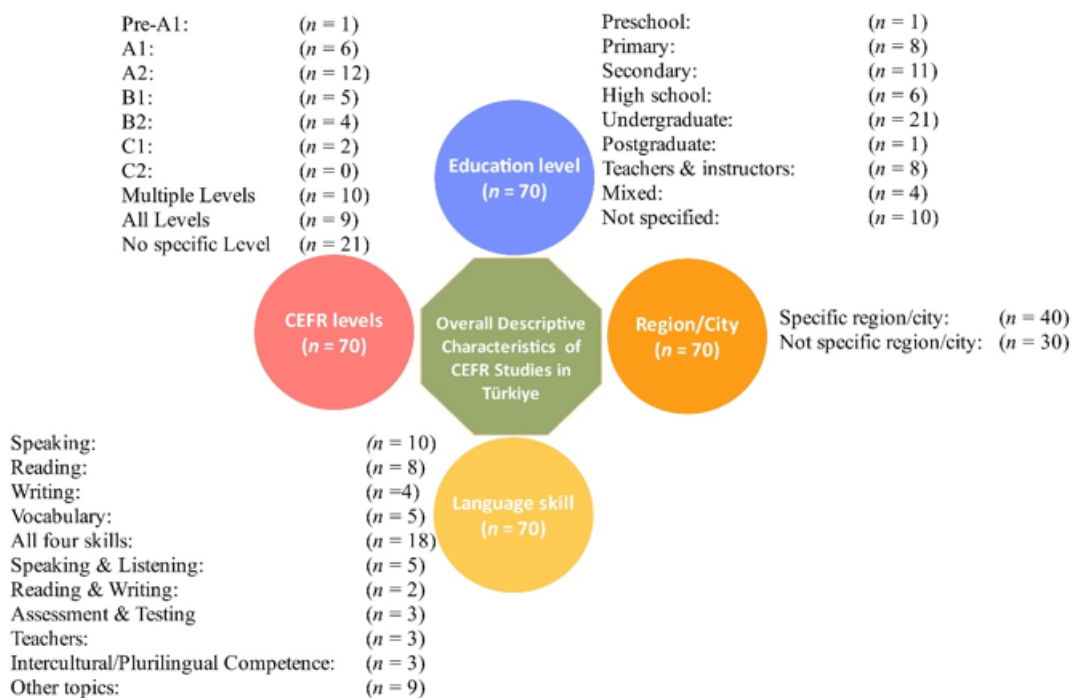
A notable proportion of the corpus ($n = 10$; 14.29%) consists of studies that do not specify educational levels or participant characteristics. These studies are predominantly document analyses and conceptual studies, ranging from critical evaluations of the CEFR framework (Arıkan, 2015; Cephe & Toprak, 2014) to policy-oriented analyses (Hazar, 2021; Tosuncuoğlu & Peacı, 2019) and comparative curriculum investigations (Özer & Parmaksız, 2013). Several conceptual papers also address specific dimensions of CEFR implementation, including Bağatur's (2017) examination of literature integration, Topal's (2019) focus on pronunciation within teacher education, and Yazıcı et al.'s (2021) qualitative comparison of the 2001 framework with the 2018 companion volume. The prevalence of document-based research brings into focus both the inherent complexity of CEFR implementation and the theoretical need for more empirically grounded studies.

Geographical analysis indicates a significant uneven distribution of CEFR-related research within Türkiye. Out of the studies reviewed, 40 of them specify their locations, while 30 of them are document analyses or conceptual papers where geographical context was considered irrelevant (Arıkan, 2015; Cephe & Toprak, 2014; Tosuncuoğlu & Peacı, 2019; Yazıcı et al., 2021). Among the location-specific studies, Ankara overwhelmingly dominates, accounting for nearly half ($n = 18$) and spanning various educational levels, from primary education (Öztürk, 2007; Şimşek, 2021) to university preparatory programmes (Mısır, 2017; Özdemir, 2015; Yapar, 2018). Research sites include several major institutions, such as Gazi University (Ekşi, 2008; Terzi, 2006), Hacettepe University (Barışkan, 2010), Başkent University (Kırmızı, 2007), and Ufuk University (Özdemir, 2015), which confirms diversity across the public and private sectors. Comparative insights are provided by Çağatay and Gürocak (2016), while Liman (2017) focuses solely on private universities. Despite its large population and extensive educational infrastructure, Istanbul is represented by only three studies: one at Bahçeşehir University (Çolakoğlu, 2019), one at Yıldız Technical University (Şahin, 2022), and one in a private high school (Ayar, 2010).

Regional representation of CEFR-related research outside major metropolitan centres shows substantial variation. In the Aegean Region, studies have been performed in Muğla (Kiriş, 2016) and Aydın (Sarıca, 2009), while the Mediterranean Region includes research from Antalya (Büyükkalay, 2016) and Isparta (Tosun & Glover, 2020). Eastern Anatolia remains notably underrepresented, with Göksu's (2011) study in Erzurum providing the only documented contribution. Additional research from smaller cities, such as Edirne (Cebeci, 2006), Karabük (Avcı, 2019), Uşak (Özüdoğru, 2016), and Malatya (Temur, 2023), tends to focus on context-specific implementation challenges and local adaptations. A few studies ($n = 5$) include broader geographical coverage through national or multi-regional sampling. For example, Ak (2016) and Baydal (2016) collected data from all seven regions of Türkiye, with the former surveying English teachers nationwide and the latter distributing 527 questionnaires by mail. Demir (2020) was the first to incorporate data from all 81 provinces by sampling teachers nationwide, while Kavaklı (2018) delved into CEFR-related practices within nationwide private language school networks. Arslan (2011) provided a distinctive and broad perspective for foreign language education at the tertiary level by combining national and international viewpoints through expert consultation.

Figure 2

The Overview of the Studies by Education Level, Region/City, CEFR Level, and Language Skill



Beyond geographic distribution, the analysis of language skills indicates that the most common research category ($n = 18$) involves approaches that combine all four skills. These studies address topics like aligning curricula (Arslan, 2011; Yiğit, 2010) and creating comprehensive syllabi (Ekşi, 2008; Liman, 2017). Some explicitly reference the CEFR's five-skill model, distinguishing between spoken interaction and production (Zorba & Arıkan, 2016), while others examine the influence of the 2018 update across all skills (Ayverdi & Güleç, 2021). Research on university preparatory programmes often throws light on integrated skills, underscoring their role in fostering comprehensive academic language competence (Çağatay & Gürocak, 2016; Temur, 2023; Yapar, 2018).

Speaking is the most extensively studied individual skill ($n = 10$), exemplifying both the emphasis on communicative teaching and the challenges in developing oral proficiency. A few studies underscore the CEFR's distinction between spoken interaction and spoken production, a distinction operationalised in the separate A1–B1 subscale evaluations conducted by Özdemir (2015) and Tıraş (2011). Büyükkınacı (2011) focused on spoken interaction at A2 level, acknowledging its unique cognitive and linguistic challenges. Although studies on advanced speaking skills are scarce, they address key proficiency areas, such as those outlined in the C1 syllabus, including pronunciation, fluency, interactional strategies, and strategic competence (Akan, 2007).

Several studies ($n = 8$) explored reading skills across various proficiency levels. Göksu (2011) and Kırmızı (2007) focused on basic and intermediate levels, while Kazazoğlu (2006) investigated advanced reading at C1 level. Additionally, Terzi (2006) evaluated academic reading practices. Integration of technology into CEFR practices remains infrequent; however, Dolgunsöz and Sarıçoban's (2016) eye-movement analysis is a notable exception, employing psycholinguistic methods to compare developmental differences between B1 and B2 readers. Additional topics ($n = 9$) include pronunciation (Topal, 2019), pragmatics (Duman, 2023), literature integration (Bağatur, 2017), general competences (Balıcı, 2017), curriculum policy (Doğan, 2007), and self-evaluation (Ayar, 2010). The lack of standalone listening research discloses a significant gap.

