SELF-REPORTS OF PRESCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RELATED CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

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This study aimed to investigate the views of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language instruction in preschool years, their self-reported practices, challenges and addressing challenges in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. Twenty participants, 11 of whom took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners in undergraduate degree and nine of whom did not, were interviewed using an interview protocol designed and piloted by the researcher. The findings revealed that the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years was mostly about children's developing an awareness of another language. Besides, it was found that teachers use story-based and theme-based curriculum designs in planning, and they aim that their plans should attract children's attention. In implementation, Total Physical Response was revealed to be the most frequently used teaching method with songs, games, course books and flashcards. Participants revealed they mostly use school reports,

portfolios and observation in assessment. The study indicated that lack of knowledge of child development and classroom management were their main challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. Finally, it was found that participants consult their colleagues and make use of extra resources to address the challenges they face while planning and implementing; however, they do not do much to address the challenges while assessing children's foreign language learning. This study suggests that trainings, workshops mainly on the characteristics of very young learners and cooperation of all of the educational stakeholders are necessary to increase the quality of foreign language teaching in early childhood years.

Keywords: Preschool foreign language teachers, purpose of foreign language teaching, planning, implementation, assessment

ÖZ

OKUL ÖNCESİ KURUMLARDA GÖREV YAPAN YABANCI DİL
ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ERKEN DİL ÖĞRENİMİ VE BU KONUDA
KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR HAKKINDAKİ ÖZBİLDİRİMLERİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı okul öncesi kurumlarda görev yapan yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin erken yabancı dil öğreniminin amacı hakkındaki görüşlerini belirlemek; planlama, uygulama ve çocukların yabancı dil öğrenimini ölçme faaliyetleri hakkındaki özbildirimlerini, karşılaştıkları zorlukları ve bu zorluklarla baş edebilme yöntemlerini incelemektir. Bu amaçla, lisans eğitiminde küçük çocuklara yabancı dil öğretimi ile ilgili ders almış 11 ve ders almamış dokuz olmak üzere toplam 20 katılımcıyla görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilip pilot çalışması yapılan görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın bulgularına göre erken yaşta dil öğretiminin temel amacı çocukların başka bir dile karşı farkındalık kazanmalarını sağlamaktır. Öğretmenlerin aktivitelerini hikaye ve tema temelli planladıkları, çocukların ilgilerini çekebilecek aktiviteleri göz önünde bulundurdukları belirlenmiştir. Uygulama sırasında öğretmenlerin en çok Tüm Fiziksel Tepki Yöntemi (TPR), oyun, şarkı, ders kitabı ve bilgi kartlarından faydalandıkları görülmüştür. Katılımcılara göre ölçme aracı olarak

sıklıkla sene sonu karneleri, portfolyolar ve gözlem kullanılmaktadır. Bunun yanında çocuk gelişimi ve sınıf yönetimi hakkındaki bilgi eksikliği katılımcıların planlama, uygulama ve ölçme sırasında karşılaştıkları en büyük problemlerdir. Planlamada ve uygulamada yaşadıkları problemlerle başa çıkmak için katılımcılar en çok meslektaşlarına danışmakta ve çeşitli kaynaklardan yararlanmaktadırlar. Fakat çocukların yabancı dil öğrenimini ölçmede karşılaştıkları problemlerle baş etmeyi çok fazla önemsememektedirler. Bu bulguların ışığında öğretmenlerin özellikle küçük çocukların gelişimsel özellikleri hakkında eğitim ve çalışmalarla desteklenmeleri ve erken yaşta dil öğreniminin kalitesini artırmak için tüm eğitim paydaşlarının işbirliği içinde çalışmaları gerektiği belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: okul öncesi yabancı dil öğretmenleri, yabancı dil öğretiminin amacı, planlama, uygulama, ölçme

To My Family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the introduction to the study with the definition of language, foreign language education, planning, implementation, and assessment as well as the statement of the problem, the purpose and significance of the study, and the definitions of significant terms.

1.1 Introduction

Language is the way and a system by means of which people express and understand each other (Crystal, 2008). In today's world, knowing one language, the mother tongue, is not enough for people to become fully functioning individuals for several reasons such as the rapid growth of technology and people's getting closer beyond the borders of their own society. Therefore, people learn other languages to catch up with global communication, better job opportunities, for a better understanding of cultures among other reasons (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011). These additional languages can be people's second or foreign languages. When people learn a language in a country where it is the native language of this country and used in everyday communication, it is called second language. However, when people learn an additional language in a country where it is not the native language officially used, then it is called foreign language (Ellis, 2008; Gass & Schachter, 1989). Foreign language learning usually takes place in formal settings such as schools and language courses, and people learn language through instructions, but they generally do not get much input for the language outside the school-based settings (Martin, 2000). In this respect, language learners may learn a foreign language at any age and any time; however, it is necessary to decide the best time, best techniques, and strategies to learn it.

At this point, early childhood years may be a long step ahead of other periods of life. To illustrate, early childhood is the period when children develop faster than any other periods regarding physical, cognitive, emotional and language domains (Crain, 2005). In terms of language development, as Crain (2005) also asserts, children go a lot further than the other stages in their world, and they start to decode the language. Furthermore, speech is considered to be a miraculous development which infants, toddlers and very young children can acquire effortlessly even if they are not formally taught (Meisel, 2011), which also assists children in reading and writing in school years when they acquire language knowledge and skills in the early years of their lives (Rhyner, Haebig, & West, 2009). Although a full explanation of the nature of language acquisition has not yet been agreed on (Trawinski, 2005), early years are pointed out as children's finding a voice in their lives.

The advantages of early years in native language have its reflections on additional languages, as well. Penfield and Roberts (1959), and Lenneberg (1967) state that languages are acquired within a period of time, but people cannot attain full command of language after this period. It is called Critical Period Hypothesis, which is known to be the period in which people learn languages permanently in the long term. It lasts until puberty and it is also known to be the optimal stage to learn languages. This period is basically for the first language of children; however, it also applies to second language and foreign language learning. Similarly, it is believed that people have a device in their brains which is called Language Acquisition Device (Chomsky, 1972). This device is activated by exposition to languages, and if children are exposed to additional languages besides their mother tongue, they can also acquire second/foreign languages (Chomsky, 1972). Furthermore, according to Krashen (1982), languages are learnt in an order which consists of rules and structures of a specific language if the input given to learners is meaningful and the affective filter of learners is at a reasonable level. Krashen (1982) also indicates that learning and acquisition are different from each other. Children can acquire languages just like their mother tongues as a part of subconscious process, and this process is used for communication whereas learning is a conscious process with specific rules and structures. Therefore, children at an early age can acquire additional languages besides their mother tongue easier with the advantages mentioned above.

In foreign language education settings in early childhood years, children who learn another language are called very young learners (VLYs) (Reilly & Ward, 1997). They are between 3 and 6 years of age. They begin mandatory elementary education when they are six. Therefore, they cannot read and write until toward the end of the 3 year of this period. In addition to their inability to read and write until they start primary school at six, according to Slattery and Willis (2001), very young learners have certain other characteristics. First of all, how they learn another language is in the same way as they acquire their mother tongue, which includes hearing and experiencing the target language as they can read or write neither in their mother tongue nor in the target language. Secondly, play is an essential part of learning. They learn through play in which they actually do not deliberately try to learn the rules of the language but they acquire them instinctively. They enjoy playing with sounds, like nunneries, nursery rhymes, tongue twisters and interesting noises, which is a great advantage for foreign language teachers to know so as to arrange language activities. Lastly, they cannot plan their learning process, that is, they do not have meta-awareness yet, so it is crucial for teachers to sustain children's learning by talk and play activities, which also help the way they acquire grammar rules unconsciously and slowly over a period of time. In light of all of these characteristics of very young learners, it is clear that they learn eminently different from adult learners. Therefore, the teaching practices of foreign language to very young learners need to be different from adults. These practices need to be appropriate for their developmental characteristics that are driven by developmentally appropriate planning, implementation and assessment in the educational settings.

Teachers may prefer different curriculum designs while planning and implementing their foreign language teaching activities for early childhood years. To begin with, they can prefer a content-based design, in which they integrate content and language instruction together so as to teach the target language more effectively (Brinton, Snow, & Weshe, 1989) and to give the power to children to use the language as a means of communication both inside and outside the classroom (Stryker, & Leaver, 1997). They can also select a topic-based design, in which the focus is on a broad topic, a bit narrower than content, and language activities are prepared according to this certain topic (Cameron, 2001). Similarly, if teachers use a

story-based design in the classrooms, then it means that a story is the focus of the lesson to learn a language, which is viewed as an advantage since it includes rhymes, role-play activities and vocabulary in a contextualized way (Garvie, 1990). Finally, in task-based design, teachers can require learners to fulfill the tasks in which they naturally learn the target language during the process of involvement in the tasks (Nunan, 2004). This allows children to perform and use the language easily while they are involved in carrying out tasks (Krahnke, 1987).

The curriculum design types mentioned above are used in planning foreign language teaching activities for young learners. They may be followed independently or they may be combined for a better language learning environment. However, implementing these curriculum designs effectively is a more crucial point. There are various types of methods and techniques to teach languages such as the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Communicative Method, Total Physical Response, Community Language Learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Some of them can be applied while teaching very young learners.

Total Physical Response (TPR) is considered to be the basic foreign language teaching technique that suit young learners. In this teaching method, physical movements are integrated into language activities (Asher, 1977). These physical movements include games, role-play activities, drama activities and so on. This method can be used while teaching children about classroom language, new vocabulary items, tenses, imperatives and story-telling (Frost, 2007). Besides TPR, Communicative Language Approach (CLA) may also be used in classrooms to teach a foreign language. Functional communication activities take place in this method (Littlewood, 1981), and these activities may be real life activities which include games, role plays, and performance-based activities. Unlike CLA, drills are used to teach a foreign language in Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In this method, children learn the language and in a context by making repetitions, getting involved in speech-based activities and language structures. In addition to all of these methods, vocabulary may be the focus in teaching a foreign language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Teachers can implement their activities giving tasks for a faster acquisition of languages using Task-Based Language Teaching, or they can organize contents to teach foreign language to children in context through

Content-Based Instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Besides, teachers can include the culture of the target language in their activities so that children can not only learn about language itself but also they are introduced with another culture (Corbett, 2003). Furthermore, teachers can make use of other methods which are not basically put into practice for foreign language but they are considered to be helpful in education. For example, they teach through creative drama activities to foster speaking and listening skills (Brouillette, 2012); they can try to appeal multiple intelligences of children (Gardner, 1983). Lastly, an eclectic method may be created by the teacher in which the teacher just picks out what is appropriate to the plan or the children's interest and implements it in the lessons (Kumaravedivelu, 2008).

All of the planning and implementation methods mentioned above are to help children learn a foreign language more efficiently and effectively. However, the progress towards learning a foreign language efficiently and effectively should be monitored. This can be actualized through assessment. Assessment in educational settings is a process of investigating children's learning, their skills and needs for further development to make the process of learning better (Nutbrown, 2006). In early childhood settings, teachers can assess children's learning through formal assessment procedures, which include standardized tests (Wortham, 2008), or they can utilize an alternative form of assessment which is also called informal assessment. It includes observation, checklists, interviews, portfolios, rating scales, and so on (Pinter, 2006). Informal assessment is used very often in foreign language education settings (Colorado, 2007). All of these planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning practices are carried out by teachers, so their proficiency and competency in teaching foreign language to very young learning by making use of these techniques of great importance for children's quality of learning.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Foreign language education in early years of life is fundamental and there are many studies to show this (Abello-Contesse, 2009; Bongaerts, 2005; Crain, 2005; Dekeyser, Alfi-Shabtay & Ravid, 2010; Dominguez & Pesso, 2005; Elvin, Maagero & Simonsen, 2007; Hylenstam & Abrahamsson, 2000; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman & Fatman, 1976; Larson-Hall, 2006; Lenneberg, 1967; Mayberry & Lock, 2003; Oyama, 1976; Penfield & Roberts, 1959; Ramsey &

Wright; Yeganeh, 2013). As Penfield and Roberts (1959) and Lenneberg (1967) put forward, children's period before they reach puberty is critical to be able to achieve language proficiency, but they cannot easily obtain a native-like level in language after this period is over (Johnson & Newport, 1989). In foreign language education settings, Oyama (1976) conducted a study with foreign language speakers who began learning it before or after puberty and found that early beginners outperformed adults in language proficiency. Similarly, Deminguez and Pesso's study (2005) showed that children who started learning foreign language in kindergarten had higher proficiency in foreign language compared to late beginners. More recently, Yeganeh's study (2013) with four groups which included monolingual and bilingual speakers of English resulted in that whether monolingual or bilingual, learners who started before puberty were more successful in language attainment.

Similar studies have been conducted in Turkey, as well (Baran & Halıcı, 2006; Gürsoy, 2011; İşpınar, 2005; Karakoç, 2007; Kocaman & Kocaman, 2012; Komurcu & Yildiz, 2011; Sert, 2004; Şeker, Girgin & Akamca, 2012; Topçuoğlu, 2006). Among them, Topçuoğlu (2006) studied with students who took foreign language education in preschool and those who did not. The results revealed that students who started learning foreign language in early childhood years were more successful in foreign language proficiency. Likewise, other studies showed that 6-year-old children who have foreign language course at school have better proficiency results in language skills compared to their peers who do not (Şeker, Girgin, Akamca, 2012). Similarly, in a study with 4 and 6-year-old children, it was revealed that both groups were good in their perceptional skills, and 4-year-olds were better in their non-native word-final distinction perceptions (Komurcu & Yildiz, 2011). In another study, Kocaman and Kocaman (2012) conducted interviews with an early childhood teacher and an early childhood teacher educator. The findings revealed that both participants regarded foreign language in early years of life as very important, and they added that children can learn multiple languages if they begin learning them at an early age.

