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A STUDY OF ANATOLIAN HIGH SCHOOLS' 9TH GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM IN RELATION TO THE CEFR

ANADOLU LİSELERİ 9. SINIF İNGİLİZCE PROGRAMININ AVRUPA DİLLERİ ÖĞRETİMİ ORTAK ÇERÇEVE PROGRAMI AÇISINDAN BİR İNCELEMESİ

M. Galip Zorba*, Arda Arikan**

* Lecturer, Akdeniz University, Faculty of Letters, galipzorba@hotmail.com

** Assoc. Prof. Dr., Akdeniz University, Faculty of Letters, ardaari@gmail.com

Abstract: The aim of this study is to understand the main principles of the CEFR and to what extent Anatolian High Schools' 9th grade EFL curriculum meet the principles advocated in that document. Hence, document analysis was used as a method to seek answers to the research questions set by a comparative analysis of the CEFR and Anatolian High Schools' 9th grade EFL curriculum. As a result of this process, the most prominent principles of the CEFR were determined. During the analysis, these principles were compared with the curriculum. Then, the gains of the curriculum for the five language skills were analyzed through a checklist whose items came from the A2 level descriptors. The results showed that the curriculum embraces 7 out of 9 principles of the CEFR although some remain in the background. Besides, the analysis of the gains for the five language skills showed that there is an unequal distribution in the gains for the five skills.

Keywords: CEFR, EFL Curriculum, Anatolian High School.

Özet: Bu çalışmanın amacı ADÖÇEP'in başlıca prensiplerini belirlemek ve Anadolu Liseleri 9. Sınıf İngilizce Programının bu prensiplerle ne derece örtüştüğünü incelemektir. Araştırma sorularına cevap bulmak amacıyla nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. ADÖÇEP ve Anadolu Liseleri 9. sınıf İngilizce Programı çalışma kapsamında karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenen dokümanlardır. Doküman analizi sonucunda ADÖÇEP'in başlıca prensipleri belirlenmiş ve İngilizce Programı da belirlenen bu prensiplere göre incelenmiştir. Ardından programda beş dil becerisinde belirtilen kazanımlar A2 dil seviyesi betimleyicileri esas alınarak hazırlanan kontrol listesi ile incelenmiştir. Sonuçlar İngilizce Programının ADÖÇEP'in 9 prensibinin 7 tanesini kapsadığını ancak bazı prensiplerin arka planda kaldığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca beş dil becerisinde belirtilen kazanımların incelenmesi sonucunda da beş dil becerisindeki kazanımlar arasında orantısız bir dağılım göze çarpmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ADÖÇEP, İngilizce Öğretim Programı, Anadolu Liseleri

Introduction

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR hereafter), which was developed by the Council of Europe (CoE hereafter), has been on the agenda in the field of foreign language teaching for more than a decade although it has its origin in over 40 years of work on modern languages (Heyworth, 2006). What has made the CEFR so popular in the last decade are the changes in methods of teaching, the nature of the materials used, the description of what is to be learned and the assessment style used in evaluating the learning outcomes (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002). In the light of these innovations, the Ministry of National Education (MONE hereafter) has decided to revise Turkey's English as a Foreign Language (EFL hereafter) curricula and course materials in accordance with the CEFR similar to other European countries that have already made these adjustments. Hence, since 2004, the MONE has accepted the CEFR as a guide to be used while revising our EFL curricula. The Board of Education declared that the CEFR is a valuable source to be used for the development of foreign language curriculum, and the new program will be based on the CEFR (Karaçalı, 2004).

What is the CEFR?

The CEFR is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages and to standardize language learning across Europe by providing:

“a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis” (Council of Europe, 2001: p.1).

In other words, as Little (2006) argues, the CEFR is offered as a basis for sustained international co-operation in the development of language education policy, the construction of language curricula, the implementation of language learning and teaching, and the assessment of language learning outcomes (p. 169). In a similar vein, Moreno (2003) defines it as a document setting the standards of language teaching and learning just as it is believed that the document enhances the transparency of courses, syllabuses and qualifications by planning of:

- language learning programs in terms of their assumptions, objectives and content.
- language certification in terms of the content syllabus of examinations and assessment criteria.
- self-directed learning in terms of raising the learners' awareness of their present state of knowledge, self-setting of feasible and worthwhile objectives, selection of materials and self-assessment (Council of Europe, 2001: p.6)

Similarly, the overall aims of the CEFR are stated so as to:

- make language learning courses, syllabuses and qualifications more transparent,
- establish well-defined objective criteria for describing language proficiency,
- aid reciprocal recognition of qualifications thereby facilitating European mobility (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 1).

