



## **Pre-service English Teachers' Views on Coursebook Evaluation and Designing Supplementary Materials**

### **Hizmet Öncesi İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Ders Kitabı Değerlendirme ve Tamamlayıcı Materyal Hazırlama Konusundaki Görüşleri**

Ferit KILIÇKAYA<sup>1</sup>

#### **Abstract**

The current study comprises the views of the pre-service English language teachers on the process of coursebook evaluation and creating supplementary activities for the coursebook written for the fifth graders at middle schools in Turkey. The participants included seniors in the Department of Foreign Language Education at a state university in Turkey. A qualitative approach was adopted and semi-structured interviews were used. The data were subject to content analysis. The results indicated that the participants valued the coursebook evaluation activity due to the contribution of this activity to their professional development, which encouraged them to use previous knowledge and skills. Moreover, the participants also noted that creating supplementary materials helped improve especially their self-confidence.

**Keywords:** Pre-service English teachers, coursebook evaluation, supplementary materials

#### **Öz**

Bu çalışma, hizmet öncesi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, Türkiye'de Ortaokul 5. sınıf öğrencileri tarafından kullanılan ders kitabını değerlendirme süreci ve bu kitap için tamamlayıcı materyal hazırlama uygulaması hakkındaki görüşlerini içermektedir. Çalışmanın katılımcılarını, bir devlet üniversitesinde Yabancı Diller Eğitimi bölümündeki son sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada, veri toplama yöntemi olarak nitel yaklaşım uygulanmış ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler, içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Yapılan değerlendirmeler, ders kitabı değerlendirme etkinliği, katılımcılar tarafından mesleki gelişimlerine sahip oldukları bilgi ve becerileri kullanma fırsatını sağlamasından dolayı oldukça faydalı bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, tamamlayıcı materyal hazırlama ile ilgili olarak katılımcılar bu etkinliğin özellikle öz güvenlerini geliştirmede etkili olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hizmet öncesi İngilizce öğretmenleri, ders kitabı değerlendirme, tamamlayıcı, materyal

## 1. Introduction

As Brown pointed out (1995), materials can be seen as the “. . . any systematic description of the techniques and exercises to be used in classroom teaching” (p. 139). This definition, actually, covers all the materials that can be used in any classroom, from lesson audiovisual aids to coursebooks. Using ELT coursebooks, used as the main resource of materials in most classrooms, provides several advantages (Graves, 2000, p. 174) such as

- acting as “a syllabus for the course”,
- providing “a set of visuals, activities, readings”, and
- including “supporting materials (e.g., teacher’s guide, cassettes, worksheets, video)”.

However, using coursebooks is not without disadvantages. The very first disadvantage is regarding the use of natural communication. The use of coursebooks might not lead the classrooms to benefit from natural communication, as it usually appears that coursebooks include texts and dialogues created for teaching the language, rather than reflecting how it is naturally used. Another concern regarding the use of coursebooks in the classroom is that they may not be appropriate for the students regarding the level as well as the content. Moreover, they may fail to include content that will interest the learners as most commercial publishers opt for playing safe while including content and activities, excluding provocative texts (Tomlinson, 2012). Three approaches to materials can be undertaken: adopting, developing, and adapting materials. Adopting is to choose the suitable materials. Developing and adapting require vital decisions on which materials can be used in what way by introducing some changes so that this process can serve the aims in the curriculum, and the learners’ needs, and result in an appropriate methodology (Holliday, 1994). However, it may not be possible to adapt the materials as it may require many changes in situations where the coursebooks are handed out to teachers, or they are expected to select the books approved/created by the Ministry of National Education. Moreover, it takes a considerable amount of time to adapt materials, as well as approaches to the local texts (Vilches, 2018). In such a case, supplementing the coursebook would be a better option as this will help reinforce content and student’s interest by providing a variety of explanations and exercises (McGrath, 2013). In other words, teachers can add more materials to the existing material by *extending* by providing more of the same material used in the coursebook and *expanding* by providing different materials to account for the insufficient explanation or guidance (Islam & Mares, 2003; Maley, 2011). Moreover, as indicated by Bao (2016) and Mishan and Timmis (2015), pre-service and in-service teachers of English should be provided with the opportunity to produce and use suitable materials considering the local students’ needs as well as the local contexts which most often shape the way how teachers and learners engage with language teaching and learning practices. The brief review of these studies indicates that there is a gap regarding the pre-service language teachers’ views on the training provided on coursebook evaluation and designing supplementary activities and there is a paucity of research on the participants’ views on the coursebook evaluation process itself as well as ‘outsourcing’ the coursebooks. Therefore, this paper aims to determine the pre-service language teachers’ views and suggestions regarding the process in which they practiced evaluating and designing supplementary activities for a selected coursebook used in public schools.