In alignment with these studies, in Turkey, the importance of foreign language education in early childhood years was also recognized by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in 1997, and foreign language education courses have been included since then in the curriculum as a required course in

elementary level, beginning with the 4th grade. From then on, students of 4th grade have had the opportunity to meet a foreign language, which is mainly English. After that, foreign language education has been included in five and six-year-olds' program to support foreign language education in early childhood years (MoNE, 2000).

As a result of the recognition of foreign language teaching in earlier years, departments of Foreign Language Education in the Faculties of Education included one or two related required courses on teaching foreign language to young learners in their programs. Although they may have various details and differences, the aim of all of these courses can be summarized as teaching undergraduate students about the characteristics of young learners, analyzing the best ways to teach languages to children with the most appropriate materials, deciding on the proper classroom management techniques, and proper language teaching techniques. However, though universities merge under the title of the Council of Higher Education (2011), they are half-autonomous; and they do not have specific goals and objectives, so each department may set different goals and objectives in its course on teaching foreign language to young learners. As a matter of fact, although the academic catalogues of the universities define the course as teaching languages to children or young learners, some of them describe children between 5-12 years old, while some of them describe the term as elementary education.

All of these educational practices on foreign language teaching arouse a serious interest of researchers to conduct studies on teaching foreign language to very young learners, mainly about the attitudes of foreign language teachers, parents and administrators towards foreign language education (Küçük, 2006; İlter & Er, 2007; Aytar & Öğretir, 2008), teachers' awareness of teaching foreign language to young learners (İşpınar, 2005), vocabulary development using various methods and techniques (Baran & Halıcı, 2006; Damar, 2009; Kalaycıoğlu, Olgan & Seferoğlu, 2012), appropriate materials to be used in preschool years (Bardakçı, 2011; Biricik & Özkan, 2012; Yıldırım & Doğan, 2010) and assessment techniques that teachers use (Çetin, 2011; Örsdemir, 2010). However, studies about how foreign language activities are conducted in preschools are quite limited, which makes it challenging to get a concrete idea about how foreign language education in preschool years is planned, implemented and assessed.

Some studies have been conducted regarding the process of education and the challenges that preschool teachers face in general or in different areas, such as music and inclusive education (Cameron, 2003; Cheatham & Ro, 2010; Cisneros-Cohernour, Moreno & Cisneros, 2000; Dikici-Sığırtmaç, Hoş & Abbak, 2011; Kampmann & Bownie, 2011; Kandır, Özbey & İnal, 2009; Kök, Küçükoğlu, Tuğluk & Koçyiğit, 2007; Öztürk, 2008; Shin, 2010). Among them, Cisneros-Cohernour, Moreno and Cisneros (2000) studied the challenges that kindergarten teachers face after curriculum reform in Mexico. They asserted that the values of the new curriculum and the cultural values of the family structure in Mexico are opposite to each other. This situation resulted in teachers facing challenges, such as lack of resources, parents and school conflicts, lack of coordination and adapting the new teaching approach in the curriculum. In Turkey, Dikici-Sığırtmaç, Hoş and Abbak (2011) revealed that teachers face several challenges related to inclusive education. These challenges are about lack of communication with parents and special education teachers, lack of resources, class size and the need for information, in-service trainings and expert support. Kandır, Özbey and İnal (2009) focused on preschool teachers' challenges in planning and implementation and indicated that teachers face challenges such as specifying the distribution of goals and objectives in a year, time and necessary concepts, and planning and implementation of parent involvement activities. In addition, some others focused more on the challenges that foreign language teachers face (Alagözlü, 2012; Çakır, 2004; Fantilli & McDoughall; Garton, Copland & Burns, 2011; Moon, 2005; Saraç, 2012; Vale & Feunteun, 1995). These studies focused on the expectations of educational stakeholders, lack of a curriculum and professional support (Moon, 2005), lack of knowledge of teaching young learners (Çakır, 2004), unreasonable expectations of parents and administrators (Vale & Feunteun, 1995), classroom management, individual differences of children and behavioral problems (Garton, Copland & Burns, 2011; Fantilli & McDoughall, 2009), and workload and lack of technological equipments (Saraç, 2012). However, these studies gave information about teachers' experiences in a more general point of view of their teaching practices; none of them focused on the experiences of preschool foreign language teachers in the purpose of foreign language teaching, planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language in depth. That is why the current research aimed at exploring the views of preschool

foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language teaching in early childhood, and their self-reports on how early foreign language learning activities are planned, implemented, and assessed in preschools, what challenges are faced and how these challenges are addressed by preschool foreign language teachers. Planning, implementation and assessment are the cores of educational practices, so they are directly related to children's achievement. Therefore, problems or improper educational practices lead to failure in foreign language proficiency (Işık, 2008).

1.3 Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine and describe the self-reports of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language teaching and their practices, challenges they face and how they address these challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. An interview protocol developed and piloted by the researcher was utilized to achieve this purpose. Within this scope, teachers' views and self-reported experiences were analyzed in detail in the following four areas: purpose of foreign language teaching; practices of planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning; challenges faced in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning; and the ways of addressing challenges in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the views of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years?

2. What are preschool foreign language teachers' self-reports on
   a. practices of planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning?
   b. challenges faced during planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning?
   c. the ways to address challenges faced during planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning

3. How do preschool foreign language teachers with and without coursework in foreign language teaching to very young learners differ in their views on the purpose, planning, implementing and assessing of children's foreign language learning?

Language development of children peaks in early childhood years (Crain, 2005; Eyres, 2007; Penfield & Roberts, 1959). Moreover, children may have language learning problems (Dekeyser, Alfi-Shabtay & Ravid, 2010; Dominguez & Pesso, 2005; Larson-Hall, 2006), and if these problems are not addressed in the early childhood period, they may cause more significant challenges for foreign language learners in later years.

A study about teachers' views on planning, implementing and assessing foreign language learning in preschool settings, the challenges they face, and how they address the challenges is valuable because it may help all of the educational stakeholders to figure out the problems and to sort them out so that they can take an action to solve these problems and increase the quality of foreign language education in preschool years.

As stated earlier, the Turkish Ministry of National Education included foreign language teaching in its program for 5 and 6-year-old children. Children who are 66 months old were included in compulsory primary education in 2012 by the Ministry of National Education. On the other hand, there are still preschool classes for 6-year-olds in early childhood settings. In addition, children between 37 and 66 months old join preschool programs, and the Ministry of National Education asserts that it aims to have a schooling rate of 100 percent till the end of 2013 (MoNE, 2012). Therefore, the existing programs may take advantage of this study to contribute to foreign language teaching to 5-year-olds, and it may also get help in a possible inclusion of a foreign language education program for younger children.

Similarly, the departments of foreign language education may adapt their contents of the courses on teaching foreign languages to young learners regarding the results of this study. Teacher candidates may get to know the characteristics of very young learners better besides young learners so that they can minimize the challenges and increase the quality of foreign language teaching activities.

Furthermore, this study may shed light on how foreign language learning practices can be improved in Turkey. As early years of life are of vital significance for children, and very young learners can acquire any language rather than just learn the rules, getting to know about what happens in preschool foreign language education in real and what challenges preschool foreign language education teachers

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face may give the chance to take an action to change the so-called destiny of being inferior to other countries in foreign languages.

Finally, as there is a lack of detailed studies describing the planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning and the challenges faced as well as addressing these challenges as perceived and reported by preschool teachers. Furthermore, there are not any instruments to be used to collect data about all of these aspects from a large number of participants (i.e. preschool foreign language teachers in Turkey). Therefore, within the nature of qualitative research, the findings of this study can present various themes, and these themes can give the researchers the opportunity to design a quantitative data collection instrument to be able to reach and learn about preschool foreign language teachers' experiences from a larger perspective.

1.4 Definition of Important Terms

Very Young Learners: Children between 3 and 6 years old who have not begun elementary schools (Reilly & Ward, 1997)

Foreign Language: A language which is learnt in a country where it is not the official native language of the community (Gass & Schachter, 1989). In this study, all of the teachers of foreign language were teaching English, so the language mentioned as foreign language was English.

Preschool Foreign Language Teachers: Teachers who are educated to teach foreign language in their undergraduate studies and teach foreign language in preschool settings.

Planning: A conscious process of formulating the activities to be implemented with children in educational settings (Collins & O'Brien, 2003).

Implementation: Carrying out the planned activities with children in classroom settings (Southwest Educational Development Library, 2008).

Assessment: Any method used for measuring the learning and performance of students to understand their knowledge and processes (Shukla, 2005).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the importance of foreign language teaching in early years of life; learners and teachers of foreign language; purpose of foreign language education in preschool years, the undergraduate course on teaching foreign language to young learners; planning, implementing and assessing children's learning; challenges that preschool foreign language teachers face and studies regarding self-reports and foreign language education in early childhood settings.

2.1 The Importance of Foreign Language Teaching in Early Childhood Education

2.1.1 Learners of Foreign Language in Early Childhood Education

Learners of foreign language before puberty are called Young Learners (YLs), and if these young learners are in the early years of their lives in preschool settings, they are called very young learners (VLYs). In this study, very young learners are described as children who have not begun mandatory education, so they are children who cannot read and write (Reilly &Ward, 1997).

As in their early childhood period, very young learners develop significantly in physical, cognitive, emotional and language domains (Crain, 2005), which makes an early start for foreign language learning necessary. This necessity was also recognized by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey, and in 2000, foreign language teaching to very young learners were included in the National Early Childhood Program with the presentation of foreign language in their programs for 5 and 6-year-old children. In this program, this age group was defined as learners who cannot analyze language; can sense concrete events and objects which they can see and touch; start learning skills with listening, then speaking, reading and writing successively; can understand words and structures as a whole; have a very rich sense

of imagination; feel bored in a very short time; need continuous repetitions; need interesting and striking materials to remember what they have learnt; prefer group work rather than individual studies; enjoy cooperation, sharing and the activities they have learnt; enjoy praise and positive criticism (Ministry of National Education, 2000).

In addition to the definition of MoNE (2000), different researchers explain the characteristics of very young learners in their own words. To begin with, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) have some descriptions of the characteristics of very young learners. First of all, children of that age group can utter words in past tense and continuous tense telling what they have done and what they are doing. They can also have some arguments for their thoughts explaining the reasons of them. They can imagine explicitly and involve in logical reasoning activities. In terms of language, they can understand interaction patterns and use intonation in their speech. Besides, they understand the language in a context and situation, and use their logics for the orders of the words uttered to them. Last but not least, they already acquire and make use of language skills even if they are not aware.

Furthermore, Moon (2005) adds several characteristics of young learners to the descriptions made by Scott and Ytreberg (1990) by differentiating them from adult learners. According to Moon (2005), children at these ages do not have a specific reason to learn a foreign language. They learn it when they are motivated or when they find something interesting just for the sake of learning. Secondly, they do not hide their feelings as they are just learning how to regulate themselves. Similarly, they learn through experience and activities in which they need to be involved, and they need to get the meaning of the language rather than the form of it to be able to learn it.

Regarding these characteristics of preschool children, it is stated that very young learners should be taught another language at an early age so that they can explore and understand different cultures and they acquire the skill of being tolerant to others as well as understanding new concepts, and getting prepared for their future studies (Brumfit, Moon & Tongue, 1991). In addition, Eichman and Fori (1977) asserted that foreign language learning in early years of life is also significant in terms of improving children's creative abilities, intelligence, vocabulary development and getting ready for primary school as well as developing awareness

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of languages regarding the similarities and differences of them and developing their cognitive abilities. They also include improving memory and problem solving skills without any damage to the native language (Kersten, Rohde, Schelletter, & Steinlen, 2010).

Supporting all of the characteristics and benefits of foreign language teaching in early childhood years, the idea that "Younger is better" can be summarized in Figure 2.1.
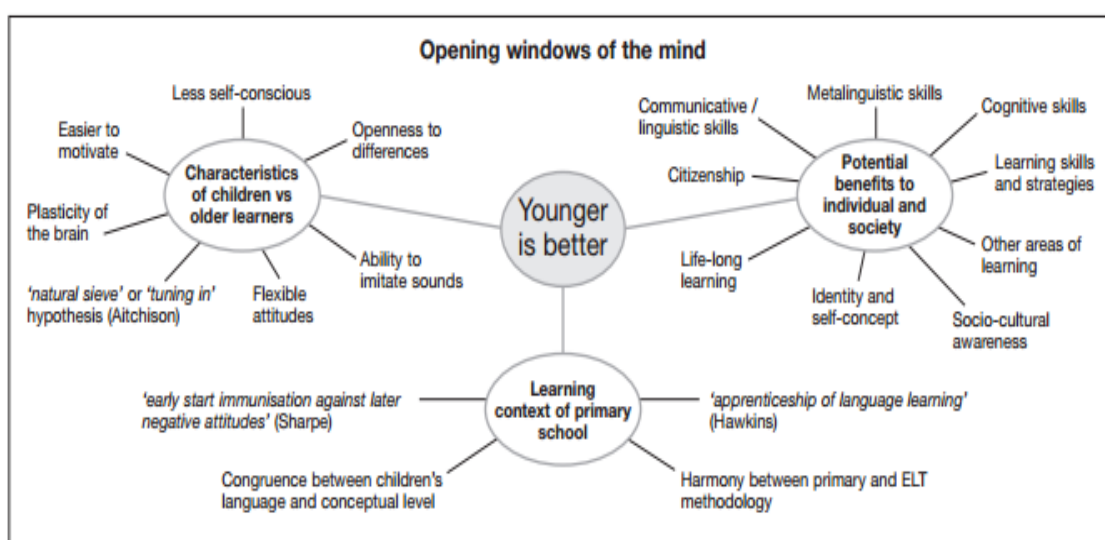
Figure 2.1 Younger is better (Read, 2003)

Figure 2.1 indicates that younger is better in learning a foreign language because of the characteristics of young learners. They are motivated easily, their brain has plasticity, they are more flexible and open to differences, they are less self-conscious and they can imitate sounds easier. Similarly, young learners develop negative attitudes towards learning later than adults as they are more open to innovations in learning and get input quite easily because they "…soak their foreign language up, like a sponge" (Johnstone, 2002, p. 6). In addition to all these characteristics, foreign language education is beneficial for young learners because they are involved in a life-long learning earlier so that they are more aware of cultures, identities. Besides, they can develop linguistic, cognitive, meta-linguistic and learning skills permanently (Read, 2003).

