

Curriculum Literacy Levels of English Teachers: A Mixed Method Research*

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the English teachers' curriculum literacy levels and their views on the English curriculum. The convergent parallel approach, which is one of the mixed research method, was used in the study. The population of the study consisted of English teachers working in secondary schools and high schools a city in the east of Turkey during 2020-2021 academic year. The sample of the study consisted of 198 English teachers in the quantitative part and 70 in the qualitative part, selected by convenience sampling method. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously and analyzed separately. Then, it was tried to present a generalizable and in-depth perspective for the purpose of the study. The "Curriculum Literacy Scale" was used to collect quantitative data. The scale consisted of 18 items and three sub-scales: *knowing the program, planning and implementation*. The Cronbach's alpha value of the curriculum literacy scale was .774. An interview form developed by the researcher was used to collect qualitative data. The results revealed that the participants had high levels of curriculum literacy. A significant difference was not found between participants' curriculum literacy levels and gender, school type and work experience. The participants stated that the curriculum was sufficient for teaching reading skills, however it was insufficient for teaching speaking skills, that they used games to make the program interesting, and that intensive curriculum was a problem while implementing the program. It was concluded as a result of the study that the participants' high level of curriculum literacy levels may increase their curriculum awareness and may contribute to conduct their teaching in a more conscious way.

Keywords: Curriculum Literacy; English Teachers; Mixed Method

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INTRODUCTION

The curriculum enables the education to progress more systematically and organized in schools (Albayrak, 2020). An effective curriculum bases on a well-studied and well-documented action plan. Successful curriculums are plans written to show the steps and resources to be used in practice, and to help practitioners measure whether the goals are achieved (Kawata, 2020). Curriculum development is not limited to addition or removal of new topics to the prepared program. On the contrary, it is a process based on practice. It is the continuous development of the educational process and all educational materials (Gültekin, 2017). Remaining the program unchanged may not meet the needs of individuals in the context of rapidly changing social structure, economy and living standards. For this reason, in curriculum development, contemporary methods should be included, and the interests, needs and experiences of the student should be taken into consideration and associated with real life (Fer, 2019; Kahramanoğlu, 2019). The most important part of education is the teacher who is regarded as the center of instruction in the classroom (Özer & Gelen, 2008). Success or failure in the teaching process is related to teachers' way of using the classroom, approaching the student, teaching the lesson, providing feedback to the student, motivating the student and implementing the curriculum (Sünbül, 1996). Therefore, teachers play a key role in curriculum implementation (Wang & Cheng, 2009). In addition, teachers are responsible to implement these programs. In order for teachers to fulfill their responsibilities adequately, they need to improve their content knowledge, be aware of the general outline of the curriculum. Therefore, teachers who will implement the program should have information about the program, understand the program, make plans and implement it. In order to interpret the general outline of the curriculum and put them into practice, the teachers need to have curriculum literacy because success is achieved only when the curriculum is implemented efficiently (Aslan, 2018; Kızılaslan Tunçer, 2019).

Curriculum literacy, which is one of the 21st century literacy skills, refers to mastering the curriculum, knowing how to implement the curriculum, having all the skills on how to measure it (Akyıldız, 2020), analyzing the elements of the curriculum, evaluating it on the basis of the society we live in, deciding the appropriate method, technique and evaluation and designing a lesson plan appropriate for the grade level (Kahramanoğlu, 2019). Curriculum literacy is defined as having information about the elements of the curriculum (Bolat, 2017), interpreting this information to examine the curriculum with a critical perspective (Keskin & Korkmaz, 2017) and making an appropriate and adaptable planning by interpreting the existing situation instead of applying monotonous plans (Nsibande & Modiba, 2012).

Similar to all teachers who are interpreters and implementers of the curriculum, English teachers also make modifications to increase productivity of the existing curriculum by using their knowledge, experience and experience in order to meet their students' needs. English teachers experience several problems while teaching the lessons, applying the prepared curriculum and trying to increase productivity in this language. In this context, the literacy levels of English teachers and their views on the English curriculum was addressed in this study.

