Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, Issue 65, 2016, 71-90

The Use of Communicative Approach in 9th Grade EFL Classes

Ferdane DENKCI AKKAS[*]
Berna COKER[**]

Suggested Citation:

Denkci-Akkas, F., & Coker, B. (2016). The use of communicative approach in 9th grade efl classes. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 65, 71-90 10.14689/ejer.2016.65.05

Abstract

Problem Statement: Having appeared in the 60s, the Communicative Approach still keeps its popularity in language teaching contexts. There is almost no doubt that its application varies depending on the teacher's understanding of the methodology. Likewise, some studies on the application of the Communicative Approach in Turkey have revealed that foreign language teaching is not performed in a communicative way due to some challenges and problems.

Purpose of the Study: This paper aims to depict the use of the Communicative Approach in 9th grade classes as well as the opinions of the teachers and students on its implementation.

Method: This is a qualitative study since it aims to describe behaviors by looking at patterns to emerge in order to learn how they happen as well as by interpreting those patterns so as to find out why they happen in that particular way. The students and teachers of two 9th grade classes in 2012-2013 academic year were observed for one hour per week in a semester. The data were collected via COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) observation scheme and the interview questions. The data from the observation scheme were analyzed by proportion calculations while a content analysis was performed with the interview data. The coding for the observations and transcriptions for the interviews were done more than once at different times to check consistency and to achieve reliability and validity.

[*]Corresponding author: Dr., Dokuz Eylul University, School of Foreign Languages, ferdanedenkci@yahoo.com
[**] Dr., Dokuz Eylul University, Buca Education Faculty, bernacoker@gmail.com

Findings: The findings have showed that the application of the Communicative Approach highly varies according to the teacher and the teaching context. When compared, the language learning context at the Anatolian high school is much more communicative than the one at the general high school. Still, it is not the ideal communicative classroom depicted in the text of the national curriculum. It has also been found that although the learners have similar attitudes, beliefs and expectations about their language learning, they do not receive the same teaching practices.

Conclusion and Recommendations: In order to adopt the communicative approach successfully in EFL countries like Turkey, the change and the employment should be steady and the countries' particular EFL contexts and the teachers' perceptions of an innovation as well as students' previous educational habits should be considered. Also, continuous teacher training and teacher development opportunities focusing on real classroom applications, especially within the crucial first few years of the innovation period are needed to support the application of any innovation in a curriculum.

Keywords: English language teaching, learner beliefs, teacher beliefs, classroom observation.

Introduction

Learning and teaching of a second language has become a vital need rather than a luxury in today's world due to the fact that multilingualism has gained significant importance as people are to follow the rapid developments in various areas. Teaching of English, which is the most common language used for international communication, has always been important and prior in Turkish education system (Kirkgoz, 2007; Oral, 2010; Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Di Paojo & Tansel, 2015). However, it is also one of the most serious educational problems that need to be urgently considered since Turkey has not been much successful in second language teaching despite making students study a language for long years (Akalin & Zengin, 2007; Isik, 2008; Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Solak & Bayar, 2015). Akpinar and Aydin (2009) and Paker (2012) state that there are undoubtedly serious problems in second language teaching in Turkey since learners who spend over ten years studying a second language can only achieve a little grammar, but almost no communication skills. Therefore, the previous curriculum of second language teaching has been changed according to the principles of the new movements and approaches of teaching which favor student-centered learning environments rather than the traditional teacher-centered ones and which emphasize learning processes rather than learning products.

Since 2005, the Turkish government has been trying to standardize English language teaching as a government policy in order to achieve the harmony with the

European Union and get the full membership. Therefore, the 1997 curriculum, which introduced the concept of communicative approach to language teaching in Turkey, has been revised a couple of times to adapt it into the European standards (Arslan & Coskun, 2012). In the latest version of the curriculum for English language teaching in high schools published by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) in 2011, it is clearly stated that this new program is primarily and dominantly based on the communicative approach and has been prepared to be in harmony with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. That is, students should be directed to understand and use rather than to memorize what they are learning since communication is a process to meet their needs, to improve themselves as well as to survive in the social life (Paker, 2012; Zorba & Arikan, 2016).

The Communicative Approach

The birth of the communicative approach goes back to the late 1960s when situational language teaching started to gain importance in Britain. After the discovery of the creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences, it was realized that the functional and communicative potential of language had a crucial role in language learning and teaching. In the early 1970s, Wilkin studied on the communicative meanings to be understood and expressed. His studies resulted in a new way to describe the core of language: notional categories and communicative functions rather than the traditional concepts of grammar and vocabulary. Thus, he produced "notional syllabuses" which led to the development of the communicative approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2002).

Therefore, it is obvious that in terms of language teaching, the communicative approach puts the emphasis on communicative competence. Brown (2000, 246) defines communicative competence as the one that allows us to exchange meanings between persons in particular circumstances. Dealing with activities consisting of real communication, which let the learner use meaningful language to carry out meaningful tasks enhances learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Harmer (1987, 37) explains the learning principles in accordance with the communicative approach and puts the emphasis on communicative activities in which language is utilized as a tool to accomplish an interactive assignment.

On the other hand, Richards (2006), highlights that the implementation of the communicative approach alters according to the teacher's perception of it. Moreover, Crawford (2004) emphasizes the significance of the teacher's implementation skills in the application of a new curriculum. Mowlaie and Rahimi (2010) state that teachers' beliefs concerning the approach have a crucial role in their classroom practices and many language teachers do not have conviction in enabling their learners to communicate.