In addition to the characteristics of very young learners regarding language learning, they go through various developmental stages related to emotional, social,

cognitive and physical domains. It is essential to know very young learners' characteristics in other domains to be able to get in developmentally appropriate practices (Linse, 2005).

In terms of social and emotional development, beginning from the 36th months, very young learners can respond to questions related to them, take part in group games, and express their feelings. Beginning from the 48th month, they can mostly tell about themselves in society by taking part in communication, share their toys, accept leaderships in group works, get permission and help, like being praised and helping younger children. Besides, they are usually positive to their environments and can get involved in independent activities, like playing with friends, take turns and have the capacity of humor (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001).

Cognitively, beginning from 36th month, children can differentiate between concepts such as less and more, and big and small, can count from 1 to 10, can get involved in one-to-one matching activities, recognize colors, and complete human body by drawing arms and legs. Beginning from 48th months, they can classify objects, count till 20, match more complicated items, differentiate narrative words, tell the names of the colors, tell stories of a picture, remember and repeat points of stories, identify tense, and form cause and effect relationships, follow instructions, and recognize patterns (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001)

Besides, in terms of physical development, children can turn around a circle, kick a rolling ball, catch a ball, dance according to a rhythm, draw a circle, can use scissors to cut simple shapes, use silly-putty and forms shapes and so on. Beginning form the 48th month, they can fulfill more complicated tasks such as walking on one foot, jump forwards and backwards, keep the ball rolling, ride a bike, draw circles and square of a model, control their muscles while using scissors, pencils, crayons, spoons, and can improve hand-eye and foot-eye coordination patterns (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001).

All of these skills that very young learners can perform are quite in relationship with their learning of foreign language. It has been acknowledged by several studies that children use their physical skills to learn foreign languages in activities such as acting according to instructions, getting involved in physical tasks

as a process of learning, performing, dancing and so on (Asher, 1977; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Willis and Willis, 2007). Similarly, their thoughts and concepts in foreign language learning through stories, making meaning of language through mental images require the combination of cognitive development skills as well as language skills (Garvie, 1990; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Pinter, 2006). Group works, role plays, communication activities and foreign language learning tasks fulfilled in social environment necessitates that children use their social and emotional skills in foreign language learning (Cameron, 2001; Hymes, 1874; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Regarding the characteristics of very young learners and their developmental stages, the importance of starting to learn foreign language at early ages can be explained through Critical Period Hypothesis, which was put forward by Penfield and Roberts (1959), and Lenneberg (1967).

2.1.2. Critical Period

In language development, beginning from the first language and covering the second/foreign language, it is believed that people have an innate ability to develop language permanently in the long run. This term lasts till puberty, and it is called Critical Period Hypothesis (Penfield & Roberts, 1959).

Critical Period Hypothesis is one of the controversial issues in second language learning. This hypothesis was firstly put forward by Penfield and Roberts (1959), and followed by Lenneberg (1967), asserting that language develops best within a term. It is also called sensitive term which exists before puberty. In explanation, in this period, people acquire their native language and other languages; however, if they cannot, they cannot reach ultimate attainment in language learning. According to Johnson and Newport (1989), when the critical period is over, it is not easy to be able to learn a foreign language at a native-like level, that is, "Language acquisition process must be completed before puberty, for it is suggested that language develop fully until then"(Gürsoy, 2011, p. 757).

Regarding these explanations, it is clear that the effect of age on foreign language learning is undeniable (Abello-Contesse, 2009). Krashen and his friends (1976) admitted that children are more independent than adults in terms of their manners for learning foreign language, which can be the result of that children who start to learn before puberty outperform adult learners in the long term (Hylenstam &

Abrahamsson, 2000; 2001). In addition, although Krashen (1982) who stated that the expression "Younger is better" is not always the case for the starting age of language learning, it helps in the long term to get the target language, that is, if a person starts learning a language when he/she is younger, although the outcomes of it cannot be observable in the early years, he/she can be more successful in long-term.

Several studies have been conducted about the age factor in language learning. To begin with, Ramsey and Wright (1974) conducted a study with randomly selected participants (*N*=1111) who arrived in Canada from different countries of the world. Presenting a picture vocabulary and an English language skill test, they indicated that children who arrived in Canada when they were younger than 6-7 years old were much better in these tests than the participants who arrived when they are older. Researchers stated this is a support for the presence of a critical age for optimum instruction in the target language.

Similarly, Mayberry and Lock (2003) studied with adults (*N*=44) to investigate the effect of age on first and second language acquisition by using a grammatical judgment and untimed sentence to picture matching tasks. Participants consisted of groups who normally hear and who are deaf. The results indicated that participants who had early language experience performed better than late starters in both tasks. This is just like what Johnson and Newport (1989) found out in their study with Chinese and Korean learners of English who live in the U.S.A., the results of which revealed that people who started learning between 3 and 7 performed better compared to late starters. These studies also support Oyama's research (1976), which analyzed Italian speakers of English in terms of their accent and listening comprehension and indicated that learners who started learning before puberty are more successful than adult learners.

Likewise, Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2009) presented native-listener judgments for 195 very-advanced speakers of Swedish, who began learning the target language at different ages. The results of the native speakers' judgments on participants nativelikeness revealed that beginners of language before 12 years old performed better than beginners after 12. In the same study, 41 participants who passed the specific nativelikeness test in the target language were examined carefully regarding their linguistic and language abilities. The results indicated that none of the late learners of Swedish could perform actual nativelikeness in the target language.

This point is just like what Bongaerts (2005) summarized in his review, stating that achieving in a native-like pronunciation is not possible if a person starts learning a foreign or second language after puberty.

In another study, Dominguez and Pessoa (2005) compared 6th grade students (*n*=27) who started to learn Spanish as a foreign language in kindergarten with students (*n*=5) who have had Spanish for only 1 year. The results of the study revealed that besides having a positive attitude towards Spanish, performances of listening, speaking and writing of the group that started learning Spanish in kindergarten is far better than the group that has learned it for a year. This research is consistent with what Larson-Hall (2006) asserted in a study with college students (*N*=200) showing that students who started learning English between the ages 3 and 12 (*n*=61) had statistically significant results than the group that started later (*n*=139) in terms of phonemic tasks (*p*<.05).

Relevant to results above, Yeganeh (2013) recently studied with college students (*N*=75) to explore the age factor in language acquisition. She randomly selected 4 groups. Two of the groups, one monolingual (Persian) and one bilingual (Kurdish-Persian), were the participants who took English courses before puberty, and two of the groups, one monolingual (Persian) and one bilingual (Kurdish-Persian), were the ones who took English courses after puberty. All of the groups had the same performance test regarding their proficiency in English. Yeganeh (2013) found out that whether monolingual or bilingual, participants who took English courses before puberty outperformed the participants who took English courses after puberty, concluding that age has a significant effect on learning a foreign language as Critical Period Hypothesis suggests.

2.1.3. Teachers of Foreign Language in Early Childhood Education

Teachers of foreign language in early childhood education have a very significant place because they have great responsibility to fulfill the aim that foreign language learning is better at a young age. According to Read (2003), younger is better, yet teachers need to manage to teach young children in a setting where they can learn it naturally and with contextualized interesting and enjoyable activities which are relevant to personalize in their social environment. Furthermore, it is better when children make sense of what they learn, when they are supported and challenged appropriately in a relaxed and warm atmosphere.

Considering all of these statements, teachers should take several factors while teaching young learners (Scott & Yterberg, 1990). Firstly, they should combine words with movements and gestures involving senses. Secondly, they need to "play with language" by coming up with songs, stories, rhymes as well as having the routines to involve children in the culture and routines of the target language. Besides, they should prepare variety of resources and activities in which children work in cooperation rather than competition.

Moreover, Shin (2007) offers ten ideas to teacher for teaching young learners. Teachers should use visuals, realia and movement activities, and they should involve children in these activities. Besides, they should move from one activity to another not to demotivate children. Similarly, they should teach in themes, using stories and familiar contexts to children. Moreover, they should have routines in the target language such as a song as a beginner of the lesson, and they should use the mother tongue when necessary. Finally, teachers should get help from the community, colleagues and professionals of the field.

Furthermore, as teachers' beliefs about the role of children in education shape their policy, both teachers and teacher educators need to be aware of children's developmental stages and appropriate teaching practices so that they can implement their practices accordingly by working in collaboration with all educational stakeholders (Daniels & Shumow, 2002). Within this collaboration, teachers need to get support, training and continuous encouragement from professionals and experienced colleagues regarding new teaching approaches, developments and innovations in the field, as well as appropriate teaching materials as well as appropriate teaching materials and activities (Johnstone, 2002).

Regarding the characteristics of very young learners mentioned above, teachers of foreign language in early childhood education need to know several language development theories to be able to teach very young learners in the best way possible. Some of these theories are shortly outlined below:

According to behaviourist perspective, children learn from environment, which means they do not have an innate capacity but they imitate adults when they are reinforced for their behaviours (Skinner, 1974). This perspective argues for operant conditioning, which involves using reinforcement for stimuli for the correct responses of child. Therefore, children's learning of language is observable, and they

learn language when they are reinforced for their utterances by adults. In accordance with this, the more children get reinforcement of adults, the more they learn it (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003; Krogh & Slentz, 2001), which also helps children learn foreign language through reinforcement.

However, there is also a perspective which states that language learning does not occur through behaviours, but it is an innate capacity structured in human brain, which is called innateness perspective (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2003). Children are born with this capacity, and they speak that language in the same order and at the same age as other children when they get input (Lenneberg, 1967). This explanation is also supported with the idea that children are born with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), and this device helps tem acquire language when it is activated by exposition to a specific language (Chomsky, 1972).

Both behaviours and external factors and the innate ability and internal factors can have a role in developing language, which is another perspective and mainly deals with the active involvement of children in language. Regarding this, Vygotsky (1962) reveals that children's language development is related to their interactions with their environments, as well. They learn with the help of their parents, other adults, peers in an actively involved and social environment, and more competent people around children help them get language attainment when children cannot fulfill them independently but with an assistance (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Morrison, 2003). Furthermore, how they learn from environment is also in interaction with the cognitive process of children. As Piaget (1959) puts forward, children in preschool ages are in their preoperational stages, and they need to be provided with concrete representations of images, they can internalize event and they can start to get involved in language activities with acceleration in language development. Therefore, children can make significant developments in language by making use of their cognitive skills to by constructing their own knowledge if they are provided with sufficient support of adults.

In terms of learning a second language, according to Krashen (1982), children learn language in an order, which means they learn the rules and structures of a language in a sequence of order. Besides, language is understood and acquired correctly if the input is meaningful to the learner, when learners' affective filter is at a reasonable level, which means when learners' anxiety level is not too high and not

too low. However, Krashen (1982) asserts learning and acquisition are different processes. Children can acquire languages as the acquisition of their mother tongue, which is a subconscious process used for communication. Learning, on the other hand, is a conscious process in which children learn the rues and structures of the target language. This learnt competence can be used as a monitor, which is the editor part of the language for making changes.

In short, teachers have a significant role in foreign language education to promote teaching regarding the importance of foreign language learning in early childhood. They can handle this significant role through learning the characteristics and developmental stages of very young learners, and various techniques and methods to be able to teach them as professionally as possible. Last but not least, they need to know about the purpose of foreign language teaching in early childhood and the related course on foreign language teaching to very young learners.

2.1.4. Purpose of Foreign Language Teaching in Early Childhood in Turkey

In Turkey, teaching foreign language to young learners began in 1997, when it became compulsory at state schools to start teaching foreign language from the 4th grade. In the same year, the course Teaching English to Young Learners took its place in the Departments of Foreign Language Education in universities.

In 2000, early childhood years were also taken into consideration and MoNE started to support teaching VLYs by presenting foreign language teaching for 5 and 6 year-old learners (MoNE, 2000). Within this respect, MoNE put several aims and objectives of foreign language teaching in preschool years, which constitute the purpose of teaching foreign language in early childhood education. As the first aim, it was stated that foreign language teaching activities should show language learning is fun. This aim was found to be helpful to make children start foreign language learning in a more successful way. Secondly, foreign language teaching practices in preschool should be designed to fulfill the aim of making children gain awareness of other languages without giving them the pressure of complex rules and structures. Another aim is to encourage children to understand, speak, read and write in a different language. Similarly, all of the practices need to make children have fun while learning and gain active speaking and listening skills.

Within these aims, the objectives that preschool foreign language teachers should take into consideration in their teaching practices are listed by MoNE (2000)

as: to make children perceive the answer of the question "What language is this?", to contribute to children's cognitive, emotional and physical developments, to increase the tolerance of other cultures and people in the world, to create positive and exciting feelings towards learning foreign language, and to teach children how to learn.

These aims of foreign language teaching at preschool level are also related to the main aims of early childhood education in Turkey, which indicates that the aim of foreign language education is to help children develop physically, cognitively and socially as well as gaining good habits for themselves, to prepare them for primary education, to provide children from inconvenient environments and families with a mutual nurturing atmosphere, and to help them speak Turkish correctly (MoNE, 2006; 2012).

In the frame program provided, teachers of very young learners were expected to have various roles and responsibilities such as getting to know about that specific age group in terms of foreign language learning, implementing their lessons in a child-centered way, preferring activities regarding short attention spans of children, pronouncing the words in the target language in the correct way, praising and reinforcing children, and taking part in in-service trainings (MoNE, 2000).

2.1.5. The Undergraduate Course on Teaching Foreign Language to Young Learners in Turkey

With the educational reform in 1997 by the Ministry of National Education, foreign language teaching took its place for 4th grade students, so the Council of Higher Education put courses on teaching foreign language to young learners in the frame program for the departments of Foreign Language Education. Therefore, foreign language education departments started to have one or two courses on teaching foreign language to young learners. Although how many related courses these departments were supported to have was not clearly stated in this program, Sanlı's study (2009), in which she made the content analyses of the curricula of English Language Teaching (ELT) departments of 10 universities, found out that all of the departments have at least one course related to teaching English to very young learners and 7 of them have 2 courses, with the aim of providing teacher candidates with an overview of various methods and approaches as well as the history of teaching foreign language.