As in all branches, it is thought that English language teachers' higher levels of curriculum literacy will increase success in language teaching. If teachers, who can interpret the goal and content of the curriculum, shapes and transfers the curriculum by tailoring it to students' level, success will be achieved in language teaching. Teachers emphasized that some ideal situations such as time, exposure to language, awareness of learning purpose, and different types of input (Adrian, 2010) may be effective in language teaching. This situation may vary depending on the teacher, student level, external factors, school climate, social environment, people's needs and many other factors. With the increasing importance of English, it is observed that a lot of studies has been carried out to identify these reasons and offer suggestions. A brief literature review shows that there are many studies on curriculum-related problems in English learning and teaching in Turkey (Günday, 2007; Can & Can, 2014; Ateş & Günbayı, 2017; Yaman, 2018; Şahin et al., 2018; Merter et al., 2012). Of them, the issue of curriculum literacy has received a considerable attention recently. However, the studies on English curriculum (Seçkin, 2011; Demirtaş & Erdem, 2015; Öztürk, 2019) and curriculum literacy (Erdem &

Eğmir, 2018; Aslan, 2018; Kahramanoğlu, 2019; Çelebi & Narinalp, 2020; Keskin, 2020; Sarıca, 2021, Ünal, 2021) are limited. Therefore, this study is important as it will raise awareness on English teachers regarding curriculum literacy as well as being a source of information for curriculum developers. Furthermore, the study is also significant in that it provides information about the views of elementary and high school English teachers on teaching English.

This study aimed to determine the curriculum literacy levels of English teachers working in elementary schools and high schools and their opinions on the English curriculum. Therefore, answers to the following questions were sought in the study:

1. What are the opinions of English teachers on curriculum literacy levels in terms of knowing, planning and implementing the curriculum?
2. Do English teachers' opinions on curriculum literacy differ significantly with regard to gender, school level, and work experience?
3. What are the features of the English curriculum that English teachers consider useful and adequate for teaching the four basic skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking?
4. What are the features of the English curriculum that English teachers consider lacking in teaching the four basic skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking?
5. What are the methods that English teachers use to revise the content of the curriculum in order to make it interesting and suitable for their students?
6. What are the problems experienced by English teachers regarding the curriculum while teaching the lesson?

METHOD

Research Model

The convergent parallel approach, which is one of the mixed research method, was used in this study the aim of which was to determine the curriculum literacy levels of English teachers and their opinions on the English curriculum. Mixed method is a type of research in which quantitative and qualitative methods are used simultaneously (Christensen et al., 2015). According to Creswell (2009: 108), the convergent parallel approach is a mixed method design in which quantitative and qualitative data are used together, data collection tools are distributed and collected, and the results are analyzed and combined simultaneously in order to make a comprehensive analysis.

Research Procedure

The aim of this study was to determine English teachers' views on curriculum literacy levels and curriculum. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time and analyzed separately in the study. Then, evaluating these data sets together, a generalizable and in-depth perspective was presented. The figure showing the procedure followed in the research is as follows:

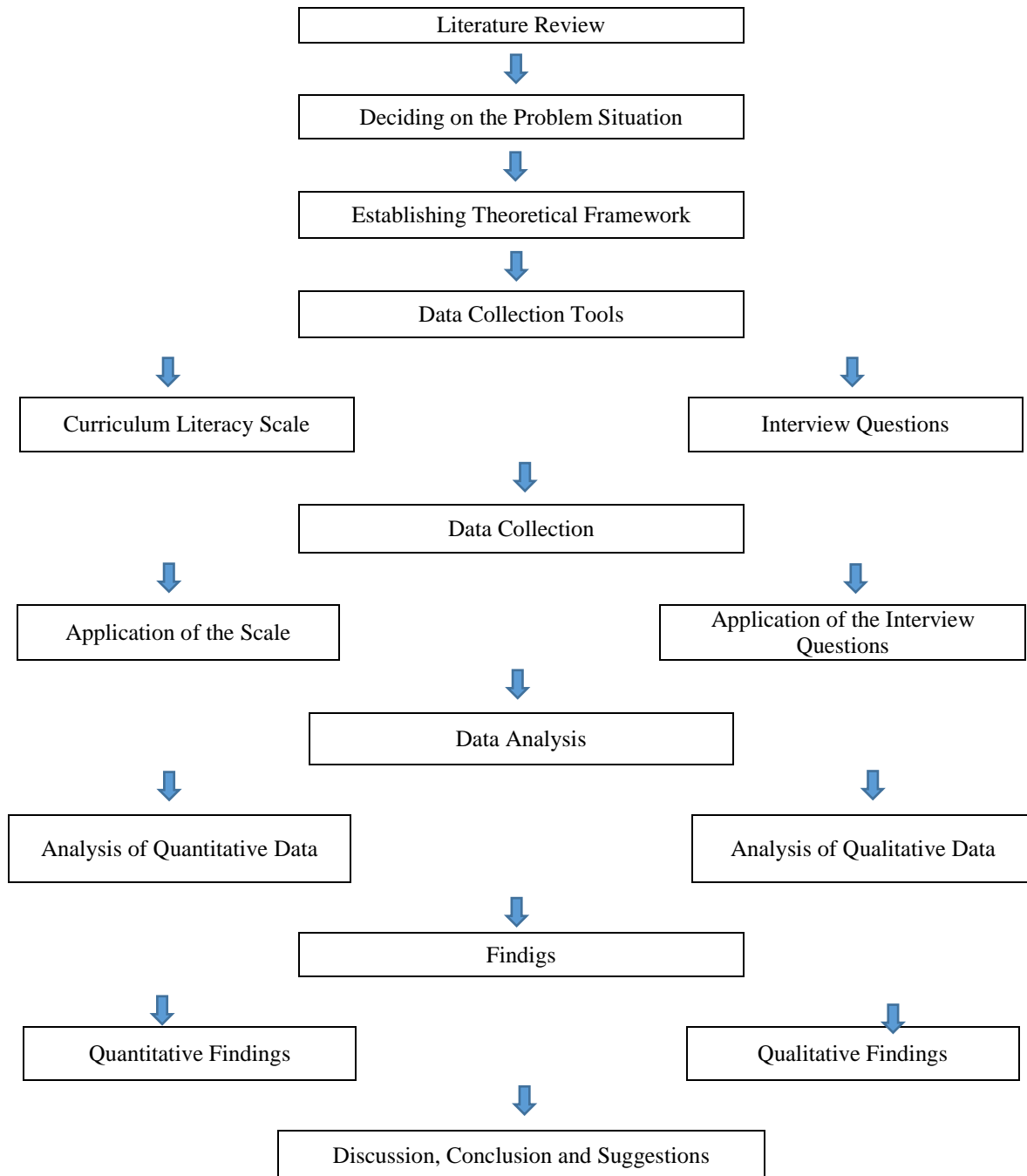


Figure 1. Procedure Table

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the research consisted of 379 English teachers working in public elementary schools and high schools a city in the east of Turkey in the 2020-2021 academic year. Of them, 198 participated in the quantitative part and 70 participated in the qualitative part of the study. The participation was on a voluntary basis and convenience sampling method was used to select samples. The main purpose of convenience sampling method is to reach the participants without spending excessive time, money and effort (Baltacı, 2018). Therefore, Individuals who are easy to contact or to reach are included in the study (Christensen, et al., 2015; Büyüköztürk, et al., 2015). Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants taking part in the quantitative part of the study.

Table 1. Demographic Information of Teachers in the Quantitative Part of the Study

		<i>Number (N)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender	Male	48	24,2
	Female	150	75,8
School Level	Elementary School	123	62,1
	High School	75	37,9
Work Experience	1-5 years	67	33,8
	6-10 years	74	37,4
	11-15 years	27	13,6
	16 years and above	30	15,2

48 (24.2%) of the 198 teachers participating in the quantitative part of the study were male and 150 (75.8%) were female. The school level of the participants showed that 123 (62.1%) worked in elementary schools and 75 (37.9%) in high schools. In addition, 67 (33.8%) of the participants had 1-5 years, 74 (37.4%) 6-10 years, 27 (13.6%) 11-15 years and 30 (15.2%) had 16 years or more work experience.

Table 2. Demographic Information of Teachers in the Qualitative Part of the Study

		<i>Number (N)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender	Male	10	14,3
	Female	60	85,7
School Level	Elementary School	45	64,3
	High School	25	35,7
Work Experience	1-5 years	24	34,3
	6-10 years	20	28,6
	11-15 years	16	22,9
	16 years and above	10	14,3

Of the 70 teachers who took part in the qualitative part of the study, 10 (14.3%) were male and 60 (85.7%) were female. 45 (64.3%) worked in elementary schools and 25 (35.7%) worked in high schools. Considering the professional seniority of the teachers, 24 (34.3%) had 1-5 years, 20 (28.6%) 6-10 years, 16 (22.9%) 11-15 years, 10 (14.3%) had 16 years or more work experience.

Data Collection Tools

Curriculum Literacy Scale

The Curriculum Literacy Scale was developed by Aslan (2018) to investigate elementary school teachers' opinions on curriculum literacy levels. The scale consists of three sub-scales: knowing the program (Items 1,2,3,4,5,6 items) planning (Items 7,8,9,10,11,12,13) and implementation (Items 14,15,16,17,18). The stratified Alpha was used to calculate the reliability of the scale which was found to be .774. In this study, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin value of the scale was found as .712 and the Bartlett's test as 326.866 $p=.000$.