The approach adopted in the development of the CEFR is called “action-oriented approach”. This approach views users and learners of a language primarily as ‘social agents’ who have tasks to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment, and with a particular field of action (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 9). In other words, the action-oriented approach means that tasks are related to texts in a way to allow the language user to utilize his/her language and general competences while making use of strategies in language use and learning, if necessary (Morrow, 2004). The key elements in this approach are communicative language competences, language activities (production, reception, interaction and mediation), domains (public, occupational, educational and vocational), tasks and strategies since these key aspects play a vital role in the development of skills which are essential in language learning. The action-oriented approach sees language as an aspect of a

total communicative event, in which the participants exchange information and achieve mutual understanding by all means open to them (Council of Europe, 2002b). Therefore, knowledge is not seen as an end in itself. Instead, it is the necessary basis for action (Council of Europe, 2001; 2002a; 2002b).

The CEFR in Turkey

Although what the CEFR aims and promotes to do seems a breakthrough in foreign language education, what the document offers, its application and implementation have paved the way for various problems in Europe and Turkey. The previous EFL curriculum for primary schools published in 2006 was based on the CEFR. However, studies have shown that various problems occurred during the implementation and application of it. Sezgin's (2007) study revealed that the lack of teacher training, poor needs analysis procedures and haphazardly selected or prepared coursebooks influenced the curricular change negatively. Similarly, Doğan's (2007) study on the applicability of the CEFR in primary and secondary schools showed that the steps taken by the MONE were not sufficient for the applicability of the CEFR in Turkey while revealing that the aims and gains of the EFL curricula were stated vaguely and the coursebooks prepared were not suitable for the implementation of the CEFR in Turkish EFL classrooms. In another study, Dağ (2008) assessed secondary school students' EFL performance in relation to the suggestions made in the CEFR and found that the performance of students were not close to A2 level although otherwise was stated in the curriculum. In addition, the results also indicated that coursebooks used in English courses in secondary schools were inadequate in comparison to the CEFR criteria along with the course hours, content and the teaching methodology proposed in the curriculum. In a similar study, Sarıca (2009) analyzed 210 8th grade students' language levels in relation to the CEFR criteria and found that 95% of the students were A1 level students in performance although they were expected to be A2 level students as stated by the MONE.

Yiğit's (2010) study on the coherence of the 6th grade EFL curriculum with the CEFR showed that the 6th grade EFL curriculum meets 36% of linguistic competences (grammatical accuracy, vocabulary range, cohesion, coherence, fluency, sociolinguistic appropriateness, phonology control etc.) defined by the CEFR as A2 level descriptors. On the other hand, it was also found out that the curriculum was totally in line with the CEFR in terms five language skills defined in the CEFR. It can be inferred from the results of that study that the 6th grade EFL curriculum focuses on developing five language skills although major linguistic competences are severely ignored. The results of these studies and structural changes in Turkey's education system pointed to the fact that the EFL curriculum for grades 4 to 8 was abandoned and a totally new EFL curriculum for grades 2-8 was introduced by the collaboration of the MONE and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey.

When the context of Anatolian High Schools is considered, Tosun (2007) compared the CEFR descriptors with the descriptors set by the MONE. The results showed that the matching percentages were not adequate at all grades. For instance, the matching percentage of the 9th grade descriptors with the CEFR descriptors was only 10%. The results also showed that the MONE descriptors involved vague statements similar to what was found by Doğan (2007).

As for foreign language intensive high schools, Yel (2009) evaluated the effectiveness of English courses in Anatolian High Schools in Sivas. The results revealed that the course content and materials were uninteresting for students. In addition, materials were inadequate in providing opportunities for communicative and student-centered activities, teaching and learning process lacked variety and the assessment procedures were not parallel with the objectives of the curriculum. These results support the idea that the implementation of the CEFR in EFL curricula and the reflection of it into the coursebooks published by the MONE are a serious concern about the effectiveness of English courses.