In this respect, although universities merger under the title of the Council of Higher Education (Council of Higher Education, 2011), they are half-autonomous, that is, whether they have one or two courses on teaching foreign language to young learners, they may have similar or different goals and objectives of these courses. They may include very young learners in their programs or they may focus on young learners. Basically, they may have goals and objectives such as helping undergraduate students get the main techniques and methods of teaching foreign languages to young children, introducing them with a curriculum design approaches, developing lesson plans and activities for reading, listening, writing and speaking, developing strategies for teaching, differentiating between first language acquisition and second language learning, and between young learners and adult learners, the effect of developmental characteristics of children on foreign language learning, developing games, songs and materials for young learners, curriculum design, assessment of young learners, introducing pre-service teachers with classroom management skills for young learners and with different curriculum designs (e.g. story-based, task-based, theme-based), correcting misconceptions about young learners, identifying different learning styles (Anadolu University, 2013; Fatih University, 2012; Gazi University, 2013; İzmir University, 2012; Maltepe University, 2013; Middle East Technical University, 2013).

Teachers learn about the developmental characteristics of very young learners, various approaches to introducing language skills, teaching techniques and assessment procedures in theory in these undergraduate courses. When they graduate, they perform their tasks to teach foreign languages to very young learners in real classroom environments, and their teaching practices include planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning.

2.2 Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Language Learning in Teaching Foreign Language to Very Young Learners

2.2.1 Planning and Implementing

Planning is the conscious process of preparing and formulating the activities that will be implemented with children in educational settings (Collins & O'Brien, 2003), and it has a crucial place in education because successful teaching is possible only with carefully developed plans. Teachers prepare their best plans when they can

select materials and activities to attract children's attention. Within this, teachers in preschools take activities into consideration rather than lessons. These activities need to be appropriate for children's level, include play and most importantly, have clear objectives (Krogh & Slentz, 2001). In terms of materials and activities to be used for successful plans, teachers can choose puppets, class mascots, picture cards, games, word cards and English corners in the class if they have any (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). However, the core of these plans must not underestimate children' needs and interests as well as teachers' expectations and teaching preferences (Nunan & Lamb, 1996). The preferences for planning teaching were stated by the Ministry of National Education (2000), as well. MoNE asserted that teachers' plans should include concepts such as the names of colors, animals, flowers, vegetables, objects and family members, and counting from 1 to 10.

Within the information given above, in foreign language teaching, teachers have various ways to plan and organize their teaching activities. Below are the most commonly used curriculum designs, methods and techniques while teaching foreign language to very young learners.

2.2.1.1 Teaching through Tasks

To begin with, teachers can prefer a task-based plan. It means that teachers present a task to perform to children, and they teach the target language through tasks, which are described as goals that children need to achieve (Nunan, 2004). While performing tasks, children unconsciously learn target language in communicative settings since they are engaged in a task that has the real language use rather than an artificial one (Willis & Willis, 2007). For example, teachers can plan a lesson in which they assign tasks to prepare a poster regarding their favorite season, and through this task, they can teach children the names and features of seasons. Richards and Rodgers (2001) assert this type of planning can best be practiced in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Shortly, in a task-based teaching and learning environment, language teachers design their activities around a task, and children are required to fulfill the task, and meanwhile they naturally acquire the language.

2.2.1.2 Teaching through Stories

In this approach, teachers can put stories in the center of their plans and revolve language activities around these stories in a story-based plan. As stories are directly related to language and literature, they are definitely a part of teaching the target language (Li & Seedhouse, 2010). Therefore, stories have active roles when learning in this type of curriculum. Cameron (2001) asserts that stories offer numerous opportunities for children to learn the target language since they have rich vocabulary, surprise, repetition of language, rhymes, metaphors and dialogues. They all enrich the language of children. If children are presented with an appropriate story, they can engage in the activities easily because they combine their thoughts with the story by acquiring the language naturally in a contextualized way (Garvie, 1990).

2.2.1.3 Teaching through Themes and Topics

In addition to the approaches above, teachers can center their activities around a theme or a topic. Although theme is a more general term, theme-based and topic-based can be used interchangeably (Cameron, 2001). In a theme-based or a topic-based teaching and learning environment, all of the activities in the class should be connected to each other as they should all be about one specific theme or a topic (e.g. types of vegetables) (Cameron, 2001). Pinter (2006) states this method as topic-based planning and states that it is really meaningful to children because they can be deeply involved in activities between which they can notice the connection. There is a general theme as the focus (e.g. vegetables), and language activities revolve around this theme or a topic. As children learn best in a natural environment, when the activities are integrated, it is better for them since they learn a language while focusing on a theme or a topic just as Scott and Ytreberg (1990) mention as concentrating on the content instead of the target language.

Though they are considered to be different types while organizing the course and planning the lessons, they are actually quite interrelated. Teachers may use story-telling as a theme (Garvie, 1990) or engage language learners with tasks in a story-based teaching environment, or they may choose a topic in which they assign tasks to learners (Bourke, 2006). Teachers should decide on how to use them according to the needs and interests of children (Moon, 2005).

There are also other approaches, techniques and methods in foreign language teaching. Teachers can implement their plans using one technique or method, or they can adapt a combination of them. In this section, the main techniques that are used for teaching foreign languages to young learners are introduced.

2.2.1.4. Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) is developed by James Asher, a psychology professor at San Jose State University. It is known to be a natural method of teaching being parallel to first and second language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). TPR is about speech and action at the same time. Motor activities are means to language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It is just like the way children acquire their native language (Asher, 1977). According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), learners' role in TPR is to listen and perform what the teacher tells as teacher is the model and the director. Native language is used for instruction, and observation is used as an assessment tool. As children's attention span is quite low, there is a need to find a way of teaching languages in which they do not get bored. In TPR, children get involved in the activities with visuals, movements, drama and so on in a natural atmosphere and learn by doing (Hashemi & Azizinezhad, 2011).

There are two main features of TPR (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Firstly, it is known that language activities are carried out in the left brain, and physical actions are coordinated by the right brain. Using TPR in language teaching helps children work both parts of the brain (Brain lateralization). Secondly, while learning a language, children focus on movements, so they acquire the language unconsciously, which reduces the stress of learning a language, that is, what Krashen (1982) mentions as affective filter does not prevent children from learning in the long term if teachers are also enthusiastic about the idea of TPR (Hashemi & Azizinezhad, 2011).

2.2.1.5. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching is related to the real life language activities. Hymes, sociolinguist, (1974) is the pioneer of this method. He asserts that language needs to have a function in a social environment rather than a set of grammar rules, so communication should take place to be able to master it.

In CLT, contextualization of the target language, effective communication and comprehensible pronunciation are used quite often (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Children interact with other learners so that they can share their language skills with each other in role-plays, games, songs, etc. Task and topic-based teaching methods are often used in communicative language teaching, since children are given a task about a topic, and they are expected to communicate around it (Cameron, 2001). Teachers have the role of a facilitator with the goal of enabling the students to communicate in the target language, and there should be a functional and purposeful communication by using authentic materials, language games, picture stories and role-plays (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

2.2.1.6. Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

This method was put forward after the World War II, with the aim of teaching a foreign language as quickly as possible (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It is also known as the Army Method. The aim of this method is to create an environment for the students using audial activities, so it mostly focuses on speaking and oral skills of language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In ALM, dialogues are the key to present the new topic. Children memorize and act them out using their mimes and gestures, and they learn the structures using repetition. In this method, besides the memorization of dialogues, teachers can make use of various types of drills. For instance, teachers can use backward build-up (expansion) drill when the dialogue to be memorized is too long for the learners. Teachers make the learners repeat the last part of the dialogue first, and then go backward from there. If the dialogue is not long but if learners cannot utter it accurately, teachers use repetition drill, which means they make learners repeat as accurately and quickly as possible. In chain drill, teachers generally check the speech accuracy of learners, since teaches start a chain of questions, and each learner has his/her turn in an ask-and-answer circle. Besides, teachers provide learners with activities such as minimal pairs, dialogue completions and grammar games (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

2.2.1.7. Suggestopedia (Desuggestopedia)

This method was developed by Georgi Lozanov, a Bulgarian psychiatrist-educator, offering that music and musical rhythm to learning helps to get a quick conversational proficiency (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Teachers aim at showing

their students everyday language in a fun and enjoyable way being the facilitators who express that learning is easy. The physical atmosphere of class is bright so that children feel relaxed. Colorful posters about the target language and vocabulary teaching are of great importance in this method so as to let children take input through different sources (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Lozanov (2005) states that this method should include tender suggestion of language within some characteristics. These characteristics begin with that it is important to regard learners as whole personalities, which means teaching of language needs to appeal to memory, creativity and intelligence reserve capacities of people. Secondly, teaching activities should be based on relaxation of the learners. For example, if they are tired, then activities related to suggestopedia cannot be effective as expected. Besides, activities should give pleasance to learners, and they should be planned in a way that decreases the aggressiveness of learners as a part of educational considerations. Lastly, suggestopedia can be used in psychotherapy and self-education, so language teaching activities need to have a part for this, as well.

2.2.1.8. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

In foreign language teaching, tasks can be used as a language teaching method as well as in the design of the curriculum (Nunan, 2004). For Willis (1996), Task-Based Language Teaching is the development of Communicative Language Teaching. In TBLT, real communication take place in language activities, and the tasks need to be meaningful to support the learning process of students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

As being learning-centered, TBLT gives many opportunities for language learners. They can interact with each other in the target language so that the process of acquisition gets faster. Besides, learners can express themselves by making meaning of the context of learning, and they naturally engage in activities in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

For Prabhu (1987), in a task-based learning, there are certain activities that are necessary to include. The first one is the information-gap activity. Here, children mostly work in pairs, and they convey information about the task given to them by their teacher to each other. The second one is the reasoning-gap activity. Here, children go one step further. They again convey information to each other; however, this time, it is not just simple information; they need to make deductions using their

reasoning skills. The last one is the opinion-gap activity. As the name suggests, children share their opinions and feelings about a task, but there does not need to be reasoning or judgment. Prabhu (1987) gives the example of story completion for this. Children can work in groups and complete story given by the teacher as a task.

2.2.1.9. Content-Based Instruction (CBI)

In content-based instruction, teaching activities are organized around content or subject, but not the structures and grammar rules (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For Leaver and Stryker (1989) contents can be a part of the curriculum design, or they can be used as a way of language teaching method. CBI is considered to be an approach which gives the opportunity to learners for the use of their communicative skills and build on them (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In addition, children learn language in context, and language learning and content learning are integrated. It can also help children improve their knowledge of content of a topic and language at the same time (Huang, 2011).Children learn through authentic language materials, and teaching activities can be adapted to their needs and interests (Stryker & Leaver, 1997).

CBI instruction lies behind the idea that people learn languages better when they use it as a process for obtaining information. Therefore, it can address the needs of learners better by making them get involved in language activities quicker and in a natural way. Besides, it can be used as a part of topic-based or theme-based designs for activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As content is used as a means of teaching language, teaching activities need to be prepared in a way that learners can relate it with their previous knowledge. Besides, as the target language is the medium of instruction, when teachers can come up with contents which are appealing to children's needs and interests, they can learn better because language is presented in a context they like (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) state that CBI is actually quite similar to theme-based instruction, which can be used as a curriculum design in foreign language teaching.

2.2.1.10. Whole Language Approach

Whole language is considered to be one of the most student centered approaches. It is based on humanism and constructivism. In Whole Language, teachers do not just transmit information, but they try to make sense of knowledge through constructing and making meaning out of it (Taylor, 2007). Ministry of National Education (2000) recommended the use of Whole Language to teach foreign language to young children in its frame program.

Authentic materials are used for teaching languages. Children work in collaboration with their peers, and teachers' aim is to help children create their own meanings by personalizing the knowledge they get. Child-teacher collaboration is very important. Integration of skills is recommended, but in preschool case, rather than four skills, speaking and listening can be combined since children lack in reading and writing skills. The difference of whole language teaching is that it does not take a single topic or a theme as its basis but it tries to attribute a purposeful meaning to activities. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001)

2.2.1.11. Intercultural Approach

An intercultural approach to foreign language teaching has its initials in the 1980s, when educationalists were discussing that the language teaching methods they had been using aimed at teaching languages naturally through linguistic knowledge and skills but they lacked the culture of the target language (Corbett, 2003). This approach of teaching mostly takes part in teaching second language rather than the foreign language.

According to Corbett (2003), in this approach, teachers need to provide learners with communicative activities as a part of an intercultural task. Group works and information sharing activities are of great significance. Besides, role plays and simulations as parts of raising cultural awareness are frequently used. In addition, especially in the first phases of learning, learners need to be scaffolded quite often; therefore, teachers' role is to initiate activities, to provide materials for tasks, to come up with activities to raise cultural awareness. However, when learners get more confident in target language, teachers' role can change to becoming a facilitator or a guide for activities.

Language teaching should also have a purpose of raising cultural awareness regarding both learners' own culture and the target culture which lead to

understanding the international culture (Siddiqie, 2011). Therefore, learners need to be involved in the activities about the sharing of meanings and cultural values in foreign language (Byram & Fleming, 1998). As Brown (1990) states, a full understanding of the target language is possible through learning the culture of that language.

There are some principles in intercultural language learning (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohlet, 2003). The first one is the active construction of knowledge with meaningful activities in sociocultural context. The second one is about making connections between languages. This can be with comparisons of learners' their own culture and the culture of the target language. The third principle is the social interaction part, in which learners engage in interactive communication to promote discussion and thinking. The fourth one is reflection. Here, learners need to use their critical thinking and construct their knowledge on the linguistic similarities and differences of languages. The last one is the responsibility, and learners need to take the initiative of their learning by also contributing the communication across languages and cultures.