The distribution of CEFR levels in Turkish EFL research exhibits diverse patterns. Many studies ($n=21$) do not specify specific CEFR levels but refer to the framework generally. These often address theoretical and policy concerns, such as an action-oriented approach (Arıkan, 2015) or critiques of assessment methods, forming important conceptual foundations (Cephe & Toprak, 2014). Among studies that do specify levels, basic user levels are most frequent, accounting for about 25% of single-level research. Notably, 12 studies focus exclusively on the A2 Waystage level, which is significant in Turkish education as the expected proficiency standard for eighth-grade students (Güdücü, 2020; Sarıça, 2009). Research methods at this level vary, including vocabulary profiling (Baydal, 2016) and evaluations of writing assessment practices (Avcı, 2019).

Several studies ($n = 9$) have taken a comprehensive approach by examining all levels and skills to provide a broad overview of implementation. Policy-level insights are offered through expert consultation research (Arslan, 2011) and curriculum conformity analysis based on the CERF framework (Yiğit, 2010). Additionally, Demir (2020) reviewed the nationwide curriculum, and Kavaklı (2018) examined vertical alignment across proficiency levels. Research at the PreA1 level remains limited, represented only by Şimşek's (2021) early childhood study. Similarly, investigations targeting higher proficiency levels are scarce, with only two studies addressing C1-level competencies, one on speaking (Akan, 2007) and another on reading (Kazazoğlu, 2006). Notably, no research has explored C2 level. This underscores a significant and longstanding gap in the Turkish EFL research landscape.

RQ2: What research methodologies are prevalent in CEFR-related ELT studies in Türkiye?

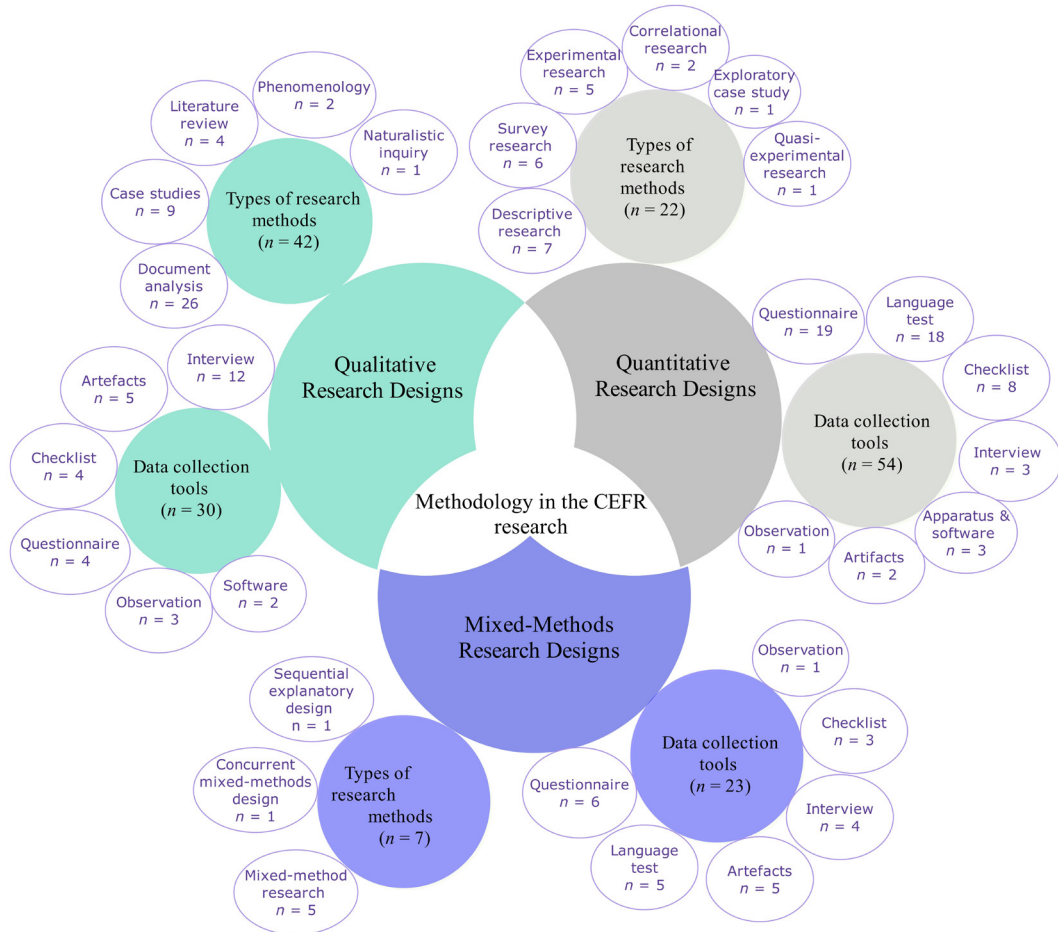
Methodological Approaches in CEFR Research

An analysis of 70 studies emerges a common methodological tendency toward qualitative approaches ($n = 42$), with mixedmethods designs appearing only infrequently ($n = 7$). This pattern reflects both the inherent complexity of investigating CEFR implementation and the predominance of traditional qualitative orientations within Turkish ELT research. Among qualitative designs, document analysis emerges as the most frequently employed method ($n = 26$), particularly in journal articles examining curriculum alignment (Hazar, 2021; Yıldırım, 2023; Zorba & Arıkan, 2016) and

in master's theses analysing coursebook content. Case studies represent the second most common qualitative design ($n=9$), frequently employed in journal articles (Ayverdi & Güleç, 2021; Çelik, 2013). Interviews ($n = 12$) are also used across various publication types, ranging from teacherperception studies (Tosun & Glover, 2020) to dualgroup interviews in early childhood education (Şimşek, 2021). Overall, the predominance of document-based research suggests a widespread emphasis on macro-level, policy-oriented analysis rather than micro-level analysis of classroom practice.

Figure 3

The Methodological Features of the CEFR-Related ELT Research in Türkiye



Quantitative research methods exhibit some variation across publication types but remain limited in breadth and depth. Survey studies ($n = 6$) are primarily identified in journal articles (Çağatay & Gürocak, 2016; Yakışık & Gürocak, 2018), whereas experimental designs ($n = 5$) are largely confined to master's theses (Büyükkalay, 2016; Cebeci, 2006). The greater prevalence of descriptive studies ($n = 7$) compared to experimental designs suggests a tendency to document existing conditions rather than evaluate pedagogical interventions. Language testing is the most frequently employed quantitative approach ($n = 18$), using the Cambridge KET (Dağ, 2008) and integrating it with self-assessment tools (Sarıça, 2009). However, reliance on externally developed assessment instruments raises concerns about contextual validity and cultural appropriateness in the Turkish educational setting.

Although mixed-methods research offers distinct advantages, it remains underutilised within the corpus ($n = 7$). For instance, Avcı (2019) combined CEFR-aligned writing assessments with instructor interviews; Mısır (2017) integrated analysis of the A1 speaking exam with learner perception data; and Özüdoğru's (2016) doctoral study employed concurrent triangulation, incorporating documents, observations, language tests, and interviews. Data collection practices largely reflect traditional approaches. Questionnaires ($n = 19$) and checklists ($n = 12$; eight quantitative and four qualitative) dominate, indicating efforts towards standardisation. Classroom observations appear in only three studies, underscoring the scarcity of resource-intensive yet pedagogically valuable methods. Similarly, artefacts ($n = 2$) and digital tools ($n = 5$), including two qualitative and three quantitative instruments, remain marginal despite their potential. A notable exception is Dolgunsöz and Sarıçoban's (2016) innovative application of eye-tracking technology to investigate reading comprehension at the CEFR level, illustrating the promise of contemporary research methods.

Current methodological trends in the corpus favour accessible, cost-effective, and operationally convenient approaches, often at the expense of depth and practical relevance. The dominance of document analysis and survey-based designs yields largely superficial findings that fail to capture the dynamic, context-specific nature of CEFR implementation in authentic classroom settings. Consequently, this methodological orientation prioritises problem description over the development of empirically grounded solutions.

Thematic Findings

RQ3: What key findings and insights have emerged from CEFR-related ELT studies in Türkiye?