Qualitative Data Collection Tool

The qualitative data collection tool used in the study is the interview form prepared by the researcher. A comprehensive literature review was carried out and the interview questions were prepared in line with these studies. In order to obtain expert opinion, the interview questions were revised by three faculty members and four English teachers working in public schools. Finally, a semi-structured interview form was developed on the basis of feedback received from the experts. The aim of the interview form was to qualitatively determine the opinions of English teachers working in

public elementary schools and high schools a city in the east of Turkey on the English curriculum. The participation was on a voluntary basis.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Quantitative Data

SPSS 22.0 package program was used in data analysis. The standard deviation, percentage, frequency and arithmetic mean was calculated and the significance levels were determined with regard to the independent variables (gender, school type, and work experience). In case the variables had normal distribution, independent samples t-test and ANOVA (analysis of variance) tests were used to investigate the significance and relationships.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The interview form aimed to examine the opinions of English teachers on the English program. Descriptive analysis method was used in data analysis. The aim of descriptive analysis approach is to present the data after organizing and interpreting the data. Themes are created and the data is grouped and interpreted on the basis of the themes. When required, comparisons between cases are also included (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008: 224). According to Günbayı (2019), the data obtained in the interview are divided into the themes without any changes and then are associated and described within the themes. In this study, the themes were determined and the findings were grouped in line with the themes. The answers of the participants were presented in relation to the themes, without making any changes as expected in the descriptive analysis. The answers of some participants were excerpted in the study. These direct quotations are expressed as S1, S2, S3 and so on.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Findings of Quantitative Data

In this section, the findings regarding the opinions of English teachers on curriculum literacy are presented.

Table 3. Opinions of English Teachers on the Sub-scales of the Curriculum Literacy Scale

Sub-scales	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Score Level
Knowing the Curriculum	198	4,26	,60	High
Planning	198	4,60	,46	High
Implementing	198	4,72	,32	High
Curriculum Literacy	198	4,53	,31	High

Table 3 shows that the participants had higher levels of curriculum literacy (\bar{X} = 4.53). It was found that, among the sub-scales of Curriculum Literacy Scale, the participants had the highest score in "implementing" (\bar{X} = 4.72) and the lowest score in "knowing the program" (\bar{X} = 4.26).

Table 4. Comparison of participants' curriculum literacy levels with regard to gender

Sub-scale	Gender	n	\bar{X}	ss	t	p
Knowing the curriculum	Male	48	4,25	,62	-,165	,869
	Female	150	4,27	,59		
Planning	Male	48	4,56	,50	-,734	,464
	Female	150	4,61	,45		
Implementation	Male	48	4,65	,36	-1,828	,069
	Female	150	4,74	,31		
Total	Male	48	4,48	,40	-,941	,348

Independent samples t-test in Table 4 demonstrated that *knowing the curriculum* [$t(196) = -1,165; p > .05$], *planning* [$t(196) = -.734; p > .05$], and *implementation* [$t(196) = -1,828; p > .05$] sub-scales of Curriculum Literacy Scale did not significantly differ in terms of gender. Similarly, English teachers' Curriculum Literacy Scale results [$t(196) = ,910; p > .05$] did not significantly differ in terms of gender. It was found that female ($\bar{X} = 4.54$) and male ($\bar{X} = 4.48$) participants strongly agreed with the statements in the Curriculum Literacy Scale.

Table 5. Comparison of participants' curriculum literacy levels with regard to School Level

Sub-scale	School Level	N	\bar{X}	sd	t	P
Knowing the curriculum	Elementary	123	4,27	,56	,311	,756
	High School	75	4,24	,66		
Planning	Elementary	123	4,63	,45	1,120	,264
	High School	75	4,55	,47		
Implementation	Elementary	123	4,73	,31	,864	,389
	High School	75	4,69	,33		
Total	Elementary	123	4,55	,34	,901	,369
	High School	75	4,50	,40		

Independent samples t-test in Table 5 revealed that *knowing the curriculum* [$t(196) = ,311; p > .05$], *planning* [$t(196) = 1.120; p > .05$], and *implementation* [$t(196) = ,864; p > .05$] sub-scales of the Curriculum Literacy Scale did not significantly differ with regard to school level. Similarly, English teachers' Curriculum Literacy Scale results [$t(196) = ,901; p > .05$] did not significantly differ with regard to school level. It was found that participants working in both elementary school ($\bar{X} = 4.55$) and high school ($\bar{X} = 4.50$) strongly agreed with the statements in the Curriculum Literacy Scale.