Therefore, the theoretical reconstruction of the new curriculum in accordance with the Communicative Approach in Turkey does not necessarily reflect what is going on within the classroom. In fact, it is known that there has been variety as well as inconsistency in foreign language instruction practices in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2008). This is mainly because teachers face some difficulties with the implementation of any

innovation or change in the educational programme (Oral, 2010; Ari, 2014). It is not an easy task to replace their habits with a new approach especially for the teachers with established teaching practices of long years (Akpinar-Dellal & Cinar, 2011). Novice teachers and pre-service teachers are also put to create a communicative classroom due to the lack of practice in real teaching contexts throughout their teacher training programs (Celik & Arikan, 2012; Liao & Zhao, 2012; Lalor, Lorenzi & Rami, 2015; Ortactepe & Akyel, 2015). Likewise, the in-service training programs tend to be rather insufficient due to their one-shot, top-down and mainly transmission-based quality (Uysal, 2012). In general, teachers are not knowledgeable enough about the requirements of the new curriculum or even if they gain some understanding in theory, they are not motivated to implement it efficiently because they do not know how to put it into practice in real classroom settings (Demir & Demir, 2012; Karakas, 2013). For instance, Saricoban (2013) expresses that despite their interest in computers and technology, many language teachers in Turkey do not know how to use them as a teaching tool.

Altan (2006) states that foreign language teachers in Turkey encounter serious challenges while meeting the demands of the 21st century and therefore need efficient support to improve their quality and to continue their professional development. It is also argued that foreign language education policies affected by current issues and administrative approaches without analyzing the needs and demands of the target group in a scientific way have led to an undesirable failure in language teaching in Turkey (Li, 1998; Isik, 2008; Incecay & Incecay, 2009; Nergis, 2011). Sarıçoban and Oz (2014) underline the importance of the consideration of learners' sociocultural backgrounds and educational settings and they state that teachers and program developers should be cautious in the process of determining appropriate materials and pedagogical approaches for specific contexts.

It is not possible to claim that a change in theory will guarantee a change in practice. Consequently, whether the application of the new curriculum by MNE in actual teaching contexts is as successful as it is in the theoretical base still remains as a question. This means that there is a need for an effective feedback about the successful and inefficient facets of the curriculum in terms of its application and this is the need which is aimed to meet by this paper. It is obvious that the new program aims to enable teachers to create communicative language classrooms in high schools, but is it so in reality? So, this is the question in general to be answered in this paper.

The Objectives

The objective of this paper is to depict how effectively the communicative approach is being applied in high school 9th grade classrooms and to find out the beliefs of the teachers and students on the use of this approach in terms of classroom practices.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are the 9th grade English classes in two high schools in Izmir, Buca based on communication?
2. What do the 9th grade students in two high schools in Izmir, Buca think about the communicative features of their English classes?
3. What do the teachers who teach English to the 9th grades in two high schools in Izmir, Buca think about the communicative features of their classes?

Method

Research Design

This is a qualitative study which focuses on emerging patterns to depict behaviors by analyzing descriptive data to understand how and why these behaviors and patters come about in that specific style (Richards, 2003; Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Research Sample

In this study, typical sampling technique was used. Typical sampling is a technique which allows the researcher to choose the most typical one or ones to study among the contexts in which an application is being implemented. With this technique, the aim is to study the average contexts in order to get a general idea about a particular phenomenon (Yildirim & Simsek, 1999). The sample of this study included the students and teachers of two 9th grade classes: one from a general high school (HAYL) and the other from an Anatolian high school (FSAL) in Buca-Izmir, in 2012-2013 academic year.

Research Instrument and Procedure

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) Observation Scheme: The data were collected with the COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) scheme by Allen, Frohlich and Spada (1983). It was created to depict the characteristics of communication and aims to portray each activity in terms of five parameters which were determined considering the current theories of communicative competence and other related literature in first and second language learning (Allen et al., 1983). These parameters include time, activities and episodes, participant organization, content, content control, student modality and materials (Spada & Frohlich, 1995). Coding was done by putting check marks into the appropriate boxes under each of the five major categories.

Interview Questions: The participant teachers and some of the students were interviewed. The interview questions were formed according to the basic principles of the communicative approach so as to discover both the teachers' and students' opinions and beliefs about how the language was taught. Questions were also included to reveal what they thought about the support of their textbook in this process. The interview included questions like *"What do you think about inclusion of pair work and group work activities in your language class?"*, *"Can you give an example of*

your favorite activities?", "What are your responsibilities as a teacher / student in the classroom?", "Which language skill(s) should be given importance in language instruction?".

Validity and Reliability

To achieve reliability and validity in the observations, the two classes were observed for seven weeks and the effects of the observer on the participants were minimized. The coding was done three times at different times with the help of the tape-recordings and controlled by three different supervisors to check consistency. In the interviews, all the participants were asked the questions without changing the wording and they were assured that they would not be panelized because of what they would tell since their identity would not be revealed. Additionally, some random parts of the interviews were transcribed twice at different times to check consistency (Turnuklu, 2000; Seferaj, 2009).

Data Analysis

The analysis for the observation data started with the calculation of time for each activity and episode. The percentage of time spent on each of the categories was calculated under the major features. On the other hand, a content analysis was implemented on the interview data in order to draw the common themes.