Key Findings and Insights from CEFR Research

The thematic analysis of 70 studies undertaken between 2006 and 2024 demonstrates complex challenges in implementing CEFR across Turkish educational contexts. The coding process identified four primary concerns covering curriculum-related issues ($n = 32$), teacher-related issues ($n = 19$), coursebook-related issues ($n = 16$), and assessment-related problems ($n = 6$) (see Table 1).

Table 1*Key Points and Insights Emerged in CEFR-Related ELT Research in Türkiye*

Field	Theme	Sample research	<i>n</i>	<i>f</i>
Curriculum (43.84 %, <i>n</i> = 32)	Curriculum alignment and implementation	Zorba & Arıkan, 2016	14	19.18%
	Curriculum design and content	Hazar, 2021	10	13.70%
	Structural and curricular challenges	Doğan, 2007	5	6.85%
	Standardisation and consistency	Yapar, 2018	3	4.11%
Coursebook (21.92%, <i>n</i> = 16)	Coursebook alignment and content	Güdücü, 202	13	17.81%
	Cultural content and representation	Özen, 2013	3	4.11%
Assessment (8.22%, <i>n</i> = 6)	Testing standardisation and practice	Kiriş, 2016	6	8.22%
Teacher (26.03%, <i>n</i> = 19)	Teacher training needs	Dağ, 2008	13	17.81%
	Teachers' perceptions and practices	Çelik, 2013	6	8.22%
Total			70	100 %

Curriculum-related Issues

The most common challenge related to curriculum is its misalignment with the CEFR and its descriptors (*n* = 14). Studies detail discrepancies across different educational levels, especially at the A2 level. Zorba and Arıkan (2016) pinpointed an imbalance in skill emphasis in 9th-grade curricula, while Yüce and Mirici (2019) reported that the 9th-grade EFL curriculum does not fully align with CEFR descriptors. These problems, such as misalignment and inconsistent skill focus, are not limited to a single educational stage or setting; they occur across the entire education system, from primary to higher education. For example, Yıldırım (2023) observed that reading and writing were significantly underrepresented in 4th-grade materials, and Özer and Parmaksız (2013) discovered that 92% of 3rd-grade curricula aligned with CEFR, despite notable disparities in language skills. Similar issues are noted in higher education. Yapar (2018) drew attention to the inconsistencies in CEFR interpretation and insufficient instruction in productive skills, despite the presence of B1 objectives. Coşkun (2018) further observed that although the objectives of the 11th-grade English curriculum exhibit certain B2-level characteristics, they do not fully align with CEFR standards.

Concerning curriculum design and content, the corpus of reviewed research sheds light on certain specific issues (*n* = 10). Doğan (2007) observed that while many CEFR principles, such as interactive, real-life skill development, are incorporated into national curricula, earlier curricula and some pedagogical methods still rely on traditional approaches that focus on rote learning and grammar rather than communication. Although official programs increasingly embrace CEFR ideals, classroom practice often falls short due to deeply ingrained teacher habits, assessment methods, and limited resources. Hazar (2021) further highlighted this misalignment by identifying several shortcomings in the 6th-grade curriculum, including a narrow range of reception activities, an excessive emphasis on descriptive oral production, limited variation in written production tasks, conceptual overlap

between production and interaction activities, and an overall scarcity of opportunities for meaningful interaction.

Arslan (2011) emphasised the need to select content grounded in real-life contexts, to ensure that instructional activities are aligned with the four language skills, and to support the development of communicative competence. Similarly, Duruk (2021) accentuated the importance of providing balanced attention to all four skills within the modular English preparatory curriculum at a state university. Several studies underscore the need for substantive curriculum revision to ensure more balanced skill development (Liman, 2017), with particular emphasis on embedding the CEFR's pedagogical principles, notably the action-oriented approach (Bakla, 2006; Kırmızı, 2007). Yüce and Mirici (2019) further advocate incorporating plurilingual and pluricultural dimensions to align curricula with contemporary communicative and intercultural expectations. Complementing these perspectives, researchers have called for eclectic and flexible curricular orientations (Ekşi, 2008) alongside strengthened communicative approaches that foster meaningful learner interaction and real-world language use (Büyükkınacı, 2011).

Another identified issue is about structural and curricular challenges ($n = 5$) that could hinder the effective application of the CEFR across various educational settings. Doğan (2007) stated that MONE adopts a one-size-fits-all approach to foreign language teaching, failing to consider the needs and realities of the local context. Similarly, Demir (2020) identified key issues in the primary school English curriculum, including limited time, insufficient professional training, and strict assessment methods. Özüdođlu (2016) also noted that the 2nd-grade English curriculum did not fully meet CEFR standards in certain language skills, cognitive goals, self-assessment features, and content. Arslan (2011) argued that curriculum redesign is necessary due to the absence of authentic, real-life tasks that support the development of all four language skills, the limited use of effective methods and strategies for presenting content, and the insufficient incorporation of alternative assessment practices aligned with the CEFR.

The corpus points to a notable lack of standardisation as regards curriculum design ($n = 3$). Yapar (2018) identified several challenges in higher education, including the need to consider individual learner differences in curriculum design, insufficient institutional facilities, varying skill levels within the curriculum, a lack of standardisation and consistency across universities, limited use of technology in language teaching, and limited extracurricular activities. Similarly, Temur (2023) mentioned misalignment and implementation issues in assessing foreign-language teaching at secondary and higher education levels against CEFR standards. Further evidence from a study of third-year students at a private primary school underscored the importance of establishing standardisation in language teaching aligned with A1-level descriptors (Öztürk, 2007).

Coursebook-related Issues

The corpus of reviewed research outlines several coursebook-related challenges ($n = 13$), most of which concern alignment with the CEFR and the quality of content. For example, Duman (2023) carried out a quantitative content analysis of national and international B1–B2 coursebooks and noticed that, although the books were comparable in terms of the types and frequencies of speech acts, English coursebooks used in Türkiye remain insufficient in their overall coverage of speech acts. Güdücü (2020) reported that a corpus-based analysis of five 8th-grade coursebooks demonstrated notable misalignment with CEFR A2 requirements, through AntConc and TextInspector analyses. The findings pointed out an overreliance on high-frequency K1 vocabulary and insufficient inclusion of intermediate K2 items, both of which are essential for progressing toward B1-level competence.

Similarly, Kızıltan and Baydal (2018) evaluated an 8th-grade coursebook and identified several deficiencies, including limited support for communicative competence, lack of real-life authenticity, dominance of K1 vocabulary, underrepresentation of K2 items, a high proportion of off-list words, restricted academic vocabulary, and overall misalignment with CEFR A2 lexical expectations.

Baydal (2016) demonstrated significant inconsistencies in the vocabulary distribution of A2-level EFL coursebooks. The study detailed the misalignment between the vocabulary used in textbooks and students' interests, as well as gaps in lexical choices that fall short of CEFR A2 standards. It specifically evaluated high-frequency words, adherence to the British National Corpus, the suitability of lexical items for A2 learners, and the extent to which the coursebook vocabulary matched learners' preferences. Content-related challenges extend beyond vocabulary to skill integration and task authenticity. Ak (2016) evaluated a second-grade coursebook against CEFR standards and identified substantial gaps in listening and speaking activities. Although the book claimed alignment with A1, it offered minimal support for integrated skill development. Similarly, Yıldırım and Sümengen (2023) analysed ninth-grade coursebooks in relation to writing skills and concluded that, despite being labelled as A2-aligned, the tasks lacked communicative purpose and the discourse features required by the CEFR descriptors, reducing writing practice to isolated grammar exercises.

The reviewed corpus ($n = 3$) also includes issues concerning cultural content in coursebooks. Özen (2019) analysed seven MoNE-approved secondary school coursebook sets and reported that values, beliefs, and attitudes constituted the most emphasised cultural category, whereas interpersonal relationships were the least represented. The study also identified substantial inconsistencies in both the quality and quantity of cultural elements across the materials. In a descriptive study, Çalman (2017) observed that although the ninth-grade coursebook offered a relatively balanced representation of diverse cultures that draws on both local and international contexts, it provided insufficient activities to develop intercultural competence. Similarly, Barışkan (2010) evaluated three coursebooks and reported inadequate cultural transmission, beginning with limited representation of students' own culture, citing issues such as fabricated reading and listening texts, restricted opportunities for cultural comparison, and a lack of direct integration of cultural content.