Karababa and Saraç-Süzer (2010) evaluated the coursebook *Breeze* prepared for general high schools in Turkey and found that the coursebook was claimed to be prepared by considering the principles of the CEFR although many problems were apparent in the coursebook. The results showed that the offered tasks did not match with communicative purposes and fell short in promoting student-centeredness and learner autonomy. In addition, the distribution of the descriptors was not proportionate in the coursebook as well.

National studies about the CEFR have focused on curricular problems and their reflections on classrooms whereas the foci of international studies have been on assessment, testing, what the CEFR includes and how it has been perceived. Alderson and others (2004) detected a problematic side of the CEFR in their study. They stated that the main chapters, specifically pointing to the CEFR chapters (4, 5 and 7), gave details of themes, purposes, activities, strategies, texts, processes, competences and tasks (cited in Alderson & others, 2006). However, they criticized that although details were given, it was not specified in the CEFR which of these details should be applied at which specific common reference level.

Fulcher (2004) criticized the CEFR in his study in terms of its weaknesses in language testing. Similarly, Hesselgreen (2003) also criticized the CEFR in terms of the assessment of the language of young learners in Norway by using the descriptors in the CEFR. Weir (2005) pointed out its limitations and stated that for tests developers, the CEFR lacked clear purpose, specification of the sub-skills of comprehension, response format (e.g. knowledge telling or knowledge transformation), channel (face-to-face or telephone conversation), discourse modes, time constraints (how much time would be required for carrying out various activities at different levels), text length (e.g. 1000 words, instead of short or long), topic (what sort of topics should be given at each level), structural competences (what level or range of syntax might help define a particular proficiency level) whereas functional competence was well mapped out in it. Little (2006), on the other hand, focused on the methodology behind it and pointed out that not all of the descriptors were based on empirical accounts as can be seen in the case of written production which had obviously been developed out of the descriptors taken from spoken production.

As for how it is perceived, Jones and Seville (2009) carried out a study on European language policy in terms of the CEFR and learning. They stated that the CEFR had serious drawbacks to be dealt with. They criticized that it had been used as an instrument of centralization and harmonization and was regarded as a system or curriculum rather than a framework. Similarly, Little (2011) studied the CEFR in terms of how it has been perceived. He stated that the CEFR had been used as a system, new approach or method in classrooms. However, it was designed to serve as a framework in order to set language learning standards. Hence, the aim of this qualitative study is to understand the main principles of the CEFR and to answer the question of to what extent Anatolian High Schools' 9th grade EFL curriculum meet the principles of the CEFR. The CEFR and Anatolian High Schools' 9th grade EFL curriculum are accepted as the documents analyzed in this study. To be more exact, we tried to present a description of the prominent principles and skill-based gains set in the CEFR so as to understand to what extent Anatolian High Schools' 9th grade EFL curriculum matched with them.

Method

Qualitative research focuses on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive non-numerical data (written or visual) to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest (Gay, Milles & Airasian, 2009) and as a branch of it, content analysis is a research technique that qualitative researchers employ when the analyzed documents include considerable amount of data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). It tries to explain a phenomenon by means of analyzing such documents as books, articles, reports, plans, policy documents and journals, and of reducing data into comprehensible pieces (Jupp, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

To determine the principles of the CEFR according to which the curriculum was examined, the CEFR was exposed to multiple readings by the researchers. A technique called "pawing" (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) was used in understanding the CEFR as a document by reading the text carefully and marking textual pieces up with different colored highlighters. The curriculum was analyzed under two different sections. In the first section, the chapters about the structure of the curriculum, setting-up foreign language learning environment, the general features of the curriculum and assessment in foreign language learning were analyzed through a checklist prepared according to the determined principles of the CEFR.

The second section of the curriculum involved the gains for the five language skills. To analyze these gains, another checklist focusing on the A2 level descriptors was used. There were three main reasons for using the ELP descriptors. First, the descriptors used in the ELP were based on the CRL in the CEFR (Lenz & Schneider, 2004; Karababa & Saraç-Süzer, 2010). Second, these descriptors were adopted from

the ELP developed by the MONE for high school students. Lastly, the descriptors in the ELP were more explanatory and specific since the ELP was designed to be a learner tool. In short, the structure of the curriculum, setting-up foreign language learning environment, basic features of the curriculum, learning/teaching process and assessment sections were itemized and the key words determined through the first research question were sought in these items. After that, the gains at the A2 level in the five language skills were analyzed through the A2 level principles of the CEFR. Both researchers worked separately and compared their results to find if their results were compatible and found that more than 90% of their results were compatible. With the help of a senior researcher, all results were compared and the final version was accepted univocally.