Results

Results for the Classroom Observations

The results for the analysis of the classroom observation data collected with the COLT have been presented in this section under the five main categories provided in the observation scheme. These categories include participant organization, content, content control, student modality and material types.

Table 1.

Participant Organization by Institution

	Participant organization						
	Class			*Group*		*Individual*	
	T- S/C	*S-S/C*	*Choral*	*Same task*	*Different tasks*	*Same task*	*Different tasks*
FSAL	42.96	2.96	-	32.22	-	21.85	-
HAYL	86.06	-	-	-	-	13.93	-

As can be seen in Table 1, the teacher at FSAL spent the 45.92 per cent of the time for whole class interaction, the majority of which was between the teacher and the student or the whole class (42.96%) while the 32.22 per cent of the time was devoted to group work and the 21.85 per cent was used for individual studies. The teacher in HAYL spent the 86.06 per cent of the time on whole class interaction which was totally between the teacher and the students and the 13.93 per cent of the time was devoted to individual studies.

Table 2.

Content by Institution

	Content							
	Management			*Language*			*Other topics*	
	Procedure	*Discipline*	*Form*	*Function*	*Discourse*	*Sociolinguistics*	*Narrow*	*Broad*
FSAL	2.59	1.48	57.03	7.40	2.22	-	11.48	25.92
HAYL	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-

According to Table 2, the teacher at FSAL spent the 4.07 per cent of the time for management, the 62.69 per cent for language and the 37.4 per cent for other topics whereas the teacher at HAYL spent the 100 per cent of the class time to focus on language form. It is also seen that the teacher at FSAL devoted most of the class time (57.03%) to deal with language form rather than function, discourse or sociolinguistics.

Table 3.

Content Control by Institution

	Content control		
	Teacher/text	*Teacher/text/student*	*Student*
FSAL	61.11	38.88	-
HAYL	100	-	-

As Table 3 presents, the 61.11 per cent of the content of the classroom instruction was controlled by the teacher and/or the text whereas the 38.88 per cent was decided by the teacher, the text and the student at FSAL. The whole content was determined by the teacher and/or the text at HAYL without giving the students any chance to control the content of the instruction in the class.

Table 4.

Student Modality by Institution

	Student modality				
	Listening	*Speaking*	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Other*
FSAL	65.55	35.92	46.66	42.59	-
HAYL	-	-	-	100	-

According to Table 4, the students at FSAL spent the 65.55 per cent of the class time by listening, the 35.92 per cent by speaking, the 46.66 per cent by reading and the 42.59 per cent by writing whereas the students at HAYL spent the whole class time by writing (100%). That is, all the four language skills were almost equally emphasized at FSAL while they were completely ignored at HAYL.

Table 5.

Material Types by Institution

	Materials							
	Type				*Source*			
	Text		*Audio*	*Visual*	*L2-NNS*	*L2-NS*	*L2-NSA*	*Student made*
	Minimal	*Extended*						
FSAL	62.59	2.59	7.77	25.92	61.11	-	-	25.92
HAYL	83.08	-	-	-	71.67	-	-	-

Table 5 indicates that at FSAL the 65.18 per cent of the class time was spent with texts, the majority of which were minimal texts (62.59%) while the 7.77 per cent was spent with audio and the 25.92 per cent was spent with visual materials. The 83.08 per cent of the class time was spent with minimal texts at HAYL and the students

passed the 16.02 per cent of their time with no materials at all. Moreover, the 61.11 per cent of the class time was spent with the materials produced by non-native speakers and the 25.92 per cent was passed with student-made materials at FSAL. Table 5 also indicates that the 83.08 per cent of the class time was spent with the materials produced by non-native speakers at HAYL.

Results from the Interviews

The results for the interviews with the teachers and the students have been presented in this section under eight main themes concerning the assumptions of the Communicative Approach. These categories include use of pair/group work activities, fluency versus accuracy, use of the native language in the classroom, error correction, teacher roles, learner roles, language skills and the course book.

Use of Pair/Group Work Activities: In the interviews, both the teachers and the students were asked about their opinions about the pair/group work activities in English classes and except one teacher and one student, the rest stated that they found these activities advantageous for language learning and they should be included in the lessons since these activities:

- provide a chance to speak and practice the language,
- help students to learn from each other,
- let students check what they have learnt,
- are motivating, encouraging and fun to do and so improve learners' self-confidence.

However, the other teacher from the general high school claimed that such activities could be used with learners of a certain language level and it was not possible or useful to do them with lower level learners like his own students as it was not possible to involve the students in the activities.

Fluency versus Accuracy: When asked about the significance of fluency and accuracy in language learning, the majority of the participants agreed on the significance of fluency since they believed that accuracy was not important as long as people could communicate with each other. Moreover, they stated that they could speak their native language fluently but not in a complete accuracy which was perfectly fine in all languages. Only the teacher from the general high school and one of his students favored accuracy. The teacher claimed that it was not possible to achieve fluency without accuracy and the student expressed that people could not understand each other without accuracy.

Use of the Native Language in the Classroom: When they were asked to consider the use of the mother tongue in the lesson, the majority of the participants stated that their native language should be included in their lessons adding that this would be advantageous for their learning. Additionally, they preferred Turkish as their native language in teaching or learning grammar whereas they believed that they should be using the target language for meaningful and communicative activities. However,

there are two learners who favored using English all the time even though they found it challenging because they believed that being challenged would contribute to their learning.