2.2.1.12. Post-Method Era (PME)

This method started as a rejection of traditional methods which focus on one specific method but ignores the rest (Kumaravedivelu, 2008). It states that it is more appropriate to have an eclectic approach as an alternative to methods, in a way that they can learn how to use different approaches and methods in teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, teachers who use this method just pick up several points from various teaching methods and techniques and create their own approaches. Kumaravedivelu (2008) explains that it might be difficult for teachers to develop coherence in language teaching because it is not possible to present an already-prepared method to learners as it is and expect that the outcome will be as expected by the method because they are not adequate to know learners in specific circumstances. That is why teachers try to find their own voices for each group of learners regarding the uniqueness and particularity of learners and prepare their own eclectic teaching methods and techniques.

Besides these approaches, techniques and methods of foreign language teaching, teachers can also make use of various teaching methods and techniques that were put into practice to teach various subjects but that can be applied to foreign

language teaching, as well. For example, teachers can prefer creative drama to teach foreign language. Creative drama is defined as a process of activities about a word, a theme, a behavior, an idea or anything which are studied through improvisation, role-plays, drama and theater techniques and games in a group (San, 1991). Therefore, foreign language teachers can select what they want to teach, and implement it using games, role-plays, group and pair works as a part of improvisation. For Brouillette (2012), creative drama can foster students' speaking and listening skills if teachers have necessary information and trainings to deliver drama activities effectively.

In addition, teachers may make use of Multiple Intelligence Theory while teaching foreign language. People have different strengths, so teachers need to make use of the strengths of their learners to be able to provide them with the best learning opportunities. Gardner (1983) came up with this constructivist theory in his book and proposed various intelligence types, so he is known to be the father of this theory. Actually, he firstly put forward 7 types of intelligence (Gardner, 1993). However, in 2006, he added one more and proposed that there are eight in main types of intelligence. These types are logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic. There is also existential intelligence; in one of his books (Gardner, 2011), he states that he concluded sufficient evidence for natural intelligence, and suggestive evidence for existential intelligence.

According to Gardner, each person is better at one of the intelligence types compared to others. If people have logical-mathematical intelligence, they are considered to be good with numbers and logical thinking such as people who are doctors, engineers and scientists. If they have linguistic intelligence, then they are better at linguistic skills such as writing, poetry or storytelling, and they can be strong as lawyers, editors, writers and so on. Musical intelligence is generally dominant in people who are good at music, songs, sounds and rhythm, and they have good ear for music, so they can be singers, composers and players of musical instruments. Spatial intelligence is about the visualization of things in mind such as charts, videos and drawings, which can be dominant in architects or sculptors. If people have bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, they are good at hands-on activities, and they have a well-coordinated body. So, they like activities in which they can move around and touch. Athletes and craftpersons can have this type of intelligence.

Besides, interpersonal intelligence is about personal relationships in a society, and people who have this intelligence can get involved in effective communication in society, and they can be successful teachers, politicians and salespeople. People who have intrapersonal intelligence are good at understanding the inner self, and they can be successful writers, philosophers and so on. Naturalistic intelligence is about understanding the patterns of nature, and people who are hunters, farmers and so on can be considered to have this type of intelligence (Armstrong, 2009; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Gardner, 2006; Gardner, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This theory is considered to be very important in teaching foreign language to young children because teachers can improve the quality of learning through getting to know about the strengths of very young learners and provide them with materials and activities appropriate to these strengths (Linse, 2005).

After the explanations of the ways to plan and implement foreign language teaching in early childhood settings, as López and Mèndez (2004) asserted teachers can use one or more of these techniques and methods as a facilitator to them while implementing their activities. However, it is necessary to state that no matter which of the ways they use, they need to implement their plans based on various activities which are contextualized. In addition, they need to use concrete and multi-sensory materials in a socially oriented atmosphere so that children can play and have fun while learning (Moon, 2005).

2.2.2 Assessing Children's Learning

Assessment is defined as a process, which includes "gathering information for a specific purpose" (Linse, 2005, p.138), and this specific purpose is assessed through listening, observing, testing and so on for the process of children in a classroom (Chen & McNamee, 2007). In terms of educational settings, assessment is defined as a process, and children's knowledge and skills are investigated in this process for better learning and development (Nutbrown, 2006).

Assessing young learners is different from assessing adult learners, and according to McKay (2006), assessment may be the most challenging part in terms of maintaining motivation and deciding on the purpose of assessing children. In this sense, Katz (1997) came up with different purposes of assessing children. For instance, a child can be assessed with the aim of determining children's achievement in a specific topic. Similarly, children can be assessed for placement as well as

diagnosing educational problems. Besides, they can be assessed for a better curriculum including more successful instruction, or for parent reports. Finally, children can be assessed to help them see their progress, and Katz (1997) suggested teachers to encourage children to assess their own work and progress as an alternative way.

In early childhood education settings, foreign language teachers may have several reasons for assessment. According to Moon (2000), teachers may assess to identify children's progress in learning to take precautions if necessary and increase the likelihood of a better learning. They can also assess to determine the achievement of children at the end of the teaching period. Similarly, teachers can assess young children to check children's use of a specific structure of vocabulary, development of specific skills or attitudes or a diagnosis of a foreign language learning problem. In addition, teachers can assess themselves to figure out if they have achieved in fulfilling their goals and objectives to make necessary adaptations, and they can activities to identify if they have been enjoyed by children and served the purpose of teaching objectives. Besides, the basic purpose of assessment is to understand the uniqueness of a child and to help him/her develop better in each domain (Leavitt & Eheart, 1991). Regarding this, it is also essential to state the principles for assessing children's language learning (Cameron, 2001). These principles are that a learning-centered perspective should be the base for assessment; it should definitely take part for the purpose of learning and teaching; assessment is not just testing, and parents and children should be informed with the assessment procedure so that they can understand the process of education. Otherwise, children can feel discouraged from learning the language if they are assessed inappropriately (Pinter, 2006). Teachers need to select appropriate language assessment methods and materials according to the developmental levels of young learners. To achieve in this, learners and teachers should be in interaction with each other (Gattullo, 2000) so that teachers can get to know about the children's characteristics better.

Assessment in early childhood education has two types, which are formal assessment and informal assessment.

2.2.2.1 Formal Assessment

Formal assessment means standardized assessment, which states that the results of assessment are based on standardized measurement (Wortham, 2008). For

language assessment, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (Dunn & Dunn, 1997) and the Preschool Language Scale (PLE-4) (Zimmerman, Steiner & Pond, 2002) are the two most important standardized assessing scales. However, they are designed to assess the native language of children rather than foreign language. Besides, these formal assessment tools are used mostly for young language learners who have started compulsory primary education. Students are required to take formal assessment tests in most of the elementary schools, but they are not that common in preschool years (Linse, 2005).

In terms of foreign language, formal assessment techniques can be used to diagnose academic achievement. Namely, teachers can assess the phonemic awareness of VLYs such as the pronunciation of a specific sound in the target language or the recognition of target vocabulary using pictures of specific words or through listening worksheets (Linse, 2005). However, Pinter (2006) asserts that although teachers prefer them due to the easiness of administration, such kinds of assessment tools are not helpful with VLYs they do not actually show the exact capacities of children. Besides, they may have negative effects on children by putting them under pressure instead of positive motivation.

2.2.2.2 Informal Assessment (Alternative Assessment)

Informal assessment in early childhood education includes observation, rating-scales, self-assessment, rubrics, audio-videotapes, interviews, assignments, games, portfolios, projects and so on (Pinter, 2006).

In foreign language teaching, teachers administer informal assessment through gathering data on children's learning basing it on their performance and portfolios (Colorado, 2007). They are mainly used to assess the development of young language learners over time by documenting what they can do (Linse, 2005).

Among them, foreign language teachers in early childhood education can use observation method, taking notes of the events or specific features of a child on a specific day by using anecdotal notes, running records, event sampling and so on as long as they have a specific purpose (Lidz, 2002). Cameron (2001) asserts that teachers have observation as a powerful tool in terms of that children do not know that they are observed so they are not disturbed by the procedure.

Similarly, teachers can use portfolio assessment, that is, they can collect the work of their learners in specific folders over time so that they can turn back and see

the process of learning improvement of a specific child. Moreover, children and parents can also see their process (Cameron, 2001). In this assessment type, children can pick up their best products, or teachers can include drafts of a specific task as an evidence for children's learning process and improvement (Paulson, 1991).

According to National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2003), children should be assessed while doing their work rather than a standardized one so that the assessment may be more reliable in early childhood settings. Therefore, teachers can infer that informal assessment is quite an appropriate way to assess children's learning.

Assessment practices in teaching foreign languages to young learners are mostly limited to elementary schools. For instance, Yang (2008) investigated teachers' current assessment practices in a survey with Taiwanese elementary school EFL teachers (N=425). The results revealed that teachers' self-efficacy, their beliefs about educational assessment, their educational background and their beliefs on the difficulty of implementing assessment significantly affects their language assessment practices. These assessment practices can be achieved by what Shaaban (2000) revealed in his study on the assessment of young learners' achievement in preschool and elementary ESL classes. He asserted that in a thematic-based planning and implementation while teaching young learners, there needs to be alternative forms of assessment which are mostly performance tasks and portfolios.

2.3 Self-Reports of Teachers on the Challenges They Face

Teachers of foreign language in early childhood have great roles and responsibilities, which may cause them to face several challenges in their profession. Research related to challenges teachers face have mostly been conducted by obtaining their self-reports because of the nature of studying challenges. For instance, a study about the challenges that teachers face regarding inclusive education in preschool years and the possible ways to address these challenges was conducted through self-reports of 15 preschool teachers. A semi-structured interview was utilized to achieve this aim. Findings revealed that teachers assert they need to know more about inclusive education and they do not have sufficient resources. As a way of addressing these two challenges, they recommend in-service trainings, communication with parents and special education teachers, learning about practical

solutions to their problems with the support of experts and the Internet, and better classroom environment with resources (Dikici-Sığırtmaç, Hoş & Abbak, 2011).

In another study, challenges that pre-service preschool male teachers face were analyzed using their self-reports (İnan, Bayındır, Doğan-Temur & Bartan, 2010). In a qualitative setting, 11 participants were interviewed through a semi-structured interview protocol. The findings revealed that participants face challenges such as expectations of parents and society, the perception that preschool teaching is not taken seriously, number of male pre-service teachers and attitudes of other teachers. Similarly, another qualitative study with 13 pre-service preschool teachers were conducted by taking their self-reports on the challenges they face in practice teaching (Karaca & Aral, 2011). The researchers found that participants' challenges include unreal expectations of school personnel and classroom teachers for planning, and lack of resources. Quite a similar study was conducted by Demir and Çamlı (2011) with 19 pre-service teachers using a semi-structured interview protocol. Participants' self-reports revealed they mostly face challenges about administrators. That they are not taken seriously and the negative attitudes of school personnel are among the other challenges they face.

There are also various studies on self-reports of foreign language teachers regarding the challenges they face. One of them is conducted with teachers in Malaysia about the challenges they face in their teaching experiences (Yunus, Hashim, Ishak & Mohammad, 2010). In a qualitative study through open-ended questions, the study revealed that participants have difficulty in dealing with the negative attitudes of administrators and other staff, selecting appropriate teaching methodology, dealing with cultural differences, and discipline problems with students.

In Turkey, Saraç (2012) conducted a study with English language teachers who work at a secondary school. To be able to get their self-reports on the conflict between their expectations and administrators' decisions, she interviewed 12 teachers. The findings of the study indicated that teachers face challenges with their administrators because they think there is a lack of communication and lack of respect between them and administrators. Besides, participants indicated that they are not included in decision-making process, and they feel the pressure of the hierarchy. In addition, teachers face challenges related to lack of a separate room for English

teachers and technological equipments, teaching multi-grade levels, and extra workload.

Besides, Alagözlü (2012) studied the self-reports of 15 faculty members who work in ELT departments of universities on the major problems in foreign language teaching. The interviews with the participants revealed that problems have four main reasons. First of all, there are flaws in the educational system because decisions regarding the system are taken very quickly and without any scientific studies, which may result from political changes or new trends in education without piloting them. Secondly, learning and learner environment is not appropriate to learn a foreign language, namely, despite the learner-centered approach, learners cannot get appropriate materials and activities in implementation. Thirdly, as curricula are changed quickly, teachers cannot get involved in trainings for the new methodology, and they fall behind what they are expected to do. Finally, all of the factors above cause a lack of competent English teachers. Pre-service language teachers and practitioners are not educated well, and graduate teachers are not given in-service trainings, and curriculum that has to be applied in the Faculties of Education is not comprehensive and well-described to help teacher candidates learn the target language to be taught.

2.4 Studies on the Challenges of Teaching Foreign Language

Besides the self-reports of participants on their challenges in the studies of Saraç (2012) and Alagözlü (2012), there are other studies and papers presented about the challenges that foreign language teachers face.

First of all, according to Moon (2005), teachers face challenges as a result of the uniqueness of teaching children. For instance, teachers need to deal with parents and other stakeholders who expect too much from the outcomes of learning. Besides, they sometimes feel a lot of pressure on themselves because the Ministries of Education want them to show what they are doing immediately, that is, without investing necessary time and energy in a well-designed curriculum, they make short-term plans and require teachers to implement them in which the results need to be shown in public. Again, teachers may feel public pressure on themselves because they are submitted with curriculum and materials which are not piloted but quickly decided, which leads to loss of willingness among children to learn the target language. Finally, teachers do not get enough professional support for teaching that

specific group, so they cannot have guidance when they need. Moon's study (2005) supports what Vale and Feunteun (1995) explain as that teachers feel lots of pressure on their shoulders while working with young learners because they have to deal with their performance, parents' expectations to make their children speak English, administrations' expectations for concrete products and teaching the target language properly to children. For Çakır (2004), teachers face challenges while teaching young learners because they are trained to teach English for general purposes rather than specific levels and ages.