Table 6. Comparison of participants' curriculum literacy levels with regard to Work Experience

	Work Experience	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Difference
A. Knowing the Curriculum	a. 1-5 years	67	4,35	,57	1,605	,190	
	b. 6-10 years	74	4,17	,63			
	c. 11-15 years	27	4,18	,58			
	d. 16 years and above	30	4,38	,58			
B. Planning	a. 1-5 years	67	4,63	,44	1,387	,248	
	b. 6-10 years	74	4,63	,47			
	c. 11-15 years	27	4,43	,52			
	d. 16 years and above	30	4,60	,41			
C. Implementation	a. 1-5 years	67	4,75	,44	6,756	,000*	a>c, b>c
	b. 6-10 years	74	4,80	,47			
	c. 11-15 years	27	4,49	,52			
	d. 16 years and above	30	4,67	,41			
D. Total	a. 1-5 years	67	4,58	,32	2,270	,082	
	b. 6-10 years	74	4,53	,36			
	c. 11-15 years	27	4,36	,38			
	d. 16 years and above	30	4,55	,34			

The findings in Table 6 showed that there was no significant difference between the work experience and the Curriculum Literacy Scale [$F(3-197) = 2.270; p > .05$] and its sub-scales *knowing the curriculum* [$F(3-197) = 1.605; p > .05$], *planning* [$F(3-197) = 1.387; p > .05$]. However, it was found that the sub-scale *implementation* [$F(3-197) = 6,756; p < .05$] was significantly differed by work experience. LSD test revealed that there was a significant difference between participants having 1-5 years of work experience and those having 11-15 years of work experience in favor of the former, and between participants having 6-10 years of work experience and those having 11-15 years in favor of the former.

Findings of Qualitative Data

Table 7. Teachers’ Views on the Useful and Adequate Aspects of the Curriculum for Teaching Four Skills

Theme	Code	f
Useful and Adequate Aspects of the Curriculum for Teaching Four Skills	Sufficient reading skills	18
	Sufficient listening skills	12
	Sufficient coursebooks	12
	Sufficient listening skills	10
	Insufficient supplementary materials and curriculum	10
	Targeting four skills	10
	Relevance to real life	3
	Opportunities to expressing themselves	2
	Appropriate to the students’ level	2
	Addressing Multiple Intelligences	1

It is seen in Table 8 that the participants provided a number of answers regarding the usefulness and appropriateness of curriculum for teaching four skills. They mostly stated that the curriculum had sufficient activities for reading and listening skills. However, they stated that the English curriculum failed to provide the opportunity for students to express themselves, be relevant to students’ level, and to address multiple intelligences.

Some excerpts regarding this theme are as follows:

P42: “The aspects of the curriculum that I find beneficial include individual assessments at the end of each unit, choosing the topics in accordance with the student's interest and level, and sufficient activities to meet the achievements.”

P44: “It includes activities suitable for student level. Another factor that I find useful is that listening and speaking skills are focused more in the 2nd and 3rd grades whereas reading and writing skills are addressed in upper grades. The contents and accordingly the tasks offered in the units are also in line with the interest of the age groups of the students.”

Table 8. The Missing Aspects of Curriculum for Teaching Four Skills

Theme	Code	f
The Missing Aspects of Curriculum for Teaching Four Skills	Insufficient speaking activities	22
	Insufficient listening activities	19
	Time constraints	13
	Insufficient supplementary materials	9
	Insufficient writing activities	7
	Complex and out-of-context texts	7
	Boring content	6
	Incomplete assessment methods	5
	Opportunity to talk with foreigners	5
	Activities inappropriate to students’ levels	4
	Extensive curriculum content	3
	Test-based exam system	2
	Listening texts without video	2
	Lack of practice	2
	Dialogues inappropriate to students’ levels	2
	Insufficient teachers	2
	Lack of need for English	1
Inappropriate ordering of the units	1	

Table 8 shows that the participants mostly stated that the English curriculum included insufficient speaking and listening activities regarding the missing aspects of curriculum for teaching four skills. On the other hand, the least mentioned issues in this theme was lack of need for English and the Inappropriate ordering of the units.

Some excerpts regarding this theme are as follows:

P6: “No matter how hard we try to teach the four basic skills, the fact that the exam system is based on tests decreases students’ interest. They are more interested in grammar and testing. For example, if there were an interview-style English assessment instead of a test in the transition of a higher level, communication skills would be much better.”

P 48: “Interactive activities aiming to improve speaking skills are not included in the curriculum. Speaking classes should involve online conversations with native speakers of English, at least once a week, so that they can have proper conversations over the internet.”