Assessment-related Issues

The analysis of reviewed studies ($n = 6$) also pinpoints substantial challenges in implementing CEFR-aligned assessment and evaluation practices. The evidence points to a gap between CEFR principles and the practical realities of the Turkish EFL context. Arslan (2011), for instance, underscored the urgent need for standardised proficiency examinations across Turkish universities. This lack of standardisation extends beyond higher education to non-formal language schools. In a mixed-methods study, Kavaklı (2018) reported that language schools do not fully implement European guidelines for language testing and assessment, as CEFR standards are insufficiently integrated into their practices. As a result, institutions frequently claim CEFR alignment without possessing the technical expertise necessary to make valid level assignments, leading to unreliable and potentially misleading proficiency certifications.

Kiriş (2016) reported that many EFL teachers lack sufficient knowledge of the CEFR, resulting in incomplete implementation of its assessment objectives. Although the framework places strong emphasis on listening and speaking, these skills are rarely assessed across school types. The study attributed this discrepancy to both student-related challenges and national policy constraints, noting that teachers attempt to address classroom-level issues but have limited capacity to do so. Similarly,

in a qualitative study involving 225 ninth-grade students and 12 teachers, Tıraş (2011) identified speaking assessment as a major concern and highlighted its frequent omission from examinations despite the existence of a dedicated listening and speaking course. Interviews conducted by Tosun and Glover (2020) with eight experienced teachers further depicted difficulties in applying CEFR principles to classroom assessment and only a superficial understanding of CEFR proficiency levels. At the tertiary level, Avcı (2019) noted that instructors struggled to design rubrics and failed to align assessment criteria with A2 level descriptors.

Teacher-Related Issues

The corpus of teacher-related issues encompasses both teachers' training needs ($n = 13$) and their perceptions and practices regarding the understanding and implementation of the CEFR ($n = 6$). Dağ (2008) documented fundamental misunderstandings among teachers regarding core CEFR principles, including difficulty articulating the action-oriented approach and distinguishing it from traditional structural syllabus design. Demir (2020) similarly reported low confidence in implementation and uncertainty about the relationship between plurilingualism and CEFR level progression. Topal (2019) further identified teachers' insufficient advanced linguistic knowledge and limited pedagogical strategies for developing phonological control at higher CEFR levels.

Similarly, Özdemir (2015) observed that even teachers with theoretical knowledge of the CEFR encountered difficulties in translating this understanding into classroom practice. Hışmanoğlu (2013) likewise noted that prospective EFL teachers often receive insufficient preparation for CEFR-informed instruction. Tosun and Glover (2020) identified a pronounced gap between teachers' perceptions of key CEFR concepts and their actual pedagogical practices. Demir (2020) further reported widespread scepticism regarding the framework's compatibility with Turkish educational traditions, particularly given its European origins and its applicability in large, resource-constrained classrooms. Additionally, Çelik (2013) observed that teachers possessed only a limited understanding of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, both of which are central to CEFR philosophy.

Çağatay and Gürocak (2016) reported that although teachers held similarly positive views regarding the importance of the CEFR, instructors in private universities demonstrated greater practical familiarity with the framework, largely due to more extensive in-service training. Likewise, Yakışık and Gürocak (2018) documented that teachers working in private schools were generally more knowledgeable about CEFR-informed practices. Nonetheless, Birgün and Polat (2023) declared that even highly motivated teachers in well-resourced private institutions continued to face implementation difficulties, underscoring the need for professional development. Finally, in a mixed methods case study, Kani (2011) indicated that revising teacher education programs could better equip pre-service teachers with the conceptual understanding and practical skills necessary to apply CEFR principles effectively during their practicum experiences.

Discussion

What emerges from the analysis of 70 CEFR-related studies in Türkiye is a pattern of notable and significant gaps. Predominantly, these studies focus on undergraduate education, with less attention given to preschool and postgraduate levels. Notably, this pattern assumes significance when considering Türkiye's 2012 educational reform, which lowered the age for English instruction to 2nd grade, and the 2018 CEFR companion volume, which introduces pre-A1 descriptors for young learners (McElwee et al., 2019). From a geographic standpoint, Ankara emerges as the primary hub of CEFR-related research, with limited studies from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, and many publications lack regional specifics. Constrained by this narrow geographic scope, the current understanding of regional differences remains limited.

Within the Turkish EFL context, research addressing CEFR levels commonly employs integrated four-skills designs, which align with the framework's comprehensive view of language competence; however, the absence of studies focusing exclusively on listening reveals a clear gap in skill-specific inquiry. Compounding these concerns, the operationalisation of CEFR levels proves similarly problematic. Such omissions may indicate either insufficient familiarity with the framework or a predisposition toward broad, undifferentiated analyses at the expense of precise, level-based examinations.

Methodologically, the corpus is mainly composed of descriptive and survey-based designs, with few mixed-methods studies and a predominant reliance on document analysis. Characterised by these methodological tendencies, the corpus yields findings of limited practical relevance of the findings for further research. What this complete pattern portrays is a wider inclination among researchers to prioritise general policy-oriented studies. Such an orientation comes at the expense of the resource-intensive empirical research necessary to illuminate proficiency development across specific CEFR levels

Yielding four principal areas of concern, the thematic analysis identified curriculum alignment, coursebook design, assessment practices, and teacher-related factors. With respect to curriculum alignment, a similar trend has been observed in Malaysia. Comparable analyses of syllabuses pointed to a gap between intended proficiency targets and the specifications of the writing syllabus (Uri & Aziz, 2020), inconsistent application of CEFR bands and an uneven distribution of levels across courses (Sulistyaningrum & Purnawati, 2021). Extending beyond Malaysia, this trajectory parallels patterns across ASEAN countries, Japan, and China, where CEFR adaptations, often grounded in the 2001 version, have tended to prioritise testing over communicative competence. Such prioritisation risks reinforcing a 'deficit view' among teachers despite the framework's learner-centred orientation (Foley, 2019; Franz & Teo, 2018).

Examining the Japanese context, Wilkins (2017) discusses the difficulty of creating a clear and consistent speaking curriculum for Japanese university students using the CEFR-J. Acknowledging the CEFR-J's widespread adoption, Wilkins nevertheless notes that its descriptors often remain vague, so teachers must decide for themselves how to apply them. Because the CEFR relies heavily on general "cando" statements, both teachers and learners may struggle to understand what is expected at each level. Addressing this challenge, Wilkins proposes a three-stage solution: summarising CEFR level requirements into simple lists of topics and tasks, developing a set of example performances to guide teachers, and creating or gathering materials that match each topic and task. In a related contribution, Mohamed (2023) outlines a systematic process for creating a CEFR-aligned Arabic curriculum for tertiary education. Central to this process is the identification of key features of the CEFR through detailed document analysis, structuring them into a curriculum framework, and validating the framework through rater triangulation.

Recognising the limitations of applying the CEFR's broad descriptors directly to remedial English reading courses in Japanese tertiary settings, Nagai et al. (2012) implemented a three-stage contextualisation procedure. Comprising four sequential stages, this process involved selecting higher-level reading tasks to promote academic readiness, defining simplified text types appropriate for learners' existing proficiency, refining tasks to articulate clear learning outcomes, and developing worksheets that operationalised these outcomes through practical activities and guided self-assessment. Designed to narrow the gap between learners' A2 proficiency and the B1 skills expected for academic study, the approach also acknowledged that achieving full B1 competence within the restricted duration of remedial programmes is unlikely. Accordingly, this research illustrates how

systematic contextualisation can make CEFR-based curricula more realistic, pedagogically coherent, and responsive to institutional constraints.