Furthermore, Fantilli and McDoughall (2009) conducted a mixed method study, in which participants (N=86) completed a survey which followed 5 case studies. The findings indicated that teachers face challenges such as classroom management (31.2 %), behavior problems, special needs of children, teaching English as a second language, meeting individual needs of children, communicating with administration (17%) and colleagues, lack of classroom resources (40.4 %), planning in the long term (25.5 %), communicating with parents (20.8 %), lack of in-service trainings, salary and wages (31.2 %). In addition, in one of the cases in this study, it was revealed that addressing challenges is possible with informal support of relatives, colleagues and formal support of a qualified mentor.

In accordance with that study, Garton, Copland and Burns (2011) mentioned that teachers face challenges such as class size, problems related to discipline, mixed level classes, motivating children and individual needs and differences of children. They stated that addressing these challenges is possible by interacting with colleagues, organizing small group works, rewarding children to encourage them and motivating children trying to make them involved in communicative activities. Cameron (2003), as an addition, based the reasons of having difficulties to learn a foreign language on two key features, which are children's search to find meaning and the demands for initial literacy. He suggested that there should be appropriate materials, activities and assessment tools so that teachers can be more successful.

Besides the studies on the problems teachers have in general, Shin (2010), Cheatham and Ro (2010), and Kampmann and Brownie (2011) focused their challenges on planning and implementation. Shin (2010) investigated teaching English to young learners by recommending ways to cope with difficulties in planning and implementation. She suggested poetry and songs for oral language

development and picture stories to show objects while explaining different concepts, and advised teachers to adjust their speech regarding their children's capacities just like how Cheatham and Ro (2010) added pretend play and narratives to facilitate implementation difficulties. Furthermore, Kampmann and Bownie (2011) asserted that the hardest part of planning and implementing is to find the area of interest for children and elaborate this interest into meaningful activities. They recommended that activities to encourage children for classroom discussions, to link language learning with other topics like environment and to put literacy development with language learning will help children to learn the target language better.

2.5 Studies on Teaching Foreign Language to Very Young Learners in Turkey

There are several studies on foreign language education in preschool years. The studies below represent an overview of the studies regarding very young learners and young learners.

Several researchers have studied on the benefits of foreign language education in early childhood years, offering some suggestions for ultimate attainment. To begin with, a study was conducted on the contributions of second language education to language development process in preschool period (Şeker, Girgin & Akamca, 2012). Data were collected from 6-year-old children (N=100) from schools that teach a foreign language and that do not, using a language processing scale. The results revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between children who learn a foreign language and who do not learn a foreign language ($p<.05$), as children who learn a foreign language performed better in the scale administered. A similar study was conducted by Topçuoğlu (2006). She studied with elementary school children by grouping her participants as the ones who had preschool educations as the ones that have had foreign language education (n=55) and those who did not (n=28). She found that children who had foreign language education in preschool had better post-test scores compared to the other group. Similar results related to Critical Period Hypothesis were taken in a study conducted by Komurcu and Yildiz (2011). Ten four-year-olds and 10 six-year-olds took part in a study about their perceptional skills of native and non-native consonantal minimal pairs. The findings revealed that four-year-olds are better in their perceptions of non-native word-final distinction (78%) and six-year-olds are

better in their perceptional skills, with the discussion that both age groups have better scores in terms of differentiating Turkish and English sounds.

Besides, İlter and Er (2007) conducted a study on the viewpoints of parents and teachers on foreign language teaching in preschool years. They found that both teachers and parents view foreign language teaching in preschool years as quite necessary for children. They also advised that language classes should be full of songs, rhythms and nursery rhymes. Similar results were found out in Küçük's study (2006), which was conducted with English teachers (*n*=20), preschool teachers (*n*=34), school administrators (*n*=13) and parents (*n*=274) in 18 preschools in Adana. Aytar and Öğretir (2008) strengthened these results in their study on the positive viewpoints of parents (*N*=350) and teachers (*N*=140) on foreign language education in preschool settings. Most of the parents in this study (*n*=171) thought that children should start learning foreign language when they are 5-6 years old. However, 7% of teachers considered that starting to learn foreign language in preschool years have a negative effect on students' language and cognitive development when are introduced with foreign language before they have not completed their first language acquisition.

Kocaman and Kocaman (2012) conducted a qualitative study which they conducted with two participants, one early childhood teacher educator at a state university and one early childhood teacher. The study revealed that both participants agreed on the importance of foreign language learning at an early age. Participants also stated that children already have the potential to learn multiple languages at an early age, adding that learning a foreign language will improve their developmental domains, too. On the other hand, one of the participants stated that the optimum age to start learning a foreign language is 7 whereas the other participants necessitates to start as early as possible. Besides that, the study asserted that there must be a standard and well-designed program in which language is taught properly and in real life situations, and most importantly, foreign language teachers who work at preschool level should have a specific training and certificate to teach very young learners and learn the developmental characteristics of them not to face challenges or make critical mistakes.

In addition to the ideas above, İşpınar (2005) conducted a study on teachers' awareness of teaching English to young learners. 70 English teachers who teach

young learners (4th graders) were interviewed and 20 of the participants were observed during their lessons. The results indicated that 19% of the participants (*N*=27) stated an earlier start of learning a foreign language would be better. Besides that, participants indicated that young learners are more enthusiastic than adults to learn, they are more interested, they like songs and games and they learn more easily. In addition, participants asserted that they mostly use games, songs, drama, role playing, drawing and repetition, by using various materials such as realia, tape recorders, pictures/photos, CDs/VCDs, flashcards. These results relate with Sert (2004), whose study dealt with the quality of early foreign language learning at preschool level in Turkey. Her study focus was the lack of a curriculum in early childhood that includes foreign language education. She found out that students' interests, needs, daily issues and so on are the main focuses of the course plan as there is no curriculum. Each school or maybe each and every teacher has his unique curriculum, so there is no standard. She took Common European Framework (CEF) principles into consideration because European Framework has a specific importance on education in the process of being a member of European Union. She suggested that there should be more autonomous learners, self-assessment tools, since they are mostly ignored by the teachers.

Baran and Halıcı (2006) had a study on foreign language education of children. They focused on that foreign language education must be child-centered in preschool years. Activities must be songs, role-plays, games, storytelling, drama, etc. The academic English must start at elementary 4th grade. Moreover, they asserted that children should not only face with a foreign language but also the culture of this specific foreign language to be able to get to know about their own culture better and to raise awareness of a different culture because they learn the culture easier. This viewpoint supports the results of the project "How do the dinosaurs speak in England? English in Kindergarten" (Elvin, Maagero & Simonsen, 2007). It is a project held in Sweden in which the English teacher includes her country's culture in English lessons so that children can much more easily learn the language and culture. In the discussion paper, they state that it is only young children who can acquire the foreign languages properly without an accent and children are intrinsically motivated; they have positive attitudes, needs and interests towards a foreign language. Similarly, Damar (2009) discussed the language activities in preschool

years and stated that language activities should be based on storytelling, nursery rhymes, finger games, poems, drama. The similarities of these studies are that they state using storytelling activities, nursery rhymes, drama, poems all have an effect on children's having positive attitudes towards language learning, so they can acquire foreign languages easier.

Biricik and Özkan (2012) studied with 45 very young learners who are 5 or 6 years old in her study regarding their motivation for learning English. After conducting classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires with children, the study revealed that when teachers begin the lesson with an attractive activity which follows games, colorful toys and objects and when they can stop the activity before children feel bored, than teachers do not face motivational challenges because children get involved in the activities eagerly. On the other hand, when teachers repeat the same activities, children get bored and feel demotivated. The study advised teachers to include challenging and achievable tasks in their plans, visuals and active and equal participation in the implementation part as well as being sincere and friendly, smiling, and beginning the lesson with a nice warm-up to keep children motivated.

2.5.1 Studies on Foreign Language Teaching Methodology

Several studies have been conducted to figure out the best methods, techniques and materials in teaching foreign language to children. Firstly, Kalaycıoğlu (2011) conducted an experimental research on the effects of picture vocabulary games in English vocabulary learning in early childhood education. She studied with four-year-old children ($N=33$). In her experimental design, she applied Total Physical Response (TPR) method to teach vocabulary items to one group ($n=17$), and she found out that there is a statistically significant difference between the group that has learned vocabulary items with picture vocabulary games and the group that has not had picture vocabulary games. In addition, regarding the emphasis on Communicative Language Teaching method, English teachers who teach children in Turkey ($N=32$) took part in a case study regarding their teaching practices of CLT. After pre-interview, observation and post-interview sessions, the findings revealed that half of the teachers ($n=16$) deviated from CLT and they try to convey knowledge but do not focus on students' active participation. On the other hand, 6 of the participants were found to use CLT with songs, drama, role play activities, group

works and related games. Finally, it was stated that 10 of the participants were in-between, combining CLT with their old methods which are mostly teacher-centered and lack of group works (Kırkgöz, 2008).

Özçelik (2013) recently conducted an experimental study with 48 preschool children. She studied the effects of talking toys in vocabulary teaching in English. Vocabulary was taught to the experimental group through talking toys. The control group was instructed through flashcards. At the end of the experiment, the researcher conducted a post-test, and the results revealed that children who are instructed using talking toys had better results in terms of their receptive and productive vocabulary skills.

Using appropriate language materials are the case in what Bardakçı (2011) studied in his research. He studied on the use of language materials such as posters, puppets, picture books, novel sets to teach English to young learners using an experimental study design, in which one group had courses using language materials and the other group had their usual lessons. The study consisted of 76 fifth-grade students. He has applied pre-test to groups, and he had the treatment to the experiment group. After the treatment, he found a significant difference ($p<.01$) between two groups, which means that using language materials help children achieve in English better than the usual method. He concluded that language materials are especially helpful in teaching vocabulary and grammar. An example to this is the experimental study on the effects of authentic cartoons on teaching young learners (Arıkan & Taraf, 2010). A control group ($N=15$) and an experimental group ($N=15$) were pre-tested, and the experimental group learnt vocabulary and grammar through authentic cartoons. The post-test results indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between two groups, discussing that young learners performed better when they are supported with audio and video materials.

Regarding assessment of children's learning on the activities and materials mentioned above, Örsdemir (2010) conducted a study on performance tasks as an alternative assessment technique to teach English to young learners. 359 5th grade students and 43 teachers were selected as participants, and data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and document analysis checklists. The findings of the study revealed that young learners reported they can use their creativity (69.1 %) and they can relate their personal thoughts and experiences (66.6 %). More

importantly, young learners (91.1 %) reported that they improve their English skills in this type of alternative assessment. Similar results were obtained in another study conducted by Çetin (2011). She found out in her study conducted with nine English teachers teaching from 1st to 5th grade in an interview, observation and document analysis of period of 6 months that teachers are in favor of alternative assessment because they support that this kind of assessment includes learning, as well.

All of the studies regarding teaching foreign language to children shed a light on the educational practices in Turkey; however, none of them directly deal with foreign language teachers in terms of their practices, challenges and addressing challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's learning at the same time.

2.6 Summary

An early beginning for language learning is known to be the best period for excellent proficiency regarding the developmental advantages of young children (Crain, 2005), which necessitates an early foreign language instruction. In foreign language education settings, children who are in preschool period and learn language are called very young learners (Reilly &Ward, 1997). They cannot read and write, but they have speaking and listening skills. They learn language through games, songs, concrete objects, and through their rich sense of imagination and creativity (Brumfit, Moon & Tongue, 1991; Eichman & Fori; 1977; MoNE, 2000).

These characteristics of very young learners and benefits they get in an early beginning of foreign language learning have also been supported by Critical Period Hypothesis. This hypothesis claims that language proficiency is in its optimum level till puberty, which means the period in a person's life till puberty is critical, or sensitive, to be able to permanently acquire languages (Penfield and Roberts, 1959; Lenneberg, 1967). Many researchers worldwide and in Turkey also support this hypothesis with their studies (Abello-Contesse, 2009; Baran & Halıcı, 2006; Bongaerts, 2005; Dominguez & Pesso, 2005; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Komurcu & Yildiz, 2011; Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman & Fatman, 1976; Larson-Hall, 2006; Lenneberg, 1967; Oyama, 1976; Penfield & Roberts, 1959; Ramsey & Wright; Topçuoğlu, 2006). Among them, Ramsey and Wright (1974) found out that people who had foreign language input in preschool period are more successful in foreign language proficiency in the older years. In Turkey, a study figured out that children

in preschool years develop better perceptional skills of sound if they learn foreign language (Komurcu & Yildiz, 2011).

The studies that suggested an early beginning for languages are in accordance with the Ministry of National Education's policy to support foreign language education in preschools. In 2000, it included foreign language education for 5 and 6-year-olds in its program with a general aim of making children raise an awareness of languages in a fun way. To be able to fulfill this aim, and to help children learn foreign language in the best way possible, teachers have great responsibility. Their activities need to be developmentally appropriate, and language needs to be implemented in an enjoyable way (Read, 2003), for which teacher can make use of songs, stories, rhymes, role plays and group activities (Scott & Yterberg, 1990). Moreover, teachers need to know about how to teach very young learners best. To achieve in this, departments of foreign language education have one or two undergraduate courses related to teaching foreign language to very young learners. Although these courses do not have standard goals and objectives in every university, they aim at teaching teacher candidates various teaching techniques and methods, curriculum designs, lesson plans, assessment and so on (Anadolu University, 2013; Fatih University, 2012; Gazi University, 2013; İzmir University, 2012; Maltepe University, 2013; METU, 2013).

When teachers start to work in real classroom environments in preschool settings, their activities mostly include planning, implementing and assessing children's learning. Teachers set their goals for the activities in a way that helps to attract children attention (Krogh & Slentz, 2001; Nunan & Lamb, 1996; Scott & Yterberg, 1990). Then they can decide on the curriculum design that they can use. They may base their activities on tasks, themes, topics or stories (Cameron, 2001; Li & Seedhouse, 2010; Nunan, 2004; Pinter, 2006; Willis & Willis, 2007). In addition, teachers can make use of Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, Audio-Lingual Method, Content-Based Instruction, Task-Based Instruction, Intercultural Approach, Whole Language Approach, multiple intelligence, creative drama, 5E Model of Instruction and Suggestopedia as teaching methods and techniques, or they can form their own method of teaching. While assessing children's learning, they can use formal assessment tools like standardized

tests (Linse, 2005; Wortham, 2008) or informal assessment tools such as portfolios, observation, interviews (Colorado, 2007; Lidz, 2002; Linse, 2005; Pinter, 2006).