Error Correction: In terms of error correction, there was a confirmation that learners should be given a chance for self-correction first. They stated that it should be the teacher who would provide the necessary feedback if learners could not correct themselves and also learners should not be interfered while speaking so that they would not get anxious, excited, distracted or confused, rather, they should be given the opportunity to complete their speech before they received the feedback. On the other hand, there are a few students who would rather get corrected by their friends since they feel themselves closer to them and so they feel more comfortable with their friends.

Teacher Roles: When they were asked about the roles and responsibilities of a language teacher in the classroom, the participants mainly stated that a good teacher should:

- teach the language well, provide efficient feedback and support for the learners;
- enable the learners to speak the language and become a model with his/her way of speaking the target language;
- challenge, encourage and motivate the learners;
- behave in a friendly way and share some information about real life and the outside world.

Learner Roles: When they were asked about the roles and responsibilities of a language learner, the participants stated that the most important things for a student were to pay attention to the lesson and the teacher, not to get engaged with other things and not to get distracted, to participate in the classroom activities, to be determined and to try to learn and speak English both inside and outside the classroom.

Language Skills: When the participants were asked to consider the significance of language skills for their learning, the majority expressed that speaking should be given the priority because they perceived this skill as the main means of communication in real life. There were also some students who valued listening in addition to speaking as they believed these two skills were complementary. However, they did not find themselves successful in these skills. They believed they were better at grammar, writing and vocabulary because they were on their own when they were writing something and so they did not feel much anxious and they were accustomed to writing and grammar rather than speaking due to their classroom routine. However, the teacher of the general high school gave the priority to grammar as he believed that grammar was the main skill in language learning and other skills could not be developed without it whereas the teacher of the Anatolian

high school attributed equal importance to all language skills since she believed all were complementary for one another.

The Course Book: When the participants were asked to evaluate the contribution of their course book to their language learning, the participants from the general high school said that they had no idea about their book since they had never used it, but it could have been useful as it would have given a chance to revise or study the topics covered in the classroom when they went home. Their teacher also criticized the book severely claiming that the content and the level of the book were not suitable for his learners. Likewise, the participants from the Anatolian high school also criticized the book because they found it too simple for their level and it did not include anything new for them so they felt that it did not help them to improve their language abilities. On the other hand, they said that they also enjoyed the simplicity of the book since it was stress free for them. The teacher of this school agreed with the learners on this stating that she got disappointed with the level of the book because it turned out to be much simpler for her learners.

Discussion and Conclusions

This paper has aimed to find out how effectively the communicative approach is being applied in high school 9th grade classrooms and to see the case from the viewpoint of the teachers and students.

First, the dominant participant organization in the observed classes is between the teacher and the students or the whole class. So, there is a tendency for teacher-centered instruction and very little or no interaction between the learners. On the other hand, the majority of the participants are highly aware of the advantages of such activities and favor the inclusion of them in their lessons. However, like the teachers in this study, language teachers in Turkey face some challenges in implementing such activities due to big classroom sizes, traditional grammar-based testing and the time pressure to cover the schedule (Ozsevik, 2010; Coskun, 2011; Karakas, 2013; Al Asmari, 2015). Moreover, some teachers avoid such activities because they simply do not believe that they can make their students communicate in the target language (Mowlaie & Rahimi, 2010).

Despite the primary focus on meaningful interaction in the communicative approach, the dominant content of the interaction in the observed classrooms is language; namely language from. That is, these classrooms lack meaningful communication and the students learn about the usage of the language rather than using the language as an instrument to convey some kind of meaning or to accomplish a task in a meaningful way. An average Turkish student wants to get explicit grammar instruction, and to be checked strictly by his teacher (Çelik, 2006). Moreover, Phipps and Borg (2009) state that language teachers in Turkey tend to adopt a 'focus-on-forms' approach in their language instruction. Such a tendency mainly stems from the common grammar-based discrete point testing methods which confront both teachers and students with a dilemma between the

communicative approach and the traditional teaching methods (Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012). Specifically for high schools in Turkey, teachers feel the responsibility of preparing their students for the university entrance exam which is made up of multiple choice question items. When they attempt to implement a new methodology and to prepare their students for such a traditional test, they do not have enough time to achieve both. This also conduces teachers to focus on form, vocabulary and particularly reading comprehension by using multiple choice tests to enhance their teaching (Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Demir & Demir, 2012; Yigit, Kiyici & Cetinkaya, 2014).

The communicative approach aims to give learners more control and autonomy of their own learning via student-centered group work activities and the chance to control the content of the classroom instruction. However, in the observed classes, the content of the instruction is mainly determined by the teacher and occasionally by the teacher and the learners together, but never merely by the learners. Therefore, the teacher is regarded as the expert in the classroom by both the students and the teachers themselves. This is also consistent with the participants' opinions about error correction, teacher and learner roles. Likewise, in Tok's (2010) study, the language learners preferred explicit grammar instruction and correction provided by the teacher. All such perceptions might create a tendency to give the control of everything to the teacher in the classroom. The previous learning experiences focusing on traditional and grammar-based methods might induce teacher-dependent learners who avoid taking the responsibility of their own learning (Karakas, 2013).

Moreover, the results have shown that the student modality is distributed almost equally among the four language skills in the Anatolian high school whereas in the general high school the only modality is writing which is not a contextualized, meaningful or creative writing, but rather copying the discrete grammar exercises into the students' notebooks.