Table 9. Participants’ Opinions on the Activities to Adjust the Content of the Curriculum to Interest and Level of the Students

Theme	Code	f
Adjusting the Content to Interest and Level of the Students	Teaching with games	28
	Using videos	13
	Using songs	13
	Using visual materials	12
	Using Web 2.0 tools	9
	Using technology	8
	Drama	8
	Word games	8
	Connecting with daily life	7
	Using different sources	6
	Using dialogues	3
	Addressing different senses	2

Table 9 shows the activities participants used to adjust the content of the curriculum to interest and level of students. It was found that the participants mostly used activities such as *teaching with games*, *using videos*, and *using songs* to tailor the content of the curriculum. On the other hand, the least mentioned them was *addressing different senses*.

Some excerpts regarding this theme are as follows:

P31: “I adjust it using appropriate supplementary materials related to the topic. For example, if a unit does not attract their attention, especially word games, suitable for the levels the students, make the lesson to competitive and fun.”

P53: “The methods and techniques I use differ according to the age of the students. For example, I try to use games and songs to make the lesson fun for 5th graders, whereas I use drama activities to improve their speaking skills and gain self-confidence for 8th graders.”

Table 10. Participants' Opinions on Problems Experienced while Implementing the Curriculum

Theme	Code	f
Problems Experienced while Implementing the Curriculum	Intensive Curriculum	19
	Time	15
	Insufficient Coursebooks	11
	Insufficient class hours	10
	Class sizes	8
	Grammar-based curriculum	8
	Intensive Vocabulary	6
	Being not suitable for the level	5
	Insufficient listening activities	5
	Lack of supplementary materials	3
	Lack of real environment in which language is used	2
	Lack of technological tools	2
	Insufficient curriculum content	1

Table 10 shows the problems the participants experience while implementing the curriculum. It was found that the most frequent problems they experienced were *intensity of the curriculum, time, and insufficient books*. On the other hand, the least frequent problems were found to be *lack of real environment in which language is used, lack of technological tools, insufficient curriculum content*.

Some excerpts regarding this theme are as follows:

P15: "The biggest problem is that the curriculum is intense and class hours are limited."

P23: "There is no time left for the activity because there is an excessive grammatical load in some units."

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Teachers need to be curriculum literate for a proper functioning of education system. Teachers are the ones who interpret the objectives, contents, skills, in short, all the elements in the curriculum. For this reason, teachers are required to understand and implement the curriculum in an accurate way. In this context, it is seen that teachers play a critical role in the understanding and appropriate implementation of the curriculum (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Thornton 2005; Park 2008). The teacher implements the existing program by tailoring and modifying it. Teachers with a high level of curriculum literacy transmit the course achievements by modifying it according to their students, school environment and expectations, and the social environment on the basis of the main framework. An appropriate interpretation and implementation increase the quality of education. In this study, English teachers' curriculum literacy levels and their views on the English curriculum were examined. The findings showed that English teachers' curriculum literacy levels were high in the sub-scales of knowing, planning and implementing the curriculum. There are similar studies with the present study in the literature. For example, Aslan (2018), Erdamar (2020), Şinego & Çakmak (2021), Sarıca (2021) revealed that curriculum literacy levels of in-service teacher were high. On the other hand, Kahramanoğlu (2019) found that in-service teachers had a medium level of curriculum literacy. In studies conducted with pre-service teachers, Erdem & Eğmir (2018) concluded that pre-service teachers had high levels of curriculum literacy, Kahramanoğlu (2019) found that their curriculum literacy level was medium, and Öztürk (2019) revealed that pre-service teachers had low levels of curriculum literacy. In addition to the aforementioned studies, Kauffman et al. (2002), Schwarz et al. (2008), Baştürk & Dönmez (2011), Hardman & Rahman (2014), Opoh & Awhen (2015), Gani & Mahjaty (2017), and Öztürk (2019) stated that teachers had lower levels of curriculum literacy levels. Altıntaş et al., (2018) and Öztürk (2019) obtained the same result in their studies in which they applied a scale to investigate curriculum literacy level of pre-service teachers. It can be argued that teachers with lower levels of curriculum literacy levels fail to interpret the curriculum and implement it in the classroom. The factors that lead to this situation may be teachers' inability to apply the curriculum and to support it with supplementary activities. In order to eliminate these insufficiencies, in-service

training should be offered to teachers. Supporting this view, Kauffman et al. (2002), Hardman & Rahman (2014), and Opoh & Awhen (2015) argued that teachers' interpretation and implementation of the curriculum are not sufficient, and thus in-service training is absolutely required to eliminate such a problem. In addition, Opoh & Awhen (2015) stated that teachers should be included in the curriculum development process to gain adequate experience so that they can implement the curriculum effectively.