Findings

Multiple readings of the CEFR revealed the existence of 9 principles that made the content of the CEFR as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Principles of the CEFR

Plurilingualism	Task-based learning	Self-assessment
Pluriculturalism	Interculturality	The use of the ELP
Communicative language teaching (CLT)	Learner autonomy	Learner-centeredness

The analyses of these principles showed that the CEFR intends to overcome language barriers in multilingual Europe through promoting language learning by means of setting some standards (Little, 2002) one of which is promoting plurilingualism in foreign language education. Thus, the CEFR suggests that the languages offered in educational institutions should be diversified and students given the opportunity to develop a plurilingual competence (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 5). In this sense, the promotion of respect for the diversity of languages and of learning more than one foreign language in school is significant (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 134). Pluriculturalism is brought with plurilingualism since it is believed that languages are indispensable aspects of cultures since communicating in a foreign language necessitates knowledge of the target language culture along with linguistic skills (Kozhemyakov, 2008). Pluriculturalism involves identifying with at least some of the values, beliefs and/or practices of two or more cultures, as well as acquiring the competences which are necessary for actively participating in those cultures during communication (Byram, 2009; p. 5). In addition to that, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism also promote the development of linguistic and communication awareness. Therefore, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism require the existence of one another. In this sense, the CEFR strongly endorses the idea that learners should value and develop their language repertoires and plurilingualism should be considered as a learning objective (Eisner, 2011). To do so, the CEFR suggests that there should be tasks and activities that develop plurilingual and pluricultural competences while teaching a foreign language (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 138).

Communicative language teaching is one of the key principles of the CEFR. The Threshold Level, the Vantage Level and the Waystage Level, all of which provide labels for the Common Reference Levels, are based on communicative language teaching approach (van Ek & Trim, 1990; Kohonen, 2003; Heyworth, 2006). Communicative language teaching suggests that communication is encouraged from the very beginning of learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2006; p. 156). Similarly, in the CEFR, communicative attempts are encouraged as well starting at the A1 level. The framework includes sub-scales which explain what a learner can do in different contexts. For instance, listening as a member of a live audience, reading for information and argument, informal discussion with friends, transactions to obtain goods and services and information exchange are some of the illustrative scales of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). As it is seen, all of the illustrative scales include specific contexts that a learner may encounter in daily life. Besides, communicative competence is the desired goal of communicative approach (Savignon, 2002; Richards & Rodgers, 2006). The CEFR offers a detailed guideline for communicative competences. It explains what a learner can do in linguistic, sociolinguistic and

pragmatic competences at six levels ranging from A1, being the lowest level, to C2, being the most advanced level in proficiency.

Task-based learning has a significant place in the CEFR. In fact, the action-oriented approach that the CEFR adopted is based on tasks. In this sense, the CEFR views language learners as 'social agents' who have tasks to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 9). Besides, communication and learning involve performance of tasks which are not solely language tasks even though they involve language activities and (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 15). Tasks allow language learners to use his/her language competences and general competences to exchange information for task achievement (Morrow, 2004; Council of Europe, 2002b). In addition, the CEFR promotes direct participation of learners in tasks in the target language which aim to actively involve learners in meaningful communication (Council of Europe, 2001). Learners are encouraged to plan and monitor their own learning by using a 'task' as the basic unit of learning (Nunan, 2004) so as to become autonomous learners. Therefore, task-based learning is an important principle of the CEFR since it is believed that it facilitates teaching and learning of foreign languages.

Education for intercultural understanding remains central to the CoE's activities to promote greater mutual understanding and acceptance of difference in Europe's multicultural and multilingual societies (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002). Thus, interculturality is accompanied by plurilingual and pluricultural objectives of the CEFR. Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) state that the communicative approach argues that language learners need the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways. Interculturality involves intercultural awareness, intercultural skills and know-how all of which enable the individual to develop an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 43). Interculturality also plays a significant role in communication since knowledge of the shared values and beliefs held by social groups in other countries and regions, such as religious beliefs, taboos, etc. are essential to intercultural communication (Council of Europe, 2001; p.11). Therefore, the CEFR suggests that intercultural awareness and skills should be integrated in foreign language learning since language learning is not solely based on teaching language skills (Council of Europe, 2001; p.104).