## 2. Literature review

The most common form of material support for language teachers in the classroom is provided by the coursebooks available (Brown & Lee, 2015). However, it is not possible, if not impossible, to obtain and use materials that provide to cater for the student needs. In other words, although there are a variety of published materials, it is difficult to “find a perfect fit between learner needs and course requirements on the one hand and what the coursebook contains on the other hand” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 136). In such a case, developing and adapting materials gains pivotal importance (Weir & Roberts, 1994). Tomlinson (1998) indicates that good language materials have the following characteristics, several of which are outlined as follows:

- Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment.
- Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language.
- Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice.
- Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback.

Considering the aforementioned characteristics and the coursebooks available to the language teachers around the world, it might be required to modify activities to suit learners’ needs as well as supplementing extra materials and extra input (Richards, 2001; Tomlinson, 2017). In order to modify the activities and to provide supplementary materials, several questions should be answered such as (Rea-Dickens & Germaine, 1992, p. 151)

- What objectives should be achieved through using these materials?

- How do you expect the teacher to use the materials?
- How do you expect the learners to use and react to the materials?
- Do you think the materials are at the appropriate level for the learners?

In most of the schools in Turkey, especially in state schools, teachers have no say regarding which coursebooks or materials to be used in the classroom as Kayaoğlu (2011) explained that “. . . the centralized education system with the strictly controlled syllabus in Turkey leaves almost no room for teachers to play any role either in the selection or adaptation process of the coursebook” (p. 352). Meddings and Thornbury (2009, p. 86) further indicate that “most teachers - perhaps 99% - work in contexts where the use of a coursebook is mandated. A few lucky ones may actually have a say in which coursebook to use, but most don’t.” Similar to the contexts that Meddings and Thornbury mentioned, in Turkey, the language coursebooks are produced and provided by the Ministry of Education, which is very similar to the context described in Bosompem’s study (2014), stressing that the coursebooks are the main language teaching and learning materials for adults as well as for children. Therefore, coursebooks seem to play a pivotal role in English language education, and regarding the teachers’ and learners’ experiences, it is evident that most language teaching and learning practices include the activities available in the coursebook and that teachers and learners keep closely to the coursebook with few, if not any, adaptations or supplementary materials.

Coursebook evaluation may not be considered necessary before or after using a variety of coursebooks, as mentioned before, it may not be possible for teachers to do such an evaluation in some schools or countries. However, even teachers cannot evaluate and select the coursebooks, coursebook evaluation is necessary to “customize the existing coursebook, adapting or supplementing it to cater for the perceived needs, interests, and abilities of specific learners (Thornbury, 2013, p. 220). The practice of coursebook evaluation helps teachers either select the coursebook for their classroom, which is possible in rare cases, or consider several options such as adapting, redesigning or replacing the materials in the coursebook through several techniques. In most cases, another option will be the only choice: creating supplementary materials and/or using materials such as worksheets or exercises available on the Internet as they are or introducing several changes to make them better suit the learners.

Materials evaluation and adaptation courses play an important role in helping prospective teachers to have a basic understanding of materials evaluation and adaptation by focusing the adoption and adaptation of a coursebook as Tomlinson (2012) indicated that “experiential materials development courses in universities and teacher training institutions have not only led to more principled and effective materials, but they have increased the confidence, self-esteem, and professional competence of teachers too . . .” (p. 275). In order to understand materials evaluation and adaptation, teachers also need to be aware of basic principles. Darici and Tomlinson (2017, p. 72) have determined several principles, some of which are listed as follows while designing materials to facilitate second language acquisition:

- providing a rich exposure to language in use;
- providing texts and tasks likely to stimulate affective engagement;
- providing texts and tasks likely to stimulate cognitive engagement;
- providing meaningful and spaced recycling

Pre-service language teachers can practice materials evaluation and adaptation through specific courses generally named as “Materials Adaptation & Evaluation” throughout the world. These courses aim at increasing the teachers’ awareness of the teaching materials. However, when relevant literature is reviewed, it is noticed that there are almost no studies that focus on teachers’ practicing developing and analyzing materials for specific contexts. Almost all of the studies investigate pre-service or in-service language teachers’ views on the coursebook evaluation and selection process (e.g. Alemi & Sadehvandi, 2012; Lee, 2015; Baştürkmen, H., & Bocanegra-Valle, 2018 ) or teachers’ and students’ views towards the coursebooks used at schools, specifically discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the coursebooks (e.g. Tekir & Arıkan, 2007; Kayaoğlu, 2011; Yılmaz & Aydın, 2015; Tekir & Dülger, 2016). Other studies, though few, analyzed the merits of having ‘Materials Evaluation and Design’ courses at the teacher education programs. For example, the study conducted by Augusto-Navarro, de Oliveira and de Abreu-e-Lima (2014) conducted a study in which pre-service EFL teachers participated and aimed at raising the teachers’ awareness of teaching materials, and specifically, grammar. The results indicated that following the course ‘Evaluation and Design of Teaching Materials in EFL’, the teachers considered several important factors such as who the students would be while reviewing, selecting and preparing teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