Developing effective CEFR-based curricula requires first identifying the key factors that shape implementation. Synthesising these factors, Supunya (2022) proposes a tripartite classification spanning policy, administration, and instruction. At the policy level, key factors involve translating policy into practice, providing clear guidelines supported by exemplars, and ensuring strong communication among stakeholders. Administrative factors concern institutional understanding of the CEFR, opportunities for pedagogical reflection, and the promotion of teacher self-efficacy. Instruction-related factors include teachers' understanding of the action-oriented approach, confidence in applying it, awareness of learner needs, sociolinguistic competence, pedagogical innovation, and the ability to adapt CEFR principles within traditional teaching cultures. For instance, Malaysia's CEFR-related language policies have often adopted a rigid, universalist interpretation that overlooks the CEFR's flexible, context-adaptive design. Critiquing this universalist approach, Savski (2020) argues that effective implementation entails recognising local linguistic ecologies and proposes a locally adapted model, CEFRM, which incorporates national features while maintaining the core principles of the framework. Resonating with the Turkish EFL context, this perspective highlights that insufficient localisation limits the meaningful application of CEFR principles.

From a curriculumtheory perspective, the curriculum-related issues identified in this review align more closely with Tyler's (1949) objective model, which prioritises predetermined outcomes, than with Stenhouse's (1975) process model, which signals adaptability and responsiveness to local contexts. Reflecting what Steiner-Khamsi (2010) terms selective policy borrowing, this pattern indicates that international frameworks are formally adopted, but their core pedagogical principles are neglected. In the Turkish context, this results in curriculum documents that employ CEFR terminology without embracing the communicative, learner-centred orientation at the heart of the framework. Consequently, the misalignment between curricula and CEFR descriptors constitutes a structural failure embedded in curriculum design itself, rather than a mere implementation issue.

To resolve these curriculum-related challenges, CEFR-aligned curricula must be adapted in line with specific linguistic and educational contexts. Central to this endeavour is the development of context-sensitive frameworks that reflect local needs and national educational priorities (Foley, 2019), thereby ensuring that CEFR principles genuinely serve diverse learner profiles. Such localisation efforts are essential for promoting equitable and inclusive language learning environments that recognise the country's linguistic and cultural diversity (Levi & Duval, 2023; Mohamed, 2023). Achieving this, however, depends on collaboration among key stakeholders, including policymakers, teachers, teacher educators, and researchers, to build shared understanding and support coherent, system-wide implementation of the CEFR (Arnott et al., 2017; Schmidt & Head, 2019).

Closely paralleling earlier research, the findings on coursebook-related challenges establish misalignment with CEFR standards. For instance, Seker and Seymen (2022) reported that only 6% of reading activities in the *Deutsch Macht Spaß A1.2* coursebook met CEFR A1 criteria, with key authentic text types, such as catalogues and posters, largely absent. Such findings underscore a significant gap between coursebook content and international benchmarks. Comparable issues emerge across other skill domains. Examining listening activities, Tüm (2016) determined that listening activities in Turkish as a foreign language coursebooks often lack authenticity, relying heavily on artificial dialogues and repetitive drills that fail to reflect real communicative situations. Turning to writing, Yıldırım and Şentürk (2022) observed that the *New Istanbul B1* coursebook prioritises controlled and guided writing tasks, limiting opportunities for independent, communicative output.

In terms of speaking, Tüm and Parmaksız (2017) demonstrated that English coursebooks provide more interactive tasks aligned with CEFR self-assessment descriptors, whereas Turkish coursebooks typically offer more constrained activities with limited potential for spontaneous interaction. Taken together, these comparative findings substantiate the need to systematically revise Turkish language teaching materials to better align with CEFR principles and international standards.

The existing literature corroborates these findings, which evidence ongoing concerns about how productive skills and related tasks are conceptualised and applied in Turkish coursebooks. As Eş and Aktaş (2023) demonstrate, productive-skills activities in Turkish as a foreign language materials largely prioritise controlled, form-focused, sentence-level output, offering minimal opportunities for collaborative or interactive production despite the CEFR's action-oriented orientation. Although some coursebooks include tasks intended to promote real-world communication, these tasks are infrequent and rarely embedded within coherent, task-based sequences. At more advanced levels, Hamaratlı (2023) notes that B2–C1 coursebooks contain limited and inconsistently structured argumentative texts, with accompanying exercises that remark surface comprehension rather than fostering analytical or discursive competence. Extending to mediation, similar limitations appear in how coursebooks address. While *Alter Ego+ A1* systematically incorporates mediation tasks, *Yedi İklim Türkçe A1* provides significantly fewer opportunities for learners to interpret or facilitate communication (Sönmez, 2024). Mediation activities in *Yeni İstanbul B2* are comparably sporadic and lack explicit pedagogical guidance, thereby insufficiently addressing cultural and intercultural dimensions (Sofu & Demirkol, 2024).

Additional evidence supporting coursebook-CEFR alignment concerns indicates that key pedagogical features, such as providing multiple examples, connecting content to learners' daily lives, and activating background knowledge, are only inconsistently embedded in coursebooks (Tepe & Tüm, 2021). In addition, reading materials often lack authenticity and real-world relevance (Güleç, 2019). Addressing intercultural competence, autonomous learning strategies, and pragmatic functions, important CEFR-related descriptors remain insufficiently represented, as evidenced in analyses of German coursebooks used in Turkish contexts (Erdoğan & Çavuşoğlu, 2023). Demonstrating the need for more systematically designed materials, these patterns call for CEFR-aligned materials that support meaningful, context-rich language learning.

With respect to cultural content, current findings align with earlier research showing that Turkish language-teaching materials often treat culture superficially. A recurring tendency emerges in studies to present cultural information in a factual and monolithic manner, with limited engagement with deeper cultural practices or intercultural perspectives. For example, Göçmenler and Açıık (2021) assert that coursebooks lay emphasis on visible, surface-level cultural elements while providing little attention to underlying practices, perspectives, or opportunities for intercultural comparison. Echoing these findings, Güleç (2019) reports that cultural content in reading texts centres largely on generalised national values, offering minimal space for intercultural understanding. Extending this analysis to German language instruction, Erdoğan and Çavuşoğlu (2023) note that German coursebooks used in Turkish schools do not sufficiently address intercultural awareness. What these findings collectively suggest is a gap in integrating culturally rich, comparative, and intercultural content into language-teaching materials.

Turning to lexical considerations, international research on vocabulary development in CEFR-aligned materials offers further insight into coursebook design and content. With respect to polysemy, Lahlou (2022) reports that CEFR-based coursebooks make limited use of polysemy, with most high-frequency words presented with only a single meaning, indicating insufficient attention

to contextual diversity. Reinforcing this point, Negishi et al. (2012) remark that CEFR-level classifications of phrasal verbs necessitate contextual adjustment, as appropriate level assignment varies according to learners' linguistic backgrounds, textbook frequency patterns, and cultural context. Viewed collectively, these findings underscore the need for more nuanced lexical design in CEFR-aligned materials to ensure greater contextual relevance and pedagogical accuracy.

Addressing the coursebook-related challenges identified in the Turkish EFL context entails a comprehensive and coordinated approach to align materials more closely with CEFR principles. At the most fundamental level, instructional materials must undergo systematic revision to reflect CEFR-informed pedagogical expectations, particularly by fostering reflective learning, intercultural awareness, and integrated skill development (Erdoğan & Çavuşoğlu, 2023; Seker & Seymen, 2022). Equally essential are skill-specific improvements. Incorporating a greater range, authenticity, and learner-centredness, writing tasks should reflect these qualities (Yıldırım & Şentürk, 2022), while speaking tasks should prioritise open-ended, communicative, and task-based designs (Tüm & Parmaksız, 2017). To address mediation, coursebooks should embed contextually relevant activities (Sönmez, 2024) and include argumentative discourse tasks that develop critical and independent language use at advanced proficiency levels (Hamaratlı, 2023).

In addition, materials need to address gaps in everyday language functions (Demirel & Fakazlı, 2021) by integrating a broader array of cultural categories such as attitudes, daily practices, beliefs, and opportunities for intercultural comparison and active learner engagement (Göçmenler & Açık, 2021). Overall, coursebook development should prioritise real-world relevance, contextual appropriateness, and rich, multi-layered examples that support meaningful language learning (Tepe & Tüm, 2021). To consolidate these improvements, scenario-based speaking and writing tasks should immerse learners in authentic communicative situations aligned with CEFR's action-oriented principles (Eş & Aktaş, 2023).