The communicative approach recommends the use of contextualized, authentic or authentic-like materials with audio visual components which will engage learners in purposeful and meaningful use of language (Newby, 2015). However, the most frequently used material in both classrooms is minimal texts prepared by non-native speakers. Almost no extended texts or authentic materials have been used in these classes. The course book provided by the MNE has also been avoided by the teachers claiming that the level of the book is not suitable for their students. The students also agree with their teachers on the suitability of the book. Similarly, the research on different course books provided by the MNE for language learners in different levels and grades has shown that these materials do not promote communicative targets, or support learner-centeredness and student autonomy and that they do not include realistic and motivating content, and that there is a need for English course books to construct student-centered and student-initiated activities (Haznedar, 2009; Karababa, Serbes & Sahin, 2010; Isik, 2011; Saricoban & Can, 2012; Basal, Celen, Kaya & Bogaz, 2016).

The communicative approach values the important benefits of the native language knowledge since the research has proven that important amount of conceptual knowledge and skills is transmitted across languages (Spada, 2007). The most of the participants also consider the advantage of using their native language while teaching or learning grammar structures since it would be harder and more time-taking to understand such structures in the target language, but they prefer using the target language for meaningful and communicative activities.

In conclusion, the extent to which the Communicative Approach is being utilized in the lessons highly varies according to the teacher and the teaching context. Despite the students' similar attitudes, beliefs and expectations about their language learning, there is not a standard in their learning practices as opposed to the requirements of the general curriculum provided by the MNE. This appears to be mainly due to the discrepancies in the teachers' perceptions of their learner profiles, teaching preferences and so their teaching philosophies.

In order to adopt the communicative approach successfully in EFL countries like Turkey, the change and the employment should be steady and the countries' particular EFL contexts and the teachers' perceptions of an innovation should be considered. Also, changes should be done by considering students' previous educational habits and so non-English speaking countries should combine communicative and non-communicative activities in English lessons since combining the communicative approach with traditional teaching techniques is advantageous for EFL students. Moreover, pre-service and in-service teacher training programs are not sufficient enough for teachers to implement such an innovation in actual teaching contexts; therefore, continuous teacher training and teacher development opportunities focusing on real classroom applications, especially within the crucial first few years of the innovation period are needed to support the application of any innovation in a curriculum.

References

Akalin, S., & Zengin, B. (2007). Turkiye'de halkin yabanci dil ile ilgili algilari. [People's perceptions about foreign languages in Turkey]. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies,* 3(1), 181-201.

Akpinar, B., & Aydin, K. (2009). Cok duyulu yabanci dil ogretimi. [Multi sensory foreign language teaching]. *Tubav Bilim Dergisi,* 2(1), 105-112.

Akpinar-Dellal, N., & Cinar, S. (2011). Yabanci dil egitiminde iletisimsel yararci yaklasim, ogretmen rolleri, davranislari ve sinif ici iletisim. [Communicative pragmatist approach, teacher roles, behaviors and classroom interaction in foreign language teaching]. *Dil Dergisi,* 154, 21-36.

Al Asmari, A. (2015). Communicative language teaching in efl university context: Challenges for teachers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 6(5), 976-984.

Allen, P., Frohlich, M., & Spada, N. (1983). The Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching: An Observation Scheme. Retrieved September 10, 2014 from

http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED275155.pdf .

Alptekin, C., & Tatar, S. (2011). Research on foreign language teaching and learning in Turkey (2005–2009). *Language Teaching*, 44(3), 328-353.

Altan, M. Z. (2006). Preparation of foreign language teachers in Turkey: A challenge for the 21st century. *Dil Dergisi*, 134, 49-54.

Ari, A. (2014). Ilkogretim altinci sinif ingilizce dersi ogretim programina iliskin ogretmen gorusleri. [Teachers' perceptions about the curriculum for the 6th grade English lesson]. *Kuramsal Egitimbilim Dergisi*, 7(1), 172-194.

Arslan, A., & Coskun, A. (2012). Avrupa dilleri ortak cerceve programi: Turkiye ve dunyada neler oluyor?. [The common european framework of reference for languages: what is happening in Turkey and in the world?]. *Abant Izzet Baysal Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu Dergisi*, 12, 1-19.

Basal, A., Celen, K. M., Kaya, H., & Bogaz, S. N. (2016). An investigation into illustrations in English course books in a Turkish context. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(3), 525-536.

Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching.* New York: Longman.

Celik, S. (2006). A concise examination of the artificial battle between native and non-native speaker teachers of english in Turkey. *Kastamonu Egitim Dergisi,* 14(2), 371-376.

Celik, S., & Arikan, A. (2012). Ogretmen yetistirme programlarinin ingilizce ogretmen adaylarini ilkogretimde ingilizce ogretimine ne kadar hazirladigina yonelik nitel bir arastirma. [A qualitative study of the effectiveness of teacher education programs in preparing primary school english language teachers]. *Pamukkale Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Dergisi*, 32(32), 77-87.

Coskun, A. (2011). Investigation of the application of communicative language teaching in the english language classroom: A case study on teachers' attitudes in Turkey. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching,* 2(1), 85-110.

Crawford, J. (2004). The role of materials in the language classroom. In J.C. Richards, W.A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching* (pp. 80-91). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Demir, S., & Demir, A. (2012). Turkiye'de yeni lise ogretim programlari: Sorunlar beklentiler ve oneriler. [New high school instructional programs in Turkey: problems, expectations and suggestions]. *Ilkogretim Online*, 11(1), 35-50.