Teachers may face challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. These challenges may be about expectations of parents (Moon, 2005), dealing with children's language performance (Vale & Feunteun, 1995), or classroom management, resources and individual differences of children (Fantilli and McDoughall, 2009) as well as many others like flaws in educational system, lack of technological equipments and lack of a professional learning environment (Alagözlü, 2012; Saraç, 2012).

Studies in Turkey show that teachers, parents and administrations support foreign language education in preschool years, as well (İlter & Er, 2007; Küçük, 2006). This support is helpful for very young learners because for İşpınar (2005), young learners are more eager to learn than adults and they have enthusiasm for foreign language. Besides, for Kalaycıoğlu (2011), teaching vocabulary using Total Physical Response increases foreign language proficiency, and use of posters, puppets, picture books and stories as well as authentic cartoons are beneficial for children's foreign language learning (Arıkan & Taraf, 2010; Bardakçı, 2011). These studies reveal valuable information about foreign language teaching in Turkey, but they do not have detailed information about teachers' planning, implementation and assessment practices.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine preschool foreign language teachers' viewpoints on the purpose of teaching foreign language in preschool years as well as their self-reported practices, challenges and addressing challenges while they are planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. To achieve this goal, participants were interviewed using an interview protocol piloted and developed by the researcher. Qualitative data analysis techniques were used for the analysis of the data gathered through the interviews.

This chapter presents the design of the study, the selection of the participants, the description of the instrument, the procedures for data collection and data analysis.

3.1. Design of the Study

This study investigated the participants' views on the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years; their self reports on how they plan, implement, assess children's foreign language learning; what challenges they face; and how they address the challenges they face while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. Thus, the study was designed as a phenomenological research so as to examine the views and lived experiences of teachers as reported by them. Phenomenology allows the researcher to understand individuals' experiences and leads to describing a meaning of their views (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) as well as promoting meaning and understanding of these experiences (Husserl, 1973). Besides, through utilizing a phenomenological study, a researcher can specifically focus on how participants describe what they experience (Patton, 1990), which is advantageous to understanding the meaning of the same phenomenon from the points of different personal experiences of individuals (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Van Manen, 1990; Willis, 1991). Phenomenology is

appropriate for the purposes of this study because it gives the researcher an opportunity to focus on individuals and their understandings (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009) through describing their common views of the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2007), which in the case of this study is foreign language teaching in early childhood year.

Within this research, twenty preschool level foreign language teachers were interviewed one-to-one through an interview protocol developed by the researcher. Interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions composed the raw data. The data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques to be able to collect detailed information about the participants' views of a specific topic, which is actually what basic qualitative research design stands for (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research gives the opportunity to perform an in-depth analysis from a small number of participants (Creswell, 2007), and as Patton (2002) describes, findings of qualitative research analysis can be derived from three data collection types, one of which makes up the core of this study, in-depth, open-ended interviews.

3.1.1. Justification for Using Self-Reports of Practices

Self-reports are usually acquired through interviews. In the heart of the interviews is a search for meaning held by the research participants. People make sense of their experience and interviewing allows a researcher to access these meanings (Patton, 1980; Seidman, 2006). Interviews are preferable when the purpose of an inquiry is to obtain rich explanations of participants' viewpoints (Fontana & Frey, 2008). In the current study, the researcher was interested in understanding preschool foreign language teachers' experiences through their eyes. Therefore, an interview-based study that allowed the participants to self-report their meanings of their experiences was necessary. In other words, the goal of the study was not identifying planning, implementation and assessment practices of teachers as perceived by the researcher. Rather, it was identifying these as perceived by the teachers to obtain first hand record of these meanings (Patton, 2002) so that participants can openly share their ideas, experiences and knowledge (Hatch, 2002; Schostak, 2006). Therefore, relying on self-reports of practice through interviews was considered to be the most appropriate way of collecting data in this study.

3.2. Participants

The specific sampling method used in this study was purposive sampling. In qualitative studies, researchers try to find participants who will provide valuable insights under study rather than to select random participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Purposive sampling was viewed appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher include preschool foreign language teachers working in different schools in the sample. During the participant selection process, social media, forums on the Internet and phone calls were utilized. Participants who accepted to take part in the study were contacted, and given detailed information about the interview process. Polkinghorne (1989, as cited in Creswell, 2007) suggests that the number of participants in phenomenology can vary between 5 and 25. However, in this study, saturation was followed to decide the number of the participants. To illustrate, teachers were interviewed until no new insights were gained through the interviews (Siegle, 2002; Mason, 2010).

Initially, 23 preschool foreign language teachers had been interviewed; however, 3 of the interviewees were eliminated from the study due to lack of data and external factors. Thus, the current study consisted of 20 preschool foreign language teachers. Among them, only one participant was male, and the remaining 19 participants were female because of the availability of female preschool foreign language teachers more than male teachers. As a matter of fact, during the selection of participants, another male preschool foreign language teacher was also available; however, he was working at the same school with the other male participant. Therefore, he was not selected as a participant so as not to jeopardize the diversity of schools in the study. In addition, all of the participants work at private schools because of the availability of foreign language teaching mostly in private schools, and they teach very young learners whose ages range from 36 to 72 months. Besides, all of the participants contended that they work with preschool children willingly and they like working with children. Below is the information about participants' educational backgrounds, the departments they graduated from, coursework on teaching foreign language to very young learners, attending trainings, type of school they work at, years of teaching experience, the age group taught, number of children in each class, number of teaching hours, and the knowledge of the National Early Childhood Program.

Table 3.1

Educational Background of the Participants

Educational Background		n	%
Degree Obtained	Bachelor's	18	90
	Master's	2	10
Department	English Language Teaching	12	60
	English Linguistics	1	5
	English Language and Literature	4	20
	American Language and Literature	3	15
Related Coursework	Yes	11	55
	No	9	45

As Table 3.1 indicates, majority of the participants have a bachelor's degree, and two of them are graduates of a master's program. In addition, 14 of the participants graduated from state universities, and 6 of them are the graduates of private universities.

Besides, majority of the participants had their degrees from English Language Teaching departments. Although the rest of the participants received their degrees from English Linguistics, English Language and Literature and American Language and Literature departments, they obtained their teaching certificates from teaching certificate programs in their universities. All of the participants studied in the departments mentioned above after taking the foreign language proficiency exam as a part of university entrance examination, which means they had to have a certain level of proficiency in foreign language to be able to get admitted into these departments.

As demonstrated in the last part of Table 3.1, about half of the participants took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and about half of the participants did not.

Table 3.2

Participants' attendance in trainings on teaching foreign language to very young learners

Trainings attended	n	%
I have not attended any.	11	55
I have attended once.	1	5
I have attended between once and three times.	2	10
I have attended more than three times.	6	30
Total	20	100

The trainings participants have attended involves in-service trainings, seminars and workshops. As Table 3.2 demonstrates, more than half of the participants have not attended any training on teaching foreign language to very young learners. One of them has attended only one training. Two of the participants have attended trainings between once and three times, and six of the participants have attended more than three trainings.

Table 3.3 demonstrates teaching backgrounds of participants. Most of the participants are new to the profession with one to five-year teaching experience. Besides, three of the participants have experience of six to ten years of teaching. Only one of the participants teaches for more than ten years in preschools. In addition, most of the participants work at private schools, and six of them work at private kindergartens. Among these six participants, two of them teach more than one preschool institutions whereas the remaining four participants have stable work places.

Most of the teachers teach foreign language to five and six-year-old children. Three of them teach four, five and six-year-olds, and the remaining two participants have four groups. They teach three, four, five and six-year-old children. The number of children in a class is usually between 16 and 20. Besides, seven of the teachers have between 11 and 15 children, and two of them have between five and ten children. There are more than 21 children in the classes of remaining two participants.

Table 3.3

Teaching Backgrounds of the Participants

Teaching Background		n	%
Years of teaching in early childhood	1-5	16	80
	6-10	3	15
	11-15	1	5
Type of school participants work at	Private schools (colleges)	14	70
	Private kindergartens	6	30
Age groups participants teach	5, 6	15	75
	4, 5, 6	3	15
	3, 4, 5, 6	2	10
Number of children in a class	5-10	2	10
	11-15	7	35
	16-20	9	45
	21-25	2	10
Teaching hours in a week	5-10	11	55
	11-15	3	15
	16-20	3	15
	21-25	3	15

As shown in the last part of Table 3.3, more than half of the participants teach foreign language to very young learners between five and 10 hours in a week. Three of them teach between 11 and 15 hours, three participants teach between 16 and 20 hours, and the remaining three participants teach more than 21 hours in a week.

Table 3.4

Participants' knowledge and use of the National Early Childhood Program

Knowledge and use of NECP	n	%
Yes	4	20
No	16	80
Total	20	100

Table 3.4 shows if participants know about and make use of the National Early Childhood Program prepared by Turkish Ministry of National Education (2006). This program includes the goals and objectives that teachers working with preschoolers should take into consideration in their teaching practices. It also introduces the developmental characteristics of preschool children in terms of psychomotor, socio-emotional, language and cognitive domains and their self-care abilities. Only four of the participants stated they know about and employ the National Early Childhood Program. The rest of the participants do not know about the existence of such a program.

3.3. Instrument and Data Collection

The interview instrument, interview protocol and interview questions and data collection procedures are presented in this section.

3.3.1. Interview Instrument

As one of the basic data collection methods in qualitative studies (Creswell, 2003), interviews were conducted in this study to inquire about participants' views on a specific topic (Patton, 2002). The interview protocol in the semi-structured format to allow the researcher make use of predetermined questions as well as additional ones when needed (Patton, 2002) was designed by the researcher around the participants' views on the purpose of foreign language teaching, and self-reports on planning, implementing, and assessing children's foreign language learning after reviewing the related literature and studies conducted.

The first version of the interview protocol consisted of a demographic information part and 17 interview questions. Three experts who study in the fields of both foreign language education and early childhood education with doctoral degrees reviewed the interview instrument and necessary adaptations were made according to their comments and recommendation.

Pilot studies followed expert opinions to make adjustments such as changing the sequence of the questions, explaining the unclear items, or eliminating the questions that were not responded (Oppenheim, 1992). A pilot study was conducted in April 2012 with four foreign language teachers to check the comprehensibility and clarity of the interview instrument. Participants of the pilot study were preschool foreign language teachers with preschool teaching experience between one and five

years. Besides, two of them took a related course on teaching foreign language in undergraduate degree and two of them did not. They were interviewed one-to-one at a convenient time in a convenient place offered by them in Ankara. All of the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed into written documents.

Transcriptions of the pilot study were utilized in data analysis and several adaptations were made accordingly. Under the supervision of expert opinions and the data analysis of the pilot study, two questions were added to the demographic information part after confirming that the findings of the pilot study lacked some necessary information about participants. In addition to this, three questions were omitted from the main questions part, and they were adjusted as follow-up questions in related main questions. The finalized version of the interview protocol was formed with seven questions of a demographic information part and 14 main questions.

Taking the research questions into consideration, 14 main questions were divided into four sections for a more planned collection of data regarding the research questions: the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschools, planning, implementation and assessment of children's foreign language learning. Table 3.5 presents the sections and the distribution of the questions.

Questions in the Demographic Information section of this study sought to obtain the educational backgrounds of the participants, their teaching experiences, type of school they work in, the number of children in a class, working hours with children, age groups taught, seminars and trainings attended, and whether they took any related undergraduate courses on teaching foreign language to very young learners to be able to present the findings according to related data.

Table 3.5

Sections and distributions of the questions

Sections	Number of the questions
Demographic Information	7 questions
Purpose of foreign language teaching	1 main & 3 follow-up questions
Planning	4 main & 14 follow-up questions
Implementation	5 main & 14 follow-up questions
Assessment	4 main & 12 follow-up questions

The question on the purpose of foreign language teaching sought for the responses related to participants' views on the reasons for foreign language teaching early childhood years as well as their purposes of teaching foreign language to very young learners.

Questions in the planning section were prepared to delineate how participants plan their activities, what features they include in their plans, what kind of resources they use, whether they make use of National Early Childhood Program, what challenges they face and how they address these challenges.

Similarly, questions in the implementation section were framed within the foreign language teaching techniques and methods participants make use of, the activities and materials they benefit from, their most and least favorable activities, what challenges they face while implementing their activities and how they address these challenges.

As the final section, questions related to assessing children's foreign language learning sought for responses about participants' definitions of assessing children's foreign language learning, the assessment procedure they follow, how they assess children's foreign language learning, what kind of challenges they face while assessing children's foreign language learning and how they address these challenges (Figure 3.1).

Demographic Information	•educational background •teaching experience •undergraduate courses on teaching foreign language teaching
Purpose of Foreign Language Teaching	•reasons for foreign language teaching in early childhood •aims of foreign language teaching in early childhood
Planning	•how participants plan their activities •what challenges they face while planning •how they address these challenges
Implementation	•how participants implement their activities •what challenges they face while implementing •how they address these challenges
Assessment	•how participants assess children's foreign language learning •what challenges they face while assessing children's foreign language learning •how they address these challenges

Figure 3.1 The organization of the interview questions

3.3.2. Data Collection Procedures

After finalizing the interview protocol, ethical permission from the Research Center for Applied Ethics of Middle East Technical University was obtained and the data collection process began. Firstly, participants who teach foreign language in preschools were purposefully selected. As part of this effort, the researcher made sure that all participants included in the study worked in different schools and taught foreign language to very young learners in different regions of Ankara. Selecting participants from different schools from different regions of Ankara allowed the researcher to bring diversity of experiences into the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and interview process through e-mail or by phone. Then a convenient place at a convenient time for the interviews was arranged with each participant. The selection of the convenient place was based on the quietness and suitability of the place for one-to-one interviews without a possible interruption during the interview. Before the interviews, participants were informed about the confidentiality of the interviews, and that they could stop if they wished during the interviews by referring to the consent form. Then they were asked to sign the informed consent form (Appendix F). After that, the interviewing process started. Each interview was audio-recorded beginning from the warm-up questions.