Shifting attention to assessment, findings on testing standardisation mirror earlier research pointing to inconsistencies across institutions. The absence of a shared national benchmark among state and foundation universities, as noted by Sıvacı (2020), results in highly variable assessment practices. In contrast, Budak and Budak (2025) report that international examinations such as those developed by Cambridge and Oxford demonstrate stronger alignment with CEFR principles, offering balanced coverage of all language skills and emphasising real-life communicative competence. Turkish national exams, however, remain heavily weighted toward reading, with limited attention to productive and interactive skills such as speaking and writing. Consequently, national test alignment with the CEFR is only partial and tends to privilege receptive skills while overlooking authentic, task-based assessment approaches. Although policymakers regularly reference the CEFR in curricular documents, Budak and Budak (2025) observe that exam content and formats continue to fall short of the integrated, skills-based assessment philosophy that the CEFR promotes.

National proficiency examinations exhibit parallel weaknesses; Şengül and Demirel (2021) report that although the Turkish Proficiency Exam (TPE) superficially resembles internationally recognised assessments such as TOEFL, IELTS, and DELF, it places disproportionate emphasis on discrete item testing and grammatical accuracy, whereas international counterparts prioritise communicative competence and contextualised language use. TÖMER proficiency examinations exhibit parallel issues, as Karagöl (2020) identifies concerns about the balance between receptive and productive skills, the authenticity of test materials, and the clarity of scoring criteria. Beyond the Turkish context, Chen et al. (2023) ascertained that the Military Online English Proficiency Test in Taiwan relied predominantly on A2-level vocabulary despite targeting B2 proficiency, undermining the validity of proficiency claims.

Beyond these institutional concerns, broader evidence highlights disconnects between CEFR-aligned assessment policies and actual classroom practices. In Malaysian primary ESL classrooms, teachers demonstrated limited understanding and implementation of formative assessment principles, with minimal use of peer and self-assessment despite the CEFR's emphasis on learner autonomy (Sidhu et al., 2018). Teachers' prioritisation of summative assessments and high-stakes exam preparation, alongside structural constraints such as time pressure and large class sizes, further exacerbates this gap (Thiagarajan & Hua, 2023).

Teacher-related findings accord with prior research identifying similar gaps. In Swedish higher education, as Baldwin and Apelgren (2018) report, teacher assessment practices remained largely unchanged following CEFR implementation, continuing to prioritise grammatical accuracy over communicative orientation due to entrenched instructional traditions. Emerging alongside these patterns, challenges in adapting CEFR descriptors to specific linguistic and cultural contexts prove considerable. Zhao et al. (2017), for example, identified that teachers struggled to distinguish between vocabulary descriptors at adjacent proficiency bands (B1, B1+, B2) when aligning the CEFR with the China Standards of English, underscoring the complexity of precise calibration. Thus, effective CEFR integration in higher education demands a context-sensitive approach that recognises local educational cultures and teacher beliefs, fostering a shared understanding of the framework's principles and intended uses. Engaging teachers actively in the implementation process can reduce resistance and support meaningful shifts in assessment practice (Baldwin & Apelgren, 2018). Moreover, the compatibility of the CEFR with a school's educational vision, along with the framework's adaptability to specific teaching contexts, plays a critical role in shaping successful implementation and assessment practices (Moonen et al., 2013; Stathopoulou, 2020).

Aligned with the present findings on teacher training needs, research demonstrates a substantial gap between teachers' theoretical awareness of the CEFR and their ability to apply its principles in practice. Examining teachers of Turkish as a foreign language, Sözer and Pilanci (2021) found that although teachers generally hold positive views of the CEFR and its communicative orientation, many report insufficient training and limited familiarity with its conceptual foundations. These patterns recur across other contexts. Among Spanish secondary teachers, Díez-Bedmar and Byram (2019) observed that CEFR understanding remained superficial, often restricted to knowledge of the proficiency levels, with limited grasp of core principles such as the action-oriented approach, plurilingualism, and interculturality. Thai EFL university lecturers, as reported by Kanchai (2019), demonstrated limited awareness of the action-oriented pedagogy underpinning the CEFR. Reinforcing the central role of professional learning, evidence from broader implementation efforts further underscores it. Drawing on Canadian and Swiss experiences, Piccardo et al. (2019) emphasised that successful CEFR integration required sustained, conceptually grounded, and practice-oriented teacher development, while Rehner et al. (2022) showed that CEFR-related professional learning led to transformative shifts in French-as-a-second-language teaching, enabling teachers to adopt more communicative, action-oriented practices.

Regarding teachers' perceptions of the CEFR, studies indicate a mix of appreciation and concern. Examining Vietnamese EFL teachers, Tiep (2017) reports that they recognise the CEFR's value in aligning assessment with proficiency levels and supporting curriculum design. Thai university teachers, according to Charttrakul and Damnet (2021), similarly view the framework as a useful guide for planning and assessment. However, these positive perceptions are tempered by significant reservations. Revealing a concerning tendency, Franz and Teo (2018) express that many Thai teachers interpret the CEFR primarily as a measure of their own proficiency rather than as a tool

for curriculum reform, leading to feelings of inadequacy, particularly in contexts where placement testing has been poorly implemented. Documenting similar concerns, Baldwin and Apelgren (2018) report mixed reactions among Swedish teacher educators, who expressed concerns about the CEFR's vagueness, lack of language specificity, and perceived neglect of grammatical accuracy.

Despite generally positive attitudes toward the CEFR, teachers frequently retain traditional, teacher-centred practices rather than adopting the learner-centred, action-oriented pedagogy it advocates (Sidhu et al., 2018; Thiagarajan & Hua, 2023). Further hindering effective implementation, a range of contextual constraints compounds these challenges. The challenges, including limited instructional time, heavy workloads, and large class sizes, have been widely documented, as seen in Malaysian primary classrooms where teachers also expressed concerns about their own English proficiency and difficulties accommodating diverse learner needs (Mohammed et al., 2021). Vietnamese teachers report similar issues, including misalignment between available teaching materials and CEFR expectations, as well as a substantial gap between learners' entry-level proficiency and required graduation outcomes (Hai & Nhung, 2018). Underscoring the necessity of context-sensitive approaches, these challenges point to CEFR implementation that recognises local educational cultures and teacher beliefs. In Israel, as Levi and Duval (2023) suggest, bottom-up curriculum processes proved valuable, where teacher input and professional learning communities played a central role in translating policy into practice. Foley (2019), in a complementary argument, contends that CEFR implementation in Asian contexts should prioritise local needs over direct policy transfer, advocating for approaches that account for the sociolinguistic realities of English as an international language. Together, this body of research illustrates that successful CEFR integration depends not only on policy alignment but also on meaningful engagement with the contextual factors shaping teachers' everyday instructional decisions.

Advancing CEFR implementation in the Turkish EFL context warrants targeted attention to several critical areas. First, a deeper investigation into Turkish EFL teachers' understanding of CEFR principles is needed to move beyond surface-level familiarity and to capture variation across educational levels and institutional contexts (Sözer & Pilanci, 2021). A second priority is to examine the effectiveness of different professional development models, particularly those that are sustained and collaborative, to determine which approaches lead to meaningful and lasting changes in classroom practice (Piccardo et al., 2019; Rehner et al., 2022). As a third point, comparative studies examining teachers' stated beliefs against their actual instructional practices would provide insights for designing interventions that address both attitudinal and practical barriers to CEFR implementation. Fourth, an investigation into how pre-service teacher education programmes incorporate CEFR principles could guide systematic revisions to teacher training curricula across Türkiye. Equally essential are investigations into contextual factors, such as large class sizes, resource constraints, and exam-oriented pressures, to develop context-sensitive strategies that support more realistic CEFR adoption. Finally, longitudinal research on the long-term effects of CEFR-informed professional development on teaching practices and student outcomes would offer robust evidence to inform national policy and promote coherent, system-wide implementation.