The studies conducted on EFL teachers’ views towards coursebooks in Turkey have yielded varying results depending on several factors such as the attitudes, the skills practiced in the books, and the type of activities. Tekir and Arıkan

(2007), for example, determined the teachers' and students' views on a specific coursebook, *Let's Speak English 7*. The data on the attitudes on this coursebook were collected through two questionnaires that included Likert-scale items. The results indicated that several issues were put forward by the participants, such as lack of interesting topics and meaningful contexts. Kayaoğlu (2011), on the other hand, aimed to determine the in-service language teachers' views on their use of the coursebooks, *An English Course for Turkish*. Sixty-eight English teachers were selected as participants from twenty-four cities across Turkey. The data obtained through the questionnaire and interviews indicated that the great majority of the teachers indicated that the coursebook used in their schools were inappropriate and insufficient in several respects such as failing to integrate the four skills and the limited availability of the exercises. Similarly, Tekir and Dülger (2016) investigated 118 English language teachers' views on the language textbooks that they used in their classes via the English Language Textbook Checklist. The language skills/components that needed improving in these were reported to be mainly speaking, listening, and grammar. Yılmaz and Aydın (2015), for example, in their review of the studies on EFL teachers' views on coursebooks, have found that pre-service EFL teachers mainly have positive perceptions towards the use of coursebook. However, it has been also indicated that in-service language teachers had raised serious concerns issues pertaining to the design of the coursebooks and the skills.

While several studies focus on comparing coursebooks on integrating the four skills and communicative competence (e.g. Tavil & Demirbaş, 2010), others (e.g. Tosun, 2013; Çoban & Can, 2013; Demirci & Tavil, 2015) aimed to investigate the skills practiced in the coursebooks. Demirci and Tavil (2015) aimed to find out whether the skills in *Yes You Can A1.2*, a coursebook published by Ministry of National Education in Turkey, were integrated in the skills. The results indicated that while the students were content with the coursebook, the teachers were against using the coursebook, as it did not successfully integrate the skills. Tosun (2013), for example, compared Turkish and English foreign language textbooks based on the skills as well as the communicative practice they promoted. The results indicated that the foreign language textbooks promoted the communicative practice and natural language more than the Turkish textbooks. Similarly, Çoban and Can investigated how language skills and components were processed in local and international English coursebooks at high schools in Turkey.

Regarding the theses conducted on coursebook use in Turkey, Şimşek and Dündar (2017) investigated how graduate theses tackled the issue of coursebook use and evaluation in Turkey between 2001 and 2013. The authors analyzed 54 graduate theses, and in the light of the findings, it was determined that the studies mostly focused on the evaluation of the coursebooks used in the schools and obtained teachers' and student views on varied coursebooks through similar questionnaires and checklists. The reviews of these theses also required that every teacher learn and apply evaluation and adaptation strategies.

Considering the studies briefly reviewed so far, it can be stated that there is almost no study conducted on the pre-service language teachers' views on the training provided on coursebook evaluation and designing supplementary activities. Much of the research conducted on coursebook evaluation and adaptation seems to ignore practicing creating supplementary materials as well as the contribution of creativity in creating and analyzing materials. Moreover, there is a paucity of research on the participants' views on the coursebook evaluation process itself as well as 'outsourcing' the coursebooks. The current study, therefore, aims to pinpoint their views and experiences during the activities of evaluation and designing supplementary activities and to consider other aspects of coursebook evaluation and adaptation such as supplementing the coursebook with the participants' own materials.

## **2. Methodology**

### **Research design and questions**

The study adopted a qualitative approach to data collection and used semi-structured interviews to gauge the participants' views regarding the coursebook evaluation activity and designing supplementary materials for the selected coursebook. Based on a descriptive case study design, the current study aimed at examining the data within a specific context with a limited number of pre-service language teachers as the participants of the study. As a result, the participants' views on the evaluation and designing activities are expected to be obtained. Consistent with the research design, the study included two phases. During the first phase of the study, the participants were trained regarding the basics and principles of coursebook evaluation and several adaptation techniques. In the second phase of the study, the participants, putting their knowledge into action, evaluated the selected coursebook and designed supplementary materials. Following this process, it was aimed to obtain in-depth information regarding participants' experiences and viewpoints. Pertaining to this aim, the following research questions were proposed:

- What are the in-service language teachers' views on the coursebook evaluation activity?
- What are the in-service language teachers' views on designing supplementary activities for the selected coursebook?