Another principle of the CEFR is learner autonomy. Learner autonomy can be defined as learners' ability to manage and master their own learning (Kohonen, 2003; p.28). One of the attempts of the CEFR is to promote learner autonomy so that further learning in the frame of lifelong learning is continued by individuals autonomously when teaching stops (Council of Europe, 2001). Hence, it is suggested that language learners need also to learn how to take initiatives to plan, structure and execute their own learning processes (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 141). In this way, learners actively participate in decision making process concerning their learning processes (Goullier, 2006). Besides, this active participation includes raising the learners' awareness of their present states of knowledge, self-setting viable objectives, selection of materials and self-assessment (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, the CEFR suggests that foreign language learning should aim to support learner autonomy.

Self-assessment is another principle of the CEFR. The CEFR states the necessity of the development of new teaching materials and new assessment tools that can be better adapted to measure the competences of language learners (Boldizar, 2010; p. 31). In this sense, the CEFR suggests the use of new assessment tools as self-assessment since it is an adaptable and also a vital component of learner autonomy. In addition, it also serves to promote development of learner autonomy since it is a tool which helps learners appreciate their strengths and recognize their weaknesses as well as orienting their learning more effectively (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 192). Hence, the CEFR adapted the descriptors to form a self-assessment grid so that learners can measure their strengths and weaknesses.

Another principle that the CEFR prioritizes is the use of the ELP. The use of the ELP is highly essential for the CEFR since it involves five of the principles of the CEFR such as plurilingualism, pluriculturalism, interculturality, learner autonomy and self-assessment; and it aims to develop them all (Council of Europe, 2001; Schneider & Lenz, 2001; Little, 2006). Therefore, the CEFR suggests the use of the ELP in language learning. In this sense, the MONE developed and accredited an ELP for high school students, and it has been used since 2003.

Learner-centeredness is the last principles of the CEFR. One of the main recommendations of the CoE to its member states is to promote a coherent, learner-centered methodology integrating aims, content, teaching, learning and assessment (Boldizar, 2010). Learner-centeredness has strong links with communicative language teaching, and gives priority to learners' needs (Nunan, 2004). Little (2006) states that the descriptors in the CEFR are an instrument of needs analysis although they embrace language skills. Besides, the CEFR places learners at the core of language learning process, through promoting learner autonomy, self-assessment and the ELP, all of which directly focus on learners. Moreover, the CEFR also promotes interaction which is one of the key aspects of learner-centeredness (Nunan, 2004). The CEFR gives high importance to interaction in language use and learning in view of its central role in communication (Council of Europe, 2001; p.14).

Table 2 shows the general aims of the curriculum. It can be seen that the curriculum aims to develop not only students' language competencies, but also their cultural and social skills that may have an effect on their linguistic output.

Table 2. The General Aims of the Curriculum

Items	CEFR Principles
1. To provide students to enjoy learning foreign language	Lerner-centeredness
2. To enable students to identify and to distinguish cultural values of the countries that speak the target language,	Interculturality CLT
3. To provide respect and tolerance to the others as well as their own values,	Interculturality
4. To provide opportunities for students to convey their own cultural values to foreigners	Interculturality
5. To provide opportunities to learn different cultures through written and spoken works,	Interculturality
6. To develop skills as self-expression, communication, collaboration, problem solving,	CLT
7. To provide individual, social and cultural development,	Interculturality
8. To develop four language skills,	CLT
9. To enrich vocabulary in the target language,	CLT
10. To develop learning skills through using information and communication technologies,	Task-based learning
11. To become adapted to the criteria determined in the CEFR.	CLT
12. To provide decisiveness for using foreign language through believing in the need of learning at least one foreign language.	Plurilingualism

(Curricular items are adapted from Secondary Schools' EFL Curriculum, 2011; p. 4)