From a policy perspective, the marginalisation of teachers creates structural barriers to both equity and quality in language education (DarlingHammond & Richardson, 2009). Effective CEFR implementation in Türkiye, therefore, necessitates repositioning teachers not as passive implementers, but as co-developers who possess the autonomy, resources, and institutional support necessary to adapt the framework meaningfully and sustainably. The evidence reviewed in this study identifies teacher-related challenges as the most critical impediment to CEFR adoption in Türkiye:

without adequately prepared educators, policy directives fail to translate into classroom practice. Knowledge gaps, limited training opportunities, and the enduring theory-practice disconnect collectively demonstrate that teachers have borne responsibility for implementation shortcomings while remaining insufficiently empowered to effect change. Unless educational authorities invest in comprehensive, long-term professional development that strengthens both conceptual understanding and practical application of CEFR principles, teachers are likely to revert to traditional, form-focused approaches, thereby undermining the success of any curriculum reform effort.

Conclusion

A divergence between Türkiye's stated commitment to the CEFR and the realities of its implementation emerges from this review. Despite more than two decades of official adoption, alignment remains largely superficial. The existing research landscape, dominated by studies on metropolitan undergraduate contexts, provides an evidence base that overlooks the settings where CEFR implementation is most challenging. Notably underrepresented are early childhood education, postgraduate programmes, rural schools, and multiple regions. Combined with methodological tendencies favouring document analysis over classroom-based inquiry, this narrow geographical and demographic scope has generated predominantly theoretical insights with limited practical relevance.

The field remains shaped by significant gaps. Contrary to national priorities related to internationalisation, the near absence of C2-level research and limited attention to C1 proficiency imply a critical misalignment. Further indicating reliance on outdated interpretations, the failure to incorporate innovations from the 2018 CEFR Companion Volume signals conceptual stagnation. Moreover, the widespread omission of specified CEFR levels in studies undermines the framework's central principle of level-based competence. Observed across curriculum design, teacher preparation, assessment practices, and instructional materials, structural barriers reveal systemic resistance to the CEFR's action-oriented philosophy. Longstanding traditions, ranging from grammar-focused instruction and centralised curriculum control to norm-referenced testing and the marginalisation of teachers, continue to reinforce conventional pedagogical models. Rather than isolated implementation issues, these challenges constitute interconnected features of a system that has adopted CEFR terminology while resisting its transformative intent.

Methodologically, the predominance of descriptive, non-experimental, and non-classroom-based studies has resulted in extensive problem identification but minimal solution development. Preventing meaningful connections between policy intentions and classroom realities, the lack of mixed-methods research, experimental designs, and observational evidence constitutes a critical methodological gap. Thus, practitioners are left without the empirical guidance needed to effectively implement CEFR principles. In sum, this review concludes that CEFR adoption in Türkiye remains largely symbolic, signalling international alignment while maintaining traditional pedagogical mindsets and structures. Explicit recognition that existing strategies have been ineffective, coupled with a shift toward broad, systemic reform, is essential to transforming the current trajectory.

Recommendations

Comprehensive reforms across structural, methodological, and pedagogical domains emerge as essential from this review. To develop a more robust and contextually grounded evidence base, future research should prioritise underexplored areas, including preschool education using pre-A1 descriptors, postgraduate contexts requiring C1–C2 competencies, and regions facing distinct implementation challenges. Funding mechanisms, in turn, should mandate greater geographic diversity to support such reforms, ensuring systematic inclusion of research from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, rural communities, and economically disadvantaged regions.

Given the identified gaps in CEFR-related research in Türkiye, refining research methods is crucial. Providing both comprehensive insights and detailed evidence, broader adoption of mixed-methods designs addresses current methodological limitations. Implementing systematic classroom observation protocols will help document how CEFR principles are applied in actual teaching environments, thereby advancing research beyond document analysis alone. To investigate modern language-learning settings more thoroughly, researchers could incorporate digital tools such as video analysis, interaction-tracking software, and learning analytics platforms. Furthermore, all research should clearly specify the targeted CEFR levels to reduce ambiguity and enhance analytical accuracy.

Beyond nominal alignment, curriculum reform must embed CEFR principles substantively and coherently. Establishing level-specific learning progressions from pre-A1 to C2, supported by clearly defined benchmarks and measurable outcomes at each stage, is essential. Enabling localisation while upholding the integrity of the framework, context-sensitive regional adaptation mechanisms should ensure equity across diverse Turkish educational settings. Through evidence-based development processes, instructional materials must likewise be redesigned. Prioritising communicative competence over structural accuracy, coursebooks should incorporate mediation and multilingual tasks, ensure systematic vocabulary progression aligned with CEFR bands, and integrate authentic discourse mirroring real-world language use. Essential for addressing gaps in existing materials, complementary digital and supplementary resources, particularly those targeting pragmatic competence and intercultural understanding, support a pedagogical shift toward genuinely CEFR-informed practice.

Requiring comprehensive restructuring, teacher preparation programmes must position educators as active agents of CEFR-informed pedagogical change rather than passive implementers. Integrating CEFR theory with structured opportunities for practical application, pre-service education should include microteaching and supervised practicum experiences. Cascading training models, in which master trainers receive intensive preparation and subsequently deliver contextually tailored regional training, would benefit in-service development. Further supporting implementation, school-based professional learning communities should facilitate collaborative material development, strategy exchange, peer observation, and joint problem-solving. To enact CEFR principles effectively, teachers need both a robust conceptual understanding of the framework and the practical competencies required to design communicative tasks, adapt instructional materials, and conduct performance-based assessments.

Given the current assessment context, a nationwide CEFR-aligned evaluation framework is needed to promote consistent, fair assessment practices across institutions. Central to this framework are standardised descriptors, scoring rubrics, and benchmarking procedures that secure consistent proficiency certification nationwide. Equally important is the creation of culturally appropriate assessment instruments tailored to Turkish learners, maintaining international comparability while reflecting local linguistic and educational contexts. To overcome logistical barriers to assessing productive skills, regional assessment centres should be established, equipped with appropriate technology and trained evaluators. Administering standardised speaking and writing assessments, these centres would ensure comprehensive and reliable proficiency evaluations for all learners, irrespective of institutional resources.

Essential for achieving meaningful reform is a staged implementation strategy with clearly defined timelines and accountability mechanisms. Targeting the most critical gaps in assessment practices and teacher preparation, short-term priorities should complement medium-term efforts that prioritise curriculum restructuring and the development of CEFR-aligned instructional materials.

Focusing on comprehensive and sustainable transformation, long-term objectives must address pedagogical culture and institutional structures. To ensure progress, each phase should be guided by measurable indicators, supported by systematic evaluation, and subject to iterative adjustment. Effective monitoring should draw on both quantitative measures, such as proficiency outcomes, teacher competencies, and resource distribution and qualitative evidence, including classroom practices, stakeholder perceptions, and pedagogical innovation. Ultimately, moving from nominal to substantive CEFR implementation demands political commitment, strategic resource allocation, and a willingness to confront the challenges posed by existing approaches. Only through such comprehensive and coherent reforms can the CEFR realise its potential to enhance the quality and equity of English language education in Türkiye.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş

Avrupa Konseyi tarafından ilk kez yayımlanmasından ve ardından bir tamamlayıcı cilt ile genişletilmesinden bu yana (Avrupa Konseyi, 2018, 2020), Diller için Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni (D-AOBM) Avrupa’da ve dünyada dil öğretim standartlarını, öğretim programlarını ve dil eğitime dair uygulamaları etkilemiştir (Nagai vd., 2020). Kökeni Avrupa olsa da, çerçeve metnin içerdiği eylem odaklı yaklaşım, görev tabanlı öğretim ve iletişimsel dil öğretimi gibi öğretim yaklaşımlarıyla dil öğretim- öğrenme ve değerlendirme süreçlerine küresel olarak hizmet etmektedir (Byram & Parmenter, 2012; North & Piccardo, 2019). Yapısal olarak D-AOBM’de yer alan dil yeterlik düzeyleri Başlangıç-A1 ile C2 dil seviyelerinden oluşmakta olup (Avrupa Konseyi, 2018) öğretim programlarının geliştirilmesinde ve aynı zamanda ölçme ve değerlendirme sürecinde basit ve işlevsel bir rehber niteliğinde görev yapar (Green, 2012; North, 2014). Farklı dil ve kültüre uyarlanabilir ve çok yönlü olan bu çerçeve metni, normatif değil tanımlayıcı bir özellik taşımaktadır.