### Participants

The participants of the study included a class of 66 university seniors (46 female students and 20 male students) in the fall semester in 2016 and 30 university seniors (19 female students and 11 male students) in the fall semester in 2017. As it was difficult to benefit from random or systematic sampling method, the study benefited from convenience sampling. Several factors affected the selection of this sampling method such as the ease of accessibility to participants and the necessary prior knowledge of approaches and methods. The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 24. All the participants were enrolled in the compulsory course '14405 Materials Evaluation and Adaptation', offered during the fall semester for the seniors in the department of foreign language education at a state university in Turkey. A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was adopted. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants to obtain their opinions as well as their experience while developing supplementary activities for the coursebooks used in Turkish public schools.

### Procedure

At the beginning of the fall semester in 2016 and 2017, the students enrolled in the compulsory course '14405 Materials Evaluation and Adaptation' were informed that they would participate in a study, which would include evaluating and designing supplementary activities for a chosen coursebook used in the public schools. The participants were informed about the general aim of the study, and their consent was obtained. However, the specific details such as the coursebook to be evaluated and the types of supplementary activities were not discussed with the participants at the beginning of the study. During the semester, the participants in 2016 and in 2017 were introduced to basic concepts and several issues underlying language teaching and learning materials and methods, including current approaches, evaluating ELT materials and adapting materials in theoretical and practical perspectives. Moreover, they were also provided with hands-on experience in adapting and/or developing materials considering the local context and the students' needs. Main objectives included familiarizing students with major approaches/frameworks of criteria for materials evaluation, giving students such an opportunity to engage in adaptation work, and preparing them towards material development.

Following the lectures and practical applications in the classroom, the participants worked in groups on two projects: Coursebook evaluation and designing supplementary activities. For the coursebook evaluation, working in groups of four or five, the participants evaluated the coursebook (see Appendix A) used in the schools where they had practice teaching against the Cunningsworth's evaluation criteria discussed in the classroom (Richards, 2001, pp. 274-275). For the project of designing supplementary activities, the students worked in groups of three to seven and designed supplementary activities for the units of a coursebook (see Appendix B for the example activities). The participants in 2016 designed these supplementary activities for the coursebook 'UPTURN in English 8' by Şener (2015), for 8th graders at the middle schools. The participants in 2017, on the other hand, designed these activities for the coursebook 'Ortaokul İngilizce 5 Ders Kitabı' [Middle School English 5 Coursebook] by Yalçın, Genç, Orhon, and Şahin (2017) for fifth graders at the middle schools. These coursebooks were selected for evaluation and designing supplementary activities as the great majority of them were doing their practice teaching in the primary and secondary schools. All the participants used the template including the layout and the content structure provided by the researcher for designing the supplementary activities. The participants presented the activities they had designed to their classmates and based on the comments and suggestions provided by both their classmates and the lecturer, they revised these activities and submitted them on the final exam day. After the final exam, two participants from each group in two semesters (40 participants in total) were randomly selected. These participants were interviewed on their reflections and experience in addition to other issues raised by the participants regarding the coursebook evaluation and designing supplementary activities for the selected coursebook.

### Data collection instruments

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews that included a list of questions. These questions were created before the interviews; however, the participants were also asked impromptu questions during the course of the interviews, which allowed obtaining unexpected information to be provided by the participants. The interview questions included four main questions and were presented as follows:

- Do you think that the coursebook evaluation activity contributed to your development? If yes, in what ways? If no, what are the reasons?

- What were the challenges/issues that you faced while evaluating the coursebook selected?
- Do you think that designing supplementary activities contributed to your development? If yes, in what ways? If no, what are the reasons?
- What were the challenges/issues that you faced while designing supplementary activities for the coursebook selected?

The interviews took place in the researcher's office, and each interview took 11.3 minutes on average. The researcher did not audio-record not to affect the participants' responses, as most participants did not like the idea of being recorded. This required the researcher to take notes in detail as much as he could of the responses provided. The interviews were conducted in English, and the average number of words noted down was determined to be 822 words on average.