As can be seen in Table 2, all of the items related with the general aims of the curriculum match with the principles of the CEFR. Learning the target language culture, developing skills as self-expression, communication, collaboration, problem solving along with the four language skills, vocabulary enrichment and using information and communication technologies directly affect communication in a positive way. The item 11 related to the criteria determined in the CEFR clearly states that the CEFR takes as a basis in the curriculum. It is stated that communication is not solely based on linguistic competence, it also requires sociolinguistic competence referring to the socio-cultural conditions of language use and pragmatic competence concerning the functional use of linguistic resources (Council of Europe, 2001). On the other hand, knowledge of the shared values and beliefs held by social groups in other countries are essential to intercultural communication (Council of Europe, 2001). Hence, the curriculum aims to intercultural development through teaching different cultures and cultural values of the countries that speak target language. In addition, the curriculum also aims to convey our cultural values to foreigners as a part of intercultural interaction, which shows that learning and expressing the native culture are also required for effective intercultural communication. Showing respect and tolerance to the others and our native values embracing learning different cultures refer to pluricultural

principles of the CEFR which aims to promote pluriculturalism. Besides, good knowledge of different cultures, with appropriate use of foreign language, paves the way for smooth and clear communication (Council of Europe, 2001). However, Table 2 shows that the general aims of the curriculum are dominated by the items referred to communicative language teaching and interculturality. Although such principles of the CEFR as plurilingualism and learner-centeredness are also included, there are not any items related to pluriculturalism and learner-autonomy.

Table 3. The General Features of the Curriculum

Items	CEFR Principles
1. The curriculum is based on communicative approach.	CLT
2. The target language is a means for communication.	CLT
3. Students are directed to understand what they learn and also directed to use what they understand in different environments.	-
4. Communication is used for meeting needs, improving their skills and being part of social life.	CLT
5. Language learning is not based on teaching only the rules and structures.	CLT
6. In communicative approach, productive activities should be used whenever possible.	CLT
7. The curriculum includes the principles of action oriented approach.	Task-based learning
8. The curriculum aims to develop creative language use through classroom activities, learning through projects.	CLT
9. The curriculum includes the principles of learner-centeredness which involves individualized learning and learner autonomy.	Learner-centeredness
10. The curriculum includes process-centered awareness which involves learning awareness, language awareness and intercultural awareness.	-
11. The curriculum includes holistic language experience which involves content-based learning and real and complicated language learning environment.	-
12. The gains of the curriculum place four skills at the center of language learning process.	CLT
13. The gains of the curriculum place students at the center of language learning process.	Learner-centeredness
14. The gains of language skills are based on the CEFR.	CLT
15. The curriculum also includes teaching such sub-skills as identifying, understanding, questioning, ordering, categorizing, associating, summarizing and matching.	CLT
16. Through these sub-skills, it is aimed that students establish communication in an effective way.	CLT
17. Through these sub-skills, it is aimed that students develop positive attitudes towards language learning.	-
18. Through these sub-skills, it is aimed that students develop reading and writing habits.	-
19. Paying attention to correct and adequate level of understanding in four language skills is promoted.	CLT
20. In the first step, students' attention should be attracted to daily life and some topics that they may need.	CLT
21. In the second step, it should be determined that what language structures students need to learn, on what purpose they need to these structures and through which activities they learn these structures.	Learner-centeredness

22. During the process, incorrect pronunciation and other language use should be corrected.	-
23. Knowledge and skills that are learned should be reinforced through projects and performance activities.	CLT Task-based learning

Table 3 shows that 19 out of 23 items match with the principles of the CEFR. Fifteen of these items refer to communicative language teaching. Language is seen as a part of social life that is used to communicate for different purposes. Therefore, developing linguistic competence through teaching the linguistic rules and structures is not enough to use the target language in a communicative way. Instead, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are also required to establish effective communication by using the target language. In order to do so, communicative language teaching regards the target language as a whole, and thus developing productive and receptive skills have equal significance. However, Table 3 shows that the item 6 contradicts with the items 12 and 14. It can be inferred from this contradiction that the curriculum prioritizes the productive skills although the gains are said to have placed the four language skills at the center of language learning whereas the CEFR give priority to none of them. Besides, development in creative language use requires the development in the four skills as well since these skills are bound to each other. In this sense, the curriculum includes teaching such sub-skills as identifying, understanding, questioning, ordering, categorizing, associating, summarizing and matching whose main aim is to develop effective communication since language learners' communicative language competence is activated through such language activities, involving reception, production, interaction or mediation (Council of Europe, 2001; p. 14). In addition to these, the curriculum gives importance to creative language use through classroom activities and learning through projects. Similarly, the CEFR gives importance to creative language use as well by providing specific descriptors for creative language use, especially for creative writing. Moreover, it is also stated in the CEFR that tasks which involve a set of purposeful actions for achieving defined goals and specific outcomes require to be supported by such steps as creative language use, taking part in a discussion etc (Council of Europe, 2001).