Amaç

Bu sistematik derleme, 2001–2024 yılları arasında Türkiye’de Diller için Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni’ne (D-AOBM) ilişkin İngiliz Dili Öğretimi (İDÖ) alanındaki araştırma ve uygulamaları sentezlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. D-AOBM ile ilgili araştırmaların betimsel özelliklerini, metodolojik yaklaşımlarını ve temel bulgularını analiz eden bu derleme, ilgili alana kapsamlı bir bakış sunmakta ve olası boşlukları öne çıkarmaktadır.

Yöntem

Araştırma kapsamında DergiPark, Ulusal Tez Merkezi, SOBİAD, EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate ve ERIC olmak üzere beş veri tabanında tarih kısıtlaması olmaksızın tarama gerçekleştirilmiş olup hem Türkçe hem de İngilizce yayınları kapsayacak şekilde kaynakça taraması ve serbest metin aramaları bu taramayı desteklemiştir. Tekrar eden kayıtların çıkarılması ve dâhil etme ölçütlerinin uygulanmasının ardından, 2001–2024 yılları arasında yayımlanmış makale, yüksek lisans tezi ve doktora tezlerinden oluşan 70 çalışma derlemeye dâhil edilmiştir. Veri analizi MAXQDA 22 kullanılarak tümevarımsal içerik analizi ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirlik Cohen’in kappası ile değerlendirilmiş olup iki kodlama sırasıyla $\kappa = 0,82$ ve $\kappa = 0,89$ değerleri elde edilmiştir.

Bulgular

Betimsel analiz, D-AOBM temelli araştırmaların eğitim kademeleri açısından dengesiz bir dağılım sergilediğini; lisans düzeyi, özellikle üniversite hazırlık programları, toplam çalışmaların %30’unu oluşturarak yoğun şekilde temsil edilmektedir. Bu durum katılımcılara erişim kolaylığı,

yerleşik araştırma altyapısının varlığı ve hazırlık programlarının Türk yükseköğretimindeki merkezi rolü ile açıklanabilir. Ortaöğretim düzeyinin ikinci sırada yer aldığı görülmekle birlikte (%15,71), okul öncesi ve lisansüstü düzeylerinin sadece %1,43'lük bir oranla belirgin biçimde araştırmalarda yeterince temsil edilmediği görülmektedir.

Coğrafi dağılım açısından başta Ankara olmak üzere büyükşehirler D-AOBM ile ilgili çalışmalarda merkezî bir konuma sahiptir. Araştırma yerinin belirtildiği 40 çalışmanın yaklaşık yarısı ($n = 18$) Ankara'da gerçekleştirilmiştir. Buna karşın Doğu Anadolu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu bölgelerinden elde edilen veriler son derece sınırlı kalmıştır. Bu dar coğrafi kapsam, D-AOBM uygulamalarındaki bölgesel farklılıkların anlaşılmasını zorlaştırmaktadır. Araştırmalarda, dil becerileri açısından çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu bütünlük dört beceri yaklaşımını benimsemektedir ($n = 18$). Konuşma becerisi en fazla araştırılan dil beceri olarak öne çıkarken ($n = 10$) tek başına dinleme becerisine odaklanan herhangi bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu durum, beceriye özgü araştırmalarda belirgin bir boşluğa işaret etmektedir. D-AOBM'de yer alan dil düzeyleri açısından ise çalışmaların önemli bir bölümü ($n = 21$) belirli bir yeterlik düzeyi belirtmemektedir. Düzey belirten çalışmalar arasında temel kullanıcı düzeyi olan A2 yeterlik düzeyi, en sık araştırılan düzey olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır ($n = 12$). Pre-A1 düzeyinde yalnızca bir çalışma bulunurken C2 düzeyinde herhangi bir araştırma tespit edilmemiştir.

Araştırmalar yöntem tercihleri açısından incelendiğinde nitel yaklaşımlara yönelik belirgin bir eğilimin olduğu ($n = 42$) ve karma yöntem desenlerinin ise sınırlı sayıda olduğu görülmektedir ($n = 7$). Nitel desenler arasında doküman analizi en sık kullanılan yöntem olarak öne çıkmaktadır ($n = 26$). Nicel araştırma yöntemleri sınırlı kapsam ve derinlikte kalmış olup tarama çalışmaları ($n = 6$) ve deneysel desenler ($n = 5$) az sayıda yer almaktadır. Veri toplama araçları arasında anketler ($n = 19$) ve kontrol listeleri ($n = 12$) en çok kullanılan araçlar olarak karşımıza çıkarken sınıf içi gözlem yalnızca üç çalışmada kullanılmıştır.

Yapılan tematik analiz, D-AOBM uygulamalarında dört ana sorun alanı tespit etmiştir. Bu sorunlar genel olarak öğretim programları ile ilgili sorunlar (%43,84), öğretmen ile ilgili sorunlar (%26,03), ders kitabı ile ilgili sorunlar (%21,92) ve ölçme değerlendirme ile ilgili sorunlardır (%8,22). En yaygın sorunlar arasında farklı eğitim kademelerinde uygulanan öğretim programları, kullanılan ders kitapları, ölçme ve değerlendirme uygulamaları ile D-AOBM arasındaki uyumsuzluklar göze çarpmaktadır. Ayrıca tematik analiz sonucunda öğretmenlerin çerçevenin temel ilkelerini anlama ve sınıf uygulamalarına dönüştürme konusunda güçlükler yaşadığı, süregelen bilgi eksiklikleri ve sınırlı mesleki gelişim olanakları vurgulanmaktadır.

Tartışma ve Sonuçlar

Bu derleme, Türkiye'nin D-AOBM pratiği ile mevcut araştırma temeli arasında süregelen bir kopukluk olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Betimsel ve tematik analiz sonuçları bunu doğrulamaktadır. Betimsel analiz, eğitim kademelerine göre araştırmaların dengesiz bir dağılım sergilemiş; lisans düzeyi çok yoğun temsil edilirken okul öncesi ve lisansüstü düzeyleri araştırmalara yeterince dâhil edilmemiştir. Başta Ankara olmak üzere büyükşehirler, D-AOBM ile ilgili çalışmalarda merkezî bir role sahiptir. Çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu bütünlük veya çoklu dil becerisini temel almakta olup bağımsız dinleme becerisine dayanan bir araştırmaya rastlanamamıştır. Tematik analiz, D-AOBM ile öğretim programları, ders kitapları ve ölçme değerlendirme arasında sorunlar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin D-AOBM ilkelerine yönelik bilgilerinin yetersiz olduğu ve D-AOBM konusunda mesleki gelişim olanaklarının sınırlı kaldığı tespit edilmiştir.

Sonuç olarak öne çıkan öneriler arasında, ulusal düzeyde bir D-AOBM araştırma gündemi oluşturulması, karma yöntemler ve sınıf içi araştırmaların yaygınlaştırılması, üretici becerileri ölçmeye yönelik ulusal bir değerlendirme mekanizmasının kurulması ve materyal geliştirme süreçlerinin D-AOBM'nin çokdilli ve çokkültürlü vizyonu ile uyumlu hâle getirilmesi yer almaktadır. Ayrıca, öğretmen eğitiminde zorunlu sertifikasyon programları, mikro öğretim uygulamaları ve mesleki öğrenme gruplarının yaygınlaştırılması; materyal geliştirme süreçlerine öğretmen katılımının sağlanması önerilmektedir. Altyapı ve kaynak yönetimi bağlamında ise D-AOBM odaklı dijital arşivler, sınıf içi video veri tabanları ve uzun vadeli izleme mekanizmalarının güçlendirilmesi tavsiye edilmektedir. Bu bulgular ışığında, Türkiye'nin D-AOBM temelli İngilizce öğretimini daha etkili ve sürdürülebilir kılmak için bağlama duyarlı, bütüncül ve derinlemesine bir reform stratejisine ihtiyaç olduğu açıktır.

Ethical Statement: The author hereby declares that the present study has been conducted in full compliance with the principles outlined in the Directive on Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of the Council of Higher Education. No actions involving violations of research or publication ethics have been undertaken.

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