### Data Analysis

The responses obtained through the interviews were subject to inductive content analysis. The notes taken down during the interviews were first word-processed. Then, these notes were analyzed and the codes were determined based on the meanings relevant to the research questions. Finally, in order to determine the main and sub-categories, the codes were clustered in ranking order. These main and sub-categories were checked by another expert in the field. When the inconsistencies were found, these were re-checked together with the researcher to ensure the credibility of the content analysis. The quotes were analyzed, and the ones that best served as the typical examples of the most commonly emerging themes were selected. In this kind of research, unlike the quantitative analysis, which benefits from statistical analyses to establish the validity and reliability of the findings, several strategies were incorporated to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. The participants during the interviews were asked to comment on the interview notes to ensure that the notes reflected the participants' views. The study also included verbatim descriptions of the participants' accounts to support the findings obtained. Moreover, since there were two coders in the study, Cohen's kappa coefficient was calculated to ensure inter-rater reliability. The coefficient was determined to be .73, which indicated substantial agreement.

## 3. Results

The data collected through the interviews provided insight into the participants' views regarding the activities (coursebook evaluation activity and designing supplementary materials). The results of the inductive content analysis are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Results of the inductive content analysis**

I. Coursebook Evaluation Activity
Applying previous knowledge and skills ( <i>f</i> : 32)
Considering the weaknesses and strengths ( <i>f</i> : 30)
<b>II. Designing Supplementary Materials</b>
Reflecting on the theoretical materials and utilize the discussions ( <i>f</i> : 36)
Localizing ( <i>f</i> : 35)
Improving self-confidence ( <i>f</i> : 29)

### The benefits of the coursebook evaluation activity

To analyze and report on the contributions of the coursebook evaluation activity to the participants' professional development, the participants were asked to share their views as well as experience while carrying out the activity. The emerging themes and codes were discussed as follows.

#### Applying previous knowledge and skills

After all the courses the participants took during the first year such as *Introduction to Education, Educational Psychology, Teaching Language Skills, and Teaching English to Young Learners*, they were also enrolled in the required course, *School Experience*. This course aims that having the students spend time in the school environment to prepare for full teaching practice, giving them a structured introduction to teaching, and helping them acquire teaching compe-

tencies and develop their teaching skills. During the current study, the participants attended the primary or secondary schools supervised by MoNE, which included four hours of observation and since the participants were pre-service teachers, the responses mostly stemmed from their own values and experience during microteaching in the department and at the practice school. The typical examples of the participants' views on the contributions of coursebook evaluation are provided as follows:

*We have taken several courses such as teaching language skills and educational psychology and I believe that the coursebook evaluation enabled me to use previous knowledge to analyze the activities on the coursebook, for example, how listening activities are carried out (Interviewee ID 20, Female).*

*I had the chance to apply the things that we did in the previous classes. I mean, we learnt how to teach reading and writing and I applied what I learned during the coursebook evaluation with my classmates. It was good to benefit from what I learned (Interviewee ID 18, Female).*

*I know that in most cases I will not be able to evaluate and select coursebooks. But in this course, we evaluated the coursebook in the schools where we had school experience class. This enabled us to put the theoretical as well as the practical information into use through checking the activities for the principles of language teaching and learning (Interviewee ID 32, Male)*

The commonly expressed meanings reflected that the participants had strong positive attitudes towards the coursebook evaluation activity as expressed in the quotes above. The reasons that the participants provided were using and practicing the previously acquired knowledge and skills in several courses such as teaching language skills. In the responses provided during the interview, the participants were observed to forge a link between the theoretical knowledge covered in the previous courses and transferring this knowledge to evaluate the coursebook.

### **Considering the weaknesses and strengths**

Another contribution attached to the coursebook evaluation is related to determining strengths and weaknesses of the activities available in the coursebook. In the coursebook evaluation activity, the participants followed the framework of criteria for materials evaluation and engaged in adaptation work. The participants' typical examples related to the theme of the weaknesses and strengths are provided as follows:

*While we were analyzing the activities, we determined which activities served better taking the students' level and needs. This required us to consider the principles of language teaching as well as the criteria provided by our lecturer (Interviewee ID 12, Female).*

*The coursebook we analyzed included several activities that aimed to teach language components such as grammar and vocabulary. While some activities were rich in terms of meaning and function, some others lacked some basic features such as activating schemata and pre-activity work, especially in reading activities (Interviewee ID 08, Female).*

*The evaluation criteria allowed me to focus on the strong and weak points of the coursebook. In the external evaluation, we checked out the layout and the use of images, while in the internal evaluation, we focused on the skills and how these skills are practiced (Interviewee ID 38, Male).*

The participants' expressions mainly indicated that they had practiced analyzing the materials in the selected coursebook based on the framework of criteria for materials evaluation and the basic principles of language teaching. This enabled them to determine which activities needed revision and adaptation so that they better served the needs of the students. The participants especially valued the evaluation process since this process made it possible to focus on the weaknesses and strengths of the coursebooks used and/or to be used in the language classroom.