A significant difference was not found between *knowing the program*, *planning* and *implementation* sub-scales of the Curriculum Literacy Scale and the gender. Consistent with the results of the present study, Aslan (2018), Erdem & Eđmir (2018), Tunçer & Şahin (2019), Dilek (2020), Sađ & Sezer (2012) and Gülpek (2020) did not find a significant difference in terms of gender. According to Şinego & Çakmak (2021), the reason of this indifference may be the fact that female and male teachers follow the updates and developments in their curriculums and fields. Similarly, Karakuş & Tümkaya (2015) and Tümkaya et al., (2014) stated that the gender factor did not play a significant role in the teaching profession. In addition, it is seen that gender have no effect on the professional development. Contrary to the findings of the present study, Eskiocak (2005) and Kahramanođlu (2019) concluded that the Curriculum Literacy scores of female teachers were higher than those of male teachers. On the other hand, Erdamar (2020) found that the curriculum literacy levels of male classroom teachers were higher than that of female classroom teachers.

In the present study, a significant difference was not found between *knowing the program*, *planning* and *implementation* sub-scales of the Curriculum Literacy Scale and the school type. A similar finding was found by Keskin (2020) who concluded that curriculum literacy did not differ by school level. In contrast, Kahramanođlu (2019) found that primary school teachers had higher levels of curriculum literacy than elementary school teachers in terms of knowing the curriculum and implementing it. On the basis of this result, it can be argued that primary school teachers were more successful in doing activities, preparing materials and adjusting the program according to the level of the students.

The examination of Curriculum Literacy Scale with regard to work experience did not reveal a significant difference in the sub-scales of *knowing the curriculum* and *planning*. On the other hand, a significant difference was found in *implementing* sub-scale. This difference was between participants having 1-5 years of work experience and those having 11-15 years of work experience in favor of the former, and between participants having 6-10 years of work experience and those having 11-15 years in favor of the former. Aslan (2018), Aydođan (2018), Aslan and Gürlen (2019), Erdamar (2020), Kahramanođlu (2019), Keskin (2020) did not find a significant difference between the curriculum literacy level of teachers and work experience. The results of the present study suggest that teachers having less work experience are more curriculum literate and better at implementing the curriculum. Supporting this view, Superfine (2008) argued that instead of sticking to a written plan, experienced teachers plan the lesson in their minds and act in accordance with their experiences.

In the qualitative part of the study, the views of English teachers on teaching English were examined. They that the program was sufficient to provide reading and listening skills and that the supplementary materials play a supportive role for these skills. Consistent with these findings, Teevno (2011) concluded that although the materials and source books for teaching English are sufficient, there are still some problems in language learning and four language skills, that are reading, writing, listening and speaking, are not acquired as it should be. On the other hand, some researchers argued that the materials and source books were insufficient which led to deficiencies in language teaching and learning (Aribaş & Tok, 2004; Günday, 2007; Erdem, 2016; Songbatumis, 2017; Şahin et al., 2018; Çelebi & Narinalp, 2020). Similarly, Yaman (2019) concluded that the textbooks were not appropriate to students' level and this paved the way to prejudice against language. In addition, in a qualitative study conducted by Şad & Karaova (2015), it was concluded that teachers thought that the outcomes for listening skills in the curriculum were sufficient, but the textbooks were insufficient to achieve these outcomes. Furthermore, it was stressed that the classroom should have required conditions to carry out the listening activities. Contrary to the findings of the present study, Dođan &

Özçakmak (2014) reported that listening skill was neglected in teaching English. The fact that every books and supplementary materials were designed nationally on a general basis may be the reason for the participants' criticism regarding the insufficient resources. The development of resources suitable for the cultural, physical and socio-economic conditions of the regions and students' level can facilitate learning. Another reason was that the resources lacked one the four skills or all of them at once, which led to failure in acquiring four skills. In order to eliminate such a problem, it would be effective to use authentic materials and resources developed by native speakers of English. Aküzel (2006) and Çatal et al., (2018) sated that the coursebooks and supplementary books used in the lessons were not interesting, clear, appropriate for the level, sufficient to achieve the expected outcomes, and fun.