Di Paolo, A., & Tansel, A. (2015). Returns to foreign language skills in a developing country: The case of Turkey. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 51(4), 407-421.

Harmer, J. (1987). *The practice of english language teaching.* New York: Longman.

Haznedar, B. (2009). Remarks on Foreign Language Education Policies in Turkey: A Critical Evaluation of English Primary Textbooks. *Paper presented in 1. Uluslararasi Egitim Arastirmalari Konferansi* in Canakkale 18 Mart Universitesi, Canakkale, May 1 to 3, 2009.

Incecay, G., & Incecay, V. (2009). Turkish university students' perceptions of communicative and non-communicative activities in EFL classroom. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 1(1), 618-622.

Isik, A. (2008). Yabanci dil egitiminde yanlislar nereden kaynaklaniyor?. [Where do the problems in foreign language teaching stem from?]. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies,* 4(2), 15-26.

Isik, A. (2011). Language education and elt materials in Turkey from the path dependence perspective. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 40(40), 256-266.

Karababa, Z. C., Serbes, I., & Sahin, A. F. (2010). Evaluation of the textbook breeze in terms of the a2 level criteria determined in the European language portfolio. *Research on Youth and Language,* 4(2), 251-263.

Karakas, A. (2013). Is communicative language teaching a panacea in elt-student and teacher perspectives. *Journal of Second and Multiple Language Acquisition*, 1(1), 1-20.

Kirkgoz, Y. (2007). English language teaching in Turkey policy changes and their implementations. *RELC Journal*, 38(2), 216-228.

Kirkgoz, Y. (2008). A case study of teachers' implementation of curriculum innovation in English language teaching in Turkish primary education. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 24(7), 1859-1875.

Lalor, J., Lorenzi, F., & Rami, J. (2015). Developing professional competence through assessment: constructivist and reflective practice in teacher-training. *Journal of Educational Research*, 58, 45-66.

Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine": Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *Tesol Quarterly,* 32(4), 677-703.

Liao, J., & Zhao, D. (2012). Grounded theory approach to beginning teachers' perspectives of communicative language teaching practice. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 9, 76-90.

Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mowlaie, B., & Rahimi, A. (2010). The effect of teachers' attitude about communicative language teaching on their practice: Do they practice what they preach?. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 1524-1528.

Nergis, A. (2011). Foreign language teacher education in Turkey: A historical overview. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 181-185.

Newby, D. (2015). The role of theory in pedagogical grammar: A cognitive + communicative approach. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 13-34.

Ngoc, K. M., & Iwashita, N. (2012). A comparison of learners' and teachers' attitudes towards communicative language teaching at two universities in Vietnam. *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, 7, 25-49.

Oral, Y. (2010). Turkiye'de yabanci dil egitim politikalari baglaminda ingilizce: 'Elestirel bir calisma'. [English in terms of foreign language teaching policies in Turkey: a critical work]. *Alternatif Egitim E-Dergisi,* 1, 59-68.

Ortactepe, D., & Akyel, A. S. (2015). The effects of a professional development program on english as a foreign language teachers' efficacy and classroom practice. *TESOL Journal*. doi: 10.1002/tesj.185.

Ozsevik, Z. (2010). *The Use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Turkish EFL Teachers' perceived difficulties in ımplementing CLT in Turkey.* MA Thesis, Published. Illinois: University of Illinois.

Paker, T. (2012). Turkiye'de neden yabanci dil (ingilizce) ogretemiyoruz ve neden ogrencilerimiz iletisim kurabilecek duzeyde ingilizce ogrenemiyor?. [Why can't we teach a foreign language (english) in Turkey and why can't our students learn English well enough to interract?]. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 32(32), 89-94.

Phipps, S., & Borg, S. (2009). Exploring tensions between teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices. *System,* 37(3), 380-390.

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today.* The USA: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. H. (2002). *Approaches and methods in language teaching.* The USA: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative ınquiry in tesol.* The US: Palgrave Macmillan.

Saricoban, A. (2013). Pre-service elt teachers' attitudes towards computer use: A turkish survey. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 53, 59-78.

Saricoban, A., & Can, N. (2012). An evaluation of the 9 th grade local and the international english course books in terms of aims and methodology. *The Online Journal of Counselling and Education*, 1(4), 8-17.

Saricoban, A., & Oz, H. (2014). Research into pre-service english teachers' intercultural communicative competence (icc) in Turkish context. *Anthropologist*, 18(2), 523-531.

Seferaj, K. (2009). *Investigating the degree into which CLT is ımplemented in twenty-three EFL classes in an East-European post-communist country.* PhD Thesis, Published. Leicester: University of Leicester.

Solak, E., & Bayar, A. (2015). Current challenges in english language learning in turkish efl context. *Participatory Educational Research (PER)*, 2(1), 106-115.

Spada, N. (2007). Communicative language teaching: Current status and future prospects. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of english language teaching (*pp. 271-288). New York: Springer.

Spada, N., & Frohlich, M. (1995). *Communicative orientation of language teaching observation scheme coding conventions and applications.* Sydney: NCELTR.

Tok, H. (2010). Comparing Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Effective Foreign Language Teaching: A Case Study in Turkey. *Paper presented in International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications* in Antalya, November 11 to13, 2010.