### **Designing Supplementary materials**

Reflecting on the theoretical materials and utilize the discussions

Another theme that emerged from the participants' responses regarding the supplementary materials was determined to be their reflecting from the theoretical materials and utilizing the discussions. The examples on this theme are provided as follows:

*We benefited from the theoretical materials and the discussions in the previous classes to design the supplementary material. We designed the activities considering the basic principles as well as the type of activities possible (Interviewee ID 05, Female).*

*I scrutinized the views and practices while designing the supplementary activities. We first checked the unit*

*in the coursebook for the main components such as vocabulary and grammar. We designed the activities based on the functions and the focus of the unit (Interviewee ID 25, Male).*

*This was a kind of discovery and construction of knowledge. I believe that while designing the activities, we used the information, strategies, and activities in the previous classes in order to apply them to a language classroom. I must admit that it took considerable time to create the activities but it was enjoyable (Interviewee ID 21, Female).*

The commonly expressed views regarding designing supplementary materials indicated positive views as creating materials enabled them to reflect and utilize the knowledge obtained from the theoretical materials both in this class and in the previous classes. While the majority of the participants acknowledged the considerable amount of time needed to create the supplementary materials, they also valued the process since it was a kind of discovery and construction of knowledge based on the given coursebook.

### **Localizing**

Localizing, relating the activities to what learners already know, was also another theme found related to designing supplementary activities. The responses clearly indicated that the participants tried to include information related to what the participants were expected to know already in their daily life or the surrounding culture.

*While designing the activities, we tried to include photos of the common places in Turkey and the famous people around Turkey so that students should also benefit from the previous knowledge (Interviewee ID 37, Male).*

*I believe that the activities to be used in the classroom must include the things such as places and people that students already know. This will enable learners to use prior knowledge, which will help them get ready for the information to be learned or practice (Interviewee ID 40, Female).*

*We tried to include students' own cultural elements and the possible events in their daily life in the readings and listening materials. I believe that when students read something related to their own life or culture, their motivation increases (Interviewee ID 03, Female).*

### **Improving self-confidence**

Creating supplementary activities for the coursebook selected seems to have provided the participants to try out and apply what they know and obtained in their studies in the department, which contributed to improving their self-confidence. The participants especially valued creating two types of activities: based on listening and reading.

*For the listening activities, we recorded our voice. I believe that we produced interesting dialogues. It was great to create our own materials, record our own voices and produce language teaching materials. I say to myself that we can do it (Interviewee ID 11, Female).*

*Creating materials was good experience for us. We could see that we can create our own activities and it was great to develop the materials (Interviewee ID 15, Female).*

These responses selected as the typical examples indicated that the participants enjoyed and valued creating listening activities by recording their voice and creating their own dialogues. As indicated in the quote above, they were happy to see that they could produce the materials. Pertaining to creating reading activities, the participants also acknowledged that they liked writing their own texts. Some of the typical responses were provided as follows:

*We created simple reading texts for the unit of the coursebook. I noticed how hard it was difficult to create texts because there were many factors to consider it. But we did it. It is a different feeling to create something in English (Interviewee ID 32, Male).*

*We created our own reading texts in the supplementary activities, which I think is great. We were happy to see that we can create activities on our own (Interviewee ID 29, Female).*

These views show that the participants were well aware of the challenging process of creating their own reading texts due to several factors to consider such the level of the students and the topic. However, as indicated in the responses, despite this challenging process, they seemed to be enjoying the pleasure and the confidence that they obtained from creating and mastering these particular activities.



## Discussion

### Research Question 1

What are the in-service language teachers' views on the coursebook evaluation activity?

Based on the content analysis of the responses to the interview questions, it was determined that the coursebook evaluation activity contributed to the participants' knowledge of the field in several ways. Through the coursebook evaluation and designing supplementary activities, the participants seemed to have benefited from applying previous knowledge and skills obtained in the courses such as teaching language skills and Educational Psychology. The participants applied the principles of language teaching such as providing the input in context and ample practice based on the form as well as the while evaluating the materials in order to determine the weaknesses and strengths of the activities in the coursebook.

However, several challenges and issues were voiced by the participants. The participants were well aware of the fact that in most cases, especially in state schools, they would be forced to use an officially approved coursebook as also indicated by Kayaoğlu (2011) and Bosompem (2014). During the interviews, the participants indicated the need and the necessity to be involved in the process of evaluation of coursebooks for their students. However, since they knew that in most cases it would not be possible, they admitted that at the beginning of the class, they were unwilling to do the coursebook evaluation and questioned the inclusion of this requirement in the syllabus. In the later stages of the course, they noticed that even though the selection of the coursebook for their future students would not be possible and would be done by MoNE, they would still need to evaluate the coursebook in order to determine the strong and weak points in the materials considering their own teaching context as well as their students' needs. As the previous studies indicated (Tekir & Arıkan, 2007; Kayaoğlu, 2011; Tekir & Dülger, 2016), the major benefit of coursebook evaluation is that it provides the teachers with the opportunity to determine the limitations of the activities included in the coursebooks and to act accordingly considering the learners' needs.