Another finding of the present study was that the curriculum was insufficient in providing speaking activities and the time constraint was a problem in teaching and learning English. The literature on the problems experienced while teaching English speaking skills shows that some of the factors that delay speaking skills are that the curriculum is not suitable, the structure of English differs in some languages, there is no opportunity to practice in a real environment, there is not enough knowledge regarding vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, students do not have sufficient motivation, attitude and behavior towards speaking, and they are afraid of making mistakes. (Yaman, 2018; Leño et al., 2019; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020; Güneş & İskender, 2021). Similarly, Paker (2012) concluded that Turkey is insufficient in speaking skills. The studies in the literature clearly shows that one of the biggest problems is that foreign language speaking skills are not taught and learned satisfactorily. Accordingly, several results have been reported. In order to overcome this problem, first of all, pre-service English teachers should be provided with sufficient speaking skills during their university years, teachers should be given in-service training and they should use more communicative approach instead of classical grammar-based ones. In line with this view, Fareh (2010) suggested that although tremendous efforts were made to improve the English teaching-learning process, English curriculum failed to reach expected results, and low levels of learners' speaking skills were one of the reasons for this. Similarly, Sultana (2010) emphasized that it is very challenging for students having limited opportunity to use English in their social and classroom environments, that incompetent English teachers fail to teach English language skills, that the classes are not suitable for language learning standards, that classroom practices emphasize rote learning rather than understanding and using English in real-life situations. Advocating that teachers are not sufficient in speaking English, Teevno (2011) argued that teachers do not receive an appropriate education on how to teach English and this hinders a successful English speaking process.

It was found in the present study that the participants mostly used games, videos and songs in order to tailor the curriculum to interests and levels of the students. In this regard, Işık (2016) stated that educational games are important in teaching English vocabulary. In addition, Bayırtepe & Tuzun (2007) concluded that the games increased the motivation level of the students and increase their interest in the content. Besides, Aydın (2014) argued that the inclusion of different games on the basis of different intelligence types would lead to an increase in the motivation of all students. Similarly, Kahraman (2019) stressed that songs are an effective method that can be used to repeat the words introduced in the lesson. Similarly, Yetunde & Kate (2008) revealed the effects of word games, songs and poems on high school students' foreign language skills and stated that these activities motivate students better and increase their English performance. Furthermore, Griva & Semoglou (2012) argued that classroom creative activities including memory and word games, drawings, role-playing games, pantomimes and songs, physical activities such as races, chases and hopscotch in the gym to improve children's verbal communication skills and creativity, as well as many dance and music activities has a positive effect on developing pupil's language skills and increasing their motivation to participate in psychomotor activities. Examining the effect of video games on students' vocabulary acquisition, Vásquez and Ovalle (2019) concluded that the participants were able to acquire a significant amount of vocabulary after the games, and this experience increased the interaction of the participants in and out of the classroom. Considering the benefits of songs in terms of teaching both pronunciation and intonation skills, it can be put forward that using songs is an important teaching method. One of the most important dimensions of language teaching is teaching with fun and thus, teachers need to make

the lessons interesting. The fact that the game is a remarkable teaching aid for individuals of all ages can be leveraged while teaching a language. For this reason, it is very necessary for English teachers to have a good level of creativity and content knowledge.

Another finding of the present study was that the problems experienced by the teachers regarding the intensive curriculum and time constraints resulted in difficulties in language learning. The fact that the curriculum and class size are inversely proportional to the class hours is an important factor that makes learning difficult. Taking the same perspective, Günday (2007), Teevno (2011) and Songbatumis (2017), tried to reveal the deficiencies in English teaching. They concluded that the intensive and time-limited English curriculum had a negative effect on language learning. They stated that teachers needed well-designed resources and increased class hours in order to eliminate the deficiencies in the curriculum. Besides, Yusuk (2020) stated that the allocated time and classroom environment are not sufficient to learn a language. In addition, Oeamoum & Sriwichai (2020) put forward that the course hours for teaching English are limited, the content of the curriculum is not up-to-date and compatible with daily life, which should be eliminated. Similarly, Işık (2008) emphasized that the materials were insufficient, Günday (2007) and Sultana (2010) emphasized that the teaching materials designed on the basis of traditional grammar-based language teaching and lack of communicative materials led to failure in language learning. Similarly, Oeamoum & Sriwichai (2020) considered lack of different English teaching materials and supplementary resources as a deficiency and expressed that this problem can be reduced by integrating web-based technologies into English lessons. The fact that the number of English class hours is limited in schools paves the way to some problems. Teachers' hard work to implement the curriculum within such a limited time period leads them to ignore some aspects or skills while teaching four skills.

In sum, the results of the present study showed that although the participants had high levels of curriculum literacy, they had problems in teaching four language skills, that are reading, writing, listening and speaking. They mentioned the lack of resources, the intensive curriculum, insufficient class hours, and the insufficient curriculum content as the reasons for these problems. The participants' high levels curriculum literacy indicates that they have high levels of awareness as well. It can be concluded that the ability of teachers to interpret the curriculum, to realize the positive or negative aspects of the curriculum, to develop alternative assessment and evaluation methods, and to develop alternative methods to the methods and techniques included in the curriculum are related to their curriculum literacy levels.

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