Turnuklu, A. (2000). Egitimbilim arastirmalarinda etkin olarak kullanilabilecek nitel bir arastirma teknigi: Gorusme. [A qualitative research technique to be used in educational sciences studies effectively: interview]. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Egitim Yonetimi Dergisi*, 6(4), 543-559.

Uysal, H. H. (2012). Evaluation of an in-service training program for primary-school language teachers in Turkey. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(7), 14-29.

Yigit, E. A., Kiyici, F. B., & Cetinkaya, G. (2014). Evaluating the testing effect in the classroom: An effective way to retrieve learned information. *Journal of Educational Research*, 54, 99-116.

Yildirim, A., & Simsek, H. (1999). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel arastirma teknikleri.* Ankara: Seckin Yayinlari.

Zorba, M. G., & Arikan, A. (2016). A study of anatolian high schools' 9th grade english language curriculum in relation to the cefr. *Usak Universitesi Egitim Arastirmalari Dergisi*, 2(2), 13-24.

9. Sınıf İngilizce Sınıflarında İletişimsel Yaklaşımın Kullanımı

Atıf:

Denkci-Akkas, F. & Coker, B. (2016). The use of communicative approach in 9th grade efl classes. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 65, 71-90 10.14689/ejer.2016.65.05

Özet

Problem Durumu: Günümüzde pek çok alanda yaşanan hızlı gelişmeleri takip edebilmek adına çok dillilik, bunun sonucunda da ikinci yabancı dil eğitimi bir lüks olmaktan çıkarak bir gereklilik haline gelmiştir. Uluslararası iletişimde en geçerli dil olan İngilizcenin öğretimine Türk eğitim sistemi içinde de her zaman önem ve öncelik verilmiştir. Yabancı dilin daha iyi ve etkili öğretilmesini sağlamak için yapılan araştırmaların ortaya çıkardığı yenilikler doğrultusunda Türkiye'de de değişikliklere gidilerek öğretmeni merkezden çeken, daha çok öğrenci merkezli ve süreç odaklı bir yaklaşıma göre ikinci yabancı dil öğretim müfredatı yeniden yapılandırılmıştır. Böylece süreç odaklı yeni bir yaklaşım benimsenmiş ve öğrencinin söylemi anlamasını ve üretmesini sağlayan her türlü beceri ve strateji ile öğrencilerin beceri ve potansiyellerini keşfedeceği öğrenme ortamları önem kazanmıştır. Öğrencilerin sınıf dışında öğrendikleri dili kendi kendilerine kullanmalarını ve karşılaşacakları sorunları kendi kendilerine çözmelerini sağlamak hedeflenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın odaklandığı ortaöğretim 9. sınıfları da kapsayan program da iletişimsel yaklaşım temel alınarak hazırlanmış, kazanımlar dört dil becerisine ve öğrenciyi merkeze alacak şekilde düzenlenmiştir.

1960'ların sonlarında ortaya çıkan iletişimsel yaklaşımın odağında belirli bağlamlarda anlamın kişiler arasında iletilmesini, yorumlanmasını ve müzakere edilmesini sağlayan iletişim edinci yer alır. İletişim edinci; dilbilgisi edinci, söylem edinci, strateji edinci ve toplumsal dil edinci gibi alt faktörlerden oluşur. Bu yetilerin kazanılması ve öğrenmenin desteklenmesi için bireyin gerçek iletişime dayalı, dili anlamlı görevleri yerine getirmek üzere bir araç olarak anlamlı bir şekilde kullandığı etkinlikler yapması gerekmektedir. İletişim edincinin tüm alt faktörleri eşit derecede önemlidir. Öğrenciler anlamlı bir hedefe ulaşmak için dili pragmatik, otantik ve fonksiyonel bir şekilde kullanabilmelidirler. Bu nedenle, iletişimsel etkinliklerde dil, verilen görevi tamamlamak üzere bir araç olarak kullanılmalıdır.

Öte yandan, iletişimsel yaklaşım uygulamalarının özellikle öğretmenlerin bu yönteme ilişkin anlayışlarına bağlı olarak çeşitlilik gösterdiği; öğretmenlerin hem bu yönteme karşı algılarının birbirlerinden farklı olduğu hem de algıları ile gerçekteki uygulamalarının tutarlı olmadığı görülmektedir. Bu da, eğitim-öğretim uygulamalarındaki değişikliklerin uygulanmasında öğretmenlerin önemli bir faktör olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Aynı durum, Türkiye'deki yabancı dil öğretimi uygulamaları için de geçerlidir. Özellikle uzun süreli yerleşmiş öğretim uygulamalarına sahip olan öğretmenler için alışkanlıklarını yeni bir yaklaşımla