While the participants of the current study had positive views on the use of coursebooks in the classroom, which was in alignment with the findings of the review study conducted by Yılmaz and Aydın (2015) and the empirical study by Hadley (2014), they were also well aware that they would need to supplement the coursebook they would or would have to use given that there would be no coursebook on the market that would meet all their needs or be ideal for their students. When the materials or the exercises on a given coursebook fall short of the objectives intended, they can be supplemented through other materials such as worksheets, as Cheng's study (2010) indicated that these extra materials could be used to meet the needs of learners when the materials were not sufficient.

Creating their own listening and reading activities, the participants not only practiced the knowledge and skills that they gained through their education but also the inclusion of the daily information that the students were familiar with in their life. This might especially help the participants in the study to cope with the situations in which they might have to supplement the materials but fail to find ready-made materials on the other coursebook or the Internet.

### Research Question 2

What are the in-service language teachers' views on designing supplementary activities for the selected coursebook?

Designing supplementary activities provided the participants with several contributions to their professional development. The participants expressed that they benefited from the theoretical readings and utilized them while designing the supplementary materials. This activity seemed to enable them to consider the general teaching principles as well as the language teaching practices. As indicated by Şimşek and Dündar (2017), it is of vital importance that teachers be trained in the evaluation and adaptation strategies. Despite the promising benefits of designing supplementary activities, some concerns were also voiced by the participants such as the amount of time needed. The participants indicated the considerable amount of time needed to create the supplementary materials, which was a challenge for them considering the deadline required for submitting the final versions of the activities. However, this process was found highly beneficial, as the process required them to consider several factors such as the level of the students, the local context, and the needs of their students. This finding was similar to that of the study conducted by Augusto-Navarro, de Oliveira and de Abreu-e-Lima (2014), which underscored the importance of raising the participants' awareness of teaching materials and several factors to consider such as the students' level. Moreover, this finding corroborates the findings of the study conducted by McGrath (2013), indicating that supplementing the coursebook will help reinforce content and student's interest by providing a variety of explanations and exercises.

The participants' views and the activities produced indicated that whenever possible, they tried to include activities that required for the participants' experiences and knowledge in their daily life. Moreover, most of the activities included photos of the common places in Turkey and topics familiar to students. Thus, the participants aimed to enable the learners to use prior knowledge to make them get ready for the activities and to motivate them. As Bahumaid (2008) underscored the importance of including topics and cultural elements in the local context when students are provided with familiar elements in their own culture, their motivation increases. The inclusion of the familiar topics and elements in learners' own context encourages them to participate in the classroom activities. Based on the responses, it was evident that the participants considered the use of familiar topics and local cultural elements while creating their own activities. Moreover, the participants tried to combine the local cultural elements with the target culture material, which is believed to lead learners to value both cultures.

Another important aspect of designing supplementary activities was related to the participant's self-confidence. For pre-service and in-service language teachers, one of the most significant factors in improving their instructional practices is the confidence in their ability to teach English to learners successfully. The participants believed that these activities helped them increase their self-confidence as they enabled them to try out and apply what they learned in their studies in the department. The participants created their own reading and listening activities, which led them to have the sense of success. In other words, they were proud of themselves while they were recording their own voices for the listening activities and creating the texts for the reading activities. The participants were pleased to see that they could create and their own materials, which contributed significantly to their self-confidence. It seemed that the experience of mastering these particular activities, especially recording their voice and creating their own texts, increased their self-confidence, which is very crucial. When the participants have this positive belief that they can accomplish what they want to do in their field, this might also help them to nurture more positive attitudes towards professional life in the future.

Considering the participants' views on the activities of coursebook evaluation and creating supplementary materials and the related literature in the field, the following implications might be put forward:

- Coursebook evaluation is an indispensable part of the curriculum of the teacher education programs as pre-service language teachers need to know the strengths and weaknesses and to act accordingly in situations, especially where the decision on which coursebook or materials are to be used is made by the other stakeholders, rather than the teachers themselves.
- 'Materials Adaptation and Evaluation' and/or similar courses under different titles in language teacher education programs should also include designing supplementary materials to account for the weaknesses of the coursebooks.
- The pre-service language teachers should be allowed to design or create their own materials since, as this study indicates, these activities might lead them to improve their self-confidence as they try out and apply what they learned in their studies in the department.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The current study investigated the pre-service English language teachers' reflections on the coursebook evaluation activity and the practice of designing supplementary activities for a selected coursebook for the fifth graders. Coursebook evaluation and designing materials have always been an important part of language teacher education programs and the curriculum. Therefore, it is also one of the widely researched topics in teaching and learning contexts around the world. Although there has been a plethora of research has been conducted on coursebook evaluation and designing materials, there is a paucity of research conducted on the pre-service language teachers' views on the coursebook evaluation and designing materials for a specific audience. Since most of the research focuses on teachers' and students' views towards the coursebooks used at schools and the content of these coursebooks, specifically focusing discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the coursebooks, the current study aimed to fill the gap in the literature by providing an insight into the pre-service language teachers' views during the one-semester course. The results indicated that these activities were highly valued as they enabled the participants to apply previous knowledge and skills, to increase their self-confidence in addition to their reflecting from materials, discussions and localizing the materials for the selected coursebook. The current study is small-scale and only reflects the views of the participants in the department of foreign language education at a state university. Moreover, due to the convenience sampling, it might be well stated that the decisions or suggestions cannot be generalized to larger contexts; however, they can be transferable to other similar contexts. The current study focused on the in-service teachers' views on the process of coursebook evaluation and creating supplementary materials. However, it did not aim to investigate reusing or adapting the ma-

materials available on the Internet. Therefore, further research can focus on how the pre-service or in-service language teachers use the sources available on the Internet and what changes they introduce to these materials. It would also be useful to investigate why they introduce these changes into the materials and/or why they are using the materials such as worksheets or exercises as they are.

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## 6. APPENDIX

### A. Coursebook evaluation- A sample page from students' work

COURSEBOOK EVALUATION

FALL 2017

#### **EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

##### **The Intended Audience**

There is no written information about the level in the book. But when we check the contents, we decided that this book is for intermediate level, so this book can be used in teaching English to high school students.

##### **Proficiency Level**

There is no specific information about the level in the book. However, we realized that the activities and the processes work as an intermediate level. Such as "the listening activities, sharing ideas by looking at the pictures, puzzles and some writing" Therefore proficiency level of the book is intermediate.

##### **The context in which the materials are to be used**

The course book teaches English as a foreign language. The students' target language is English so this book is using for English as a foreign language in 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school students.

##### **How the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons**

This book is prepared by using functional-notional syllabus and topic based syllabus. Because each unit has communicative functions and there is a context for each unit to see the topics.

This course book contains ten units. Each unit has various types of topics and activities therefore this book is suitable for the intermediate level.

Each of units follows this format:

1. *Warm-up*---introduces the theme of the unit by asking specific questions or by writing activities.
2. *Listening activities*---There are recordings for matching activities and questions, generally to find a specific information and for the gist
3. *Reading activities*---The book gives task to improve students reading skill by given texts and its activities.
4. *Grammar activities*---This book presents grammar inductively and students find out the grammar rules by themselves and by doing the activities.
5. *Writing-speaking activities*---Activities make the students interactive in the classroom and allows students to share their own ideas one another.

## APPENDIX B. Supplementary activities created by the participants

The ebooks including the supplementary activities can be downloaded at [http://kilickaya.scienceontheweb.net/documents/english\\_activities.html](http://kilickaya.scienceontheweb.net/documents/english_activities.html)

c. Please read the Ebru's e-mail, which is about her farm life and answer the questions.



1. What is Ebru doing on the farm?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is Ebru's mother doing now?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which animal is Ebru's father feeding?

\_\_\_\_\_

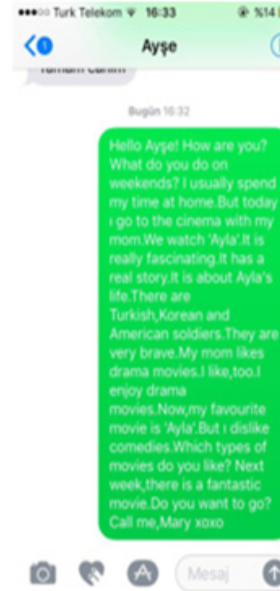
4. Is Ebru's sister watering the flowers?

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Read the text again and match the sentence halves.

1. I am riding	a) milking the cows.
2. My mother is	b) is sleeping in the cage.
3. My father is	c) the horse.
4. The bird	d) feeding the sheep.

c. Please read the message between Ayşe and Mary and then answer the questions.



1. Do you like watching movies?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Is the movie about Ayla's life in Turkey?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which type of movie does Mary like?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do Mary and her mom usually go to the cinema on weekends?

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Read the text again and match the sentence halves.

1. My mom likes	a) 'Ayla'
2. Now, my favourite movie is	b) do you like?
3. I dislike	c) drama movies
4. Which types of movies	d) comedies