Three general features of the curriculum are related to learner-centeredness. Through individualized learning and learner autonomy, the curriculum places students at the center, and thus the gains of the curriculum reflect students' needs and goals. Furthermore, the curriculum emphasizes what to learn, why learn and how to learn.

Table 3 shows that there are only two items about task-based learning. Action-oriented approach that the CEFR and the curriculum adopted focuses on activating language learning through communicative tasks (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, it is regarded as a reference of task-based learning. Besides, the curriculum aims to reinforce knowledge and through projects and performance activities. Since these activities involve communicative tasks, it can be said that the last item refers to task-based learning. On the other hand, the reason why there are a very few items addressed to task-based learning can be explained through several principles of task-based learning that overlap with the principles of communicative language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2006).

Table 4. The Overall Results for the Gains

	The Gains of the Curriculum <i>f</i>	The Gains matching with A2 Level <i>F</i>	%
Listening	38	16	42.10
Spoken Interaction	52	19	36.53
Spoken Production	37	12	32.43
Reading	52	17	32.69
Writing	56	26	46.42
TOTAL	235	90	38.29

Table 4 shows the distributions of both gains and the matching items with percentages. The writing skill and the listening skill have the most appropriate gains to the A2 level descriptors. It can be inferred that the curriculum prioritizes these two skills although it is stated that none of the skills are ignored. On the other hand, the total result shows that only 38.29% of the gains are appropriate to the A2 level descriptors. Therefore, it can be deduced that the adaptations of the criteria determined in the CEFR for the five language skills are not satisfactorily succeeded as the MONE expected. Subtle, irrelevant and stereotypical gains might lead to the low percentage in total. Some of the gains do not present open and definite statements as they do not clarify context and to what extent students are expected to fulfil the statements whereas the statements in the A2 level clearly explains how the target language is used in these skills through certain adverbs as “clearly”, “slowly” and “directly” as well as defining discourse with certain adjectives as “simple” and “short”. Besides, domains and contexts are stated in the A2 level descriptors along with the task such as understanding the main idea, finding the most important information, making simple purchases, giving basic descriptions of events and briefly introducing oneself in a letter. As for the irrelevant gains, the curriculum includes some gains that are not addressed to communicative use of the target language such as writing stories, speaking in a self-confident way and defining appropriate title to reading texts. In addition to subtle and irrelevant statements, such stereotypical statements as enjoying keeping diary or reading poetry and a wishing to speak about certain topics have negative influence on the low percentage in total. Hence, it can be said that the statements that explain the gains for the five skills are not explanatory and comprehensible enough setting realistic and viable gains.

Conclusion

The results of this study showed that the curriculum embraces 7 out of 9 principles of the CEFR although some remain in the background. Besides, the analysis of the gains for the five language skills showed that there is an unequal distribution in the gains for the five skills. The study has some contextual limitations. The study is limited to the evaluation of Anatolian High School’s 9th grade EFL curriculum within the framework of the CEFR. Therefore, some items observed in the curriculum may be regarded as unsuitable in relation the CEFR although they might be methodologically and theoretically correct. Furthermore, some sections of the curriculum are not included in the study as they do not serve to the aims of the study. However, our findings are in parallel with those studies by Doğan (2007), Tosun (2007), Dağ (2008), Sarıca (2009) and Yiğit (2010), which showed that there is serious discrepancy between Turkish EFL curricula and the suggestions made in the CEFR.

The gains stated in the curriculum are only analyzed through the A2 level descriptors since they refer to the five language skills stated in the CEFR. Lastly, only one coursebook that has been used by 9th grade students is analyzed as a course material. Therefore, our findings related with this coursebook cannot be generalized so as to speak for all of the coursebooks studied in Anatolian High Schools. However, noting that one third of students has negative feelings, ideas or images about the coursebooks they follow (Kesen, 2010), coursebooks should be studied, in future studies, to attain a more in-depth view of these coursebooks in practice and specifically by comparing them with the CEFR (Arıkan, 2015). When the situation of the EFL teachers in Turkey is considered, as stated by Mirici (2015, p.51), “despite some concrete efforts for training foreign language teachers through common European standards, there is a lot to do for a truly successful and fruitful implementation across the country.”

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