değiştirmek kolay bir iş değildir. Bu nedenle, program metinlerindeki teorik değişimlerin uygulamada arzu edilen değişimleri garanti edeceğini varsaymak mümkün değildir.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu çalışmanın amacı da MEB (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı) tarafından okullara ücretsiz olarak dağıtılan ders kitaplarının kullanıldığı 9. sınıf İngilizce derslerinin ne kadar iletişime dayalı olduğunu belirlemek ve mevcut durumu öğretmen ve öğrenci açısından incelemektir.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Bu çalışmada betimsel verilere dayanan nitel araştırma yöntemleri kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada veriler "Dil Öğretiminin İletişimsel Odağı" (COLT) gözlem formu ve görüşme soruları ile toplanmıştır. 9. sınıf İngilizce dersleri doğal ortamında gözlemlenmiştir. Öğrenme-öğretme süreçlerine herhangi bir müdahale yapılmamış, yalnızca var olan durum betimlenmiştir. Ancak gözlem formlarıyla elde edilen veriler oran hesaplamaları yapılarak analiz edildiğinden betimleme sayısal değerlerle yapılmıştır. Bu durum, araştırmaya nicel bir özellik de katmaktadır. Bu betimlemeye görüşme soruları yardımıyla araştırma konusu olan öğrenci ve öğretmenlerin de bakış açıları katılmıştır. Görüşme soruları ile toplanan veriler için içerik analizi yapılarak genel temalar ortaya konmuştur. Bu araştırmanın katılımcılarını, 2012-2013 eğitim-öğretim yılında İzmir ili Buca ilçesinde bulunan iki liseden birer 9. sınıfın öğrencileri ve bu sınıflarda derse giren İngilizce öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Bu iki okul MEB'e bağlı birer tipik genel lise ve Anadolu lisesi olmaları nedeniyle seçilmişlerdir. Her iki okulda da bir dönem boyunca her hafta bir ders saati gözlemlenmiştir.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Araştırmanın bulguları, gözlem yapılan sınıflarda iletişimin çoğunlukla öğretmen ile öğrenciler ya da sınıf arasında geçtiğini, öğrencilerin birbirleri ile iletişiminin hemen hemen hiç olmadığını, iletişimin içeriğinin çoğunlukla dilbilgisi üzerinde odaklandığını, bu içeriğin de baskın şekilde öğretmen tarafından belirlendiğini, öğrencilerin hemen hemen hiçbir zaman kendi kendilerine içerik seçme şansına sahip olmadığını, özellikle genel lise için dört dil becerisinden sadece yazma becerisi üzerinde durulduğunu ve sınıf içinde kullanılan materyallerin büyük ölçüde anadili İngilizce olmayan kişiler tarafından hazırlanan minimal metinlerden oluştuğunu, otantik materyallere hiç yer verilmediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Buna karşın, öğretmen ve öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmeler; öğrencilerin birbirleri ile iletişim kurmalarına imkân veren grup çalışmalarını dil öğrenme süreçleri için yararlı bulduklarını, bir dili akıcı konuşabilmeyi önemsediklerini, yeni ya da zor dilbilgisi kalıplarının öğretiminin dışında hedef dil kullanılmasını istediklerini, hatalarının iletişimi kesmeyecek şekilde ve genellikle öğretmen tarafından düzeltilmesini tercih ettiklerini, öğretmenin dil öğretimi sırasında iyi bir rol model olmakla, öğrencinin de sorumluluklarını yerine getirerek bu modeli izlemekle yükümlü bulduklarını, iletişimin temeli olarak görülen konuşma becerisini önemsediklerini ve sınıfta kullanılan ders kitabını seviyelerine uygun olmadığı için yararlı bulmadıklarını göstermektedir.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri: Araştırmanın sonuçları, öğrenciler arası iletişimi destekleyen grup çalışmalarının yararlarına olan inanca rağmen sınıf içinde daha çok

öğretmen merkezli bir öğretimin yapıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Çeşitli araştırmalar, öğretmenlerin bu tür etkinlikleri yapmaktan kaçınmalarına neden olan çeşitli güçlüklerin varlığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu nedenle, bu güçlüklerin aşılması için öğretmenlere destek olunabilir ve yabancı dil öğretimini daha öğrenci merkezli hale getirecek olan grup çalışmalarından faydalanmaları için öğretmenlere destek olunabilir. İletişimsel yaklaşımın ana hedefi öğrencinin anlamlı iletişim kurmasını sağlamak olmasına rağmen, gözlemlenen sınıflarda dilbilgisi yapılarına odaklanıldığı görülmüştür. Öğretmenlerin bu yönde eğilim göstermelerinde dilbilgisi yapılarına ve kelime bilgisine odaklanan ve çoktan seçmeli soru tipini kullanan ulusal sınavlar etkili olabilir. Öğrencilerin iletişim becerilerini ölçen bir sınav sistemi öğretmenlerin bu eğilimlerini değiştirmelerinde etkili olabilir. İletişimsel yaklaşıma göre, yabancı dil öğretim sürecinde otantik materyallerin kullanımı anlamlı öğrenmeyi desteklemektedir. Ancak, derslerde bu tür materyallere hiç yer verilmediği gözlenmiştir. Kullanılan ders kitabının da iletişimsel yaklaşıma dayanan bir dil öğretim sürecini desteklemediği ifade edilmiştir. Genel olarak yabancı dil öğretimi için devlet tarafından sağlanan kaynakların bu bakımdan yetersiz olduğunu ortaya koyan çeşitli araştırmalar vardır. Materyallerin yetersiz görülen yönleri geliştirilerek dil öğretim sürecinin daha fazla iletişime dayanmasına katkı sağlanabilir. Ayrıca, iletişimsel yaklaşımın sınıf içinde uygulanma düzeyinin büyük oranda öğretmene ve eğitim ortamına bağlı olduğu görülmektedir. Bu durumun temelde öğrencilerin profillerine, öğretmenlerin eğitim önceliklerine ve dolayısı ile eğitim felsefelerine ilişkin bakış açılarındaki farklılıklardan kaynaklanıyor olabileceği söylenebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce öğretimi, öğrenci görüşleri, öğretmen görüşleri, sınıf içi gözlem.