After a few warm-up questions, demographic information of the participants was obtained. Right after that, they were required to answer questions about the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschools, their practices, challenges and addressing challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. Interview questions were asked in the same order to all of the interviewers. When needed, on the moment follow-up questions beyond the interview protocol were also asked. Each interview took approximately a half hour. These interviews took place between September 2 and November 20, in 2012.

3.4. Data Analysis

As the first step of the data analysis, all of the interviews were transcribed into written documents to materialize the data analysis process. After that, all of the transcriptions were read and re-read by the researcher lest transcriptions might have been misunderstood. Ensuring that transcriptions were understood correctly and there were no missing data, data were coded into meaningful units. A priori codes were used in the data analysis process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Four categories

were developed prior to the data analysis based on the focus of the study including the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschools, planning, implementation and assessment. Data were coded under these four categories. While transferring the words into meaningful units, they were counted to be able to decide on the distinctive words uttered by the participants. Neuman (2007) states that while coding the data, raw data should be transferred into manageable piles such as themes and concepts so that the researcher can retrieve the purposeful parts of the data swiftly. Therefore, carrying out coding procedure, meaningful units were transferred into themes, and these themes were put into order to be able to identify and interpret the findings (Patton, 2002).

3.4.1. Quality Considerations

Several methods were used to ensure validity and reliability of the findings. It is necessary to state that in qualitative research, validity and trustworthiness (or credibility), and reliability and consistency can be used interchangeably (Golafshani, 2003). In this study, the use of these interchangeable words was decided by the word choice of the references given.

To begin with, validity in this study is about the closeness in which the equalization of what is desired to study and what is got (Roberts & Priest, 2006). For Creswell (2007), validity of a study can be established through prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer review or debriefing, negative case analysis, clarification of researcher bias, member checking, rich and thick descriptions of the study and external audits. Creswell (2007) suggests that it is necessary to make use of two of these techniques to ensure validity in a qualitative study. First of all, thick descriptions of how the procedures of the study were tried to be included as far as possible. Secondly, as Carlson (2010) summarized in an article, and as Shenton (2004) mentioned, collection of data from different people at different places help the researcher ensure triangulation. Therefore, all of the participants in this study were selected from different schools and regions of Ankara and from different years of experience to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Besides, as a part of the purposive sampling, it was important for the researcher to interview participants who had rich information about the phenomenon. Therefore, most of the participants were selected from private schools (colleges) considering

that they have a more formal foreign language education system and they have specific groups for foreign language teaching instruction.

Furthermore, for peer review or debriefing, first of all, the research proposal was written under the supervision of the thesis supervisor and necessary feedback and permission to conduct the study regarding the purpose and significance of the study, methodology, data collection procedures and data analysis plans were taken by an examining committee in the "Seminar in Elementary Science and Math Education" course in the spring term of 2011 and 2012 academic year. Then three experts in the field of education checked the design of the study and data analysis plan, and they provided feedback and recommendations. During the implementation of study, the thesis supervisor monitored the procedures with her suggestions and recommendations, as well. Last, throughout the study, another researcher who has conducted several qualitative studies in the field of foreign language education monitored the data collection and data analysis procedures of the study. The monitoring process was fulfilled by organizing face-to-face or online sessions and discussions with the peer, and by making necessary adaptations and editing if necessary.

In addition, member checking was utilized in this study. Member checking helps the researcher control the quality of the study (Harper & Cole, 2012). For Creswell (2007), it can be implemented at the end of the analysis to give the opportunity to participants to analyze the findings as focus groups; however, it can also be done during the interview sessions, in which the researchers summarizes, paraphrases the data obtained and asks the participants if they are understood correctly for credibility (Creswell, 2007; Harper & Cole, 2012). In the current study, member checking was implemented during the interviews. At the end of each section in the interview, participants were asked to confirm their responses by similar statements rephrased by the researcher. The misunderstandings and information gaps were eliminated and necessary corrections were recorded in the audio-tape to increase the validity in data analysis.

Besides, as recommended by Maxwell (1992), several techniques were used to ensure trustworthiness. To begin with, each and every detail obtained from the participants was reported in the findings section to ensure descriptive validity, and transcriptions helped to ensure it. Secondly, theoretical validity was ensured by

analyzing the concepts regarding whether they were understood correctly. To be able to make this certain, an expert's opinion was taken to check if there was a link between the theory and practice mentioned in the literature review section. Next, details were tried to be given in a clear and constant way using charts and tables to show the results clearly and in an understandable way, which are the ways to ensure evaluative validity. Besides all of these, internal validity is a term which is of great significance in this current study (Daymon & Holloway, 2003). To ensure internal validity, transcribing the interviews into written documents was utilized to justify that what was collected as data is the same as what the participants shared. Furthermore, possible threats to internal validity were tried to be controlled, as well. First, the topic of the study includes the challenges that teachers face, so it might give the participants the feeling that they were going to be judged. This can jeopardize the attitudes of subjects for the study. To control this, participant were ensured by giving information that data gathered from them about their self-reported practices were really important, and it is the data that would be studied but not the characteristics of participants. Second, as also mentioned above, the threat of the characteristics of the subjects was tried to be controlled through the selection of participants from various schools, which indicated all of the participants work at different schools and different regions of Ankara. Third, questions were asked in the same order and manner to control implementation threat (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Most importantly for quality assurance, multiple coders coded the data during the data analysis process to ensure the inter-coder reliability of the analysis. Inter-coder reliability refers to the consistency of results among different coders (Creswell, 2003; Oppenheim, 1992). This study included two independent coders. The first coder was the researcher. The second coder was a faculty member and a foreign language education instructor with experience in qualitative data analysis. The second coder had been informed about the study beforehand, and then interviews were coded independently by two coders. First of all, two independent coders coded the data by reading the transcriptions and underlining distinctive words. Then they utilized a framework to note down the key points by putting a tick every time a distinctive word was faced. After that, the codes of two independent coders were compared. The comparison was made by checking the percentage agreement of the codes of two independent coders (Johnson, Penny & Gordon, 2001). The results of

the percentage agreement revealed that the agreement rate was approximately 92%, which meant coders agreed on most of the codes. Agreement on codes was concluded upon discussion, and inter-coder reliability was finalized after a full agreement on meaningful units and themes together.

3.5.Limitations

This study has several limitations. First of all, as the nature of qualitative research, there is limited number of participants, so the findings of the data are limited with the responses of 20 participants. Secondly, almost all of the participants were female, only one of them was male. Besides, although the study aims to investigate the viewpoints on the purpose of teaching foreign language to very young learners, practices, challenges and addressing challenges of foreign language teachers while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning, all of the participants are English language teachers. Teachers of other foreign languages were not included in the study.

Moreover, participants do not represent the whole country because they are selected from only one of the cities in Turkey, which is Ankara because of its accessibility to the researcher, so findings of the current study cannot be generalized. Furthermore, all of the participants teach foreign language at private schools, so participants from state schools are not included in the study. Besides, only teachers take place in the study, that is, other stakeholders of education (e.g. administration, parents, children, policy makers) do not stand as a part of it.

This study involves only one type of data collection tool, which is an interview protocol. It is not a longitudinal study, and it does not include observations or quantitative data collection tools such as surveys and questionnaires. Besides, as this is a self-report study about a phenomenon, teachers' responses may not reflect their actual practices, or they may be influenced by society's expectations and may not reveal their actual views. As Kagan (2007), the responses are subjective to participants. Therefore, the findings of the study depend on only verbal and self-reported responses of participants. The settings of actual planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning are not presented by the researcher.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter of the study includes the responses obtained from the interviews conducted with 20 preschool foreign language teachers. Among these participants, 11 of them are the ones who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners, and nine of the participants are the ones who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language teaching to very young learners. Findings are presented regarding the related courses taken by the participants by reporting the answers of the research questions below:

1. What are the views of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years?

2. What are preschool foreign language teachers' self-reports on

a. practices of planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning?

b. challenges faced during planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning?

c. the ways to address challenges faced during planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning

3. How do preschool foreign language teachers with and without coursework in foreign language teaching to very young learners differ in their views on the purpose, planning, implementing and assessing of children's foreign language learning?

4.1.Views on the Purpose of Foreign Language Teaching in Preschool Years

Participants were asked about their views on foreign language teaching in preschool years. Regarding this, participants' responses on the reasons for teaching foreign language in preschool years can be reported in 2 main themes.

According to participants, the first reason for teaching foreign language in preschool years is that children learn better than adults. Seven of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and more than half of the ones who did not (n=5) indicated children are better learners, so an early start increases the likelihood of a permanent learning as "… the earlier the better" (P 2). Participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners made a comparison stating that young children "…have more capacities to learn [foreign language] compared to adults. What is more, according to participants, young children do not feel the pressure of the society and the anxiety of exams to pass, and "They are not afraid to fail or they are not forced to learn the grammar rules or complicated structures" (P 19). Similarly, participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners focused on young children's "… capacity to learn foreign language effortlessly compared to adults who have to put extra struggle" (P 11), and they added "Adults try not to make any mistakes, but children do not force themselves to be perfect, which makes them learn easier and better" (P 7). Moreover, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and participants who did not agreed on that children are better learners especially in pronunciation of the words and they claimed that "They [children] hear a word and it is enough to articulate it perfectly; adults can rarely do this." (P 6) which was considered to be a great advantage by a participant who also teaches adult learners since children's pronunciation is " … as if somebody had taught children phonetics but forgotten to show it to adults" (P 17).

The second reason is related to children's acquisition of languages. According to four of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and four of the ones who did not explained the reason for teaching foreign language in preschool years as children's capacity to acquire foreign language just like the acquisition of their mother tongue. Participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners explained this as "it is like acquiring their mother tongue, so it becomes life-long." (P 1), and "They [children] learn naturally as they learn their mother tongue, which starts with understanding body language, interpretation and explanation [of language]" (P 10). On the other hand, participants who took a related course responded more theoretically as "I learnt Critical Period Hypothesis [in an undergraduate course] and

I agree that children can acquire languages at an early age" (P20) and "They [children] have language acquisition device [known as LAD in Universal Grammar] as Chomsky says, and it helps children acquire all languages at an early start" (P 9).

As indicated above, that children learn better than adults and that they acquire foreign language just like their mother tongue are two main reasons for teaching foreign language in preschool years. Making use of the benefits of children's foreign language learning capacities, participants revealed that they have certain aims for teaching foreign language to very young learners. They can be grouped into three aims (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

The Purpose of Teaching Foreign Language in Preschool Years

The purpose of teaching foreign language in preschool years is	n	Course taken	Course not taken
1. to make children develop an awareness of another language and culture.	10	6	4
2. to make children get prepared for future foreign language activities.	8	5	3
3. to make children start to love foreign language.	7	6	1

Six of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and almost half of the ones who did not (n=4) regarded the purpose of teaching foreign language in preschool years as children's opportunity to develop an awareness of another language in the early years of their lives, mentioning this as "The aim is to make children aware that there are other languages besides Turkish" (P 8). They similarly indicated "Young children learn other languages, other cultures and they understand that there is not just one way of communicating" (P 5). Through this another way of communication, participants believed that they introduced children with another culture and language as well as "… features and characteristics of another language and culture such as greeting, thanking, celebrating" (P 19). These are quite in line with the explanation that

"Though children may forget vocabulary and structures, they will always remember that they met a different language in kindergarten" (P 13).

Besides this, almost half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=5) and one third of the ones who did not (n=3) had the view that foreign language education in preschool years is like preparation for future language activities so the aim is "to prepare our children and provide a basis for what they will learn in primary school" (P 3). Not only the participants who took a related course on teaching very young learners but also the ones who did not were the proponents of this idea since they believed children will feel more confident in the following years if they meet foreign language earlier. To illustrate, a participant proposed "Children need to get prepared for future foreign language practices in preschool years. I aim at teaching them some basic expressions and statements, so they will find it easier to add on in primary school years." (P 12), and another participant revealed "they [children] will be more successful in foreign language in the future if they learn the basics of language learning" (P 19).

Finally, more than half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and only one of the participants who did not assumed that the purpose is to make children start to love foreign language. For example, a participant who did not take a related course stated that "I try to make my children love languages besides Turkish." (P 16), and participants who took a related course explained this similarly and proposed that they can fulfill this aim by making use of fun and enjoyable activities. Among these participants, two of them clarified the importance of love of languages as "Love of languages leads to an increase in high-achievement so children feel better" (P 9), and "If they [children] love a language, there will be a decrease in their foreign language anxiety" (P 18) in the future.

4.2. Self-Reported Practices of Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Foreign Language Learning

4.2.1. Planning

During the interview, participants were expected to answer the questions related to their self-reported planning practices. In this respect, they exhibited

responses to how they plan their activities, which ways they follow and what is important while planning their activities.

There does not seem to be a difference between participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not in terms of their self-reported planning practices. The study indicated that participants plan their activities in two ways. The first way is about making use of the plans which are provided by the publishers of the course books, as indicated by more than half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=7), and the ones who did not (n=5). Participants in both groups expressed that publishers send them plans and participants utilize them by adapting them for their activities. To explain, two of the participants commented "The publisher whose course book I use sends it [the plan] at the beginning of the year, and I follow that by making necessary adaptations." (P 3), and "Publishers include activity plans in teacher's book, and I make use of it" (P 5).

On the other hand, the same number of participants in both groups (n=8) stated similarly that they prepare their own plans. Participants who did not take a related course explained that they themselves "…plan lessons, by checking the materials, activities and topics in hand, and adjusting them in the right place in the plan" (P 11). For them, they feel better when they make their own plans due to having the control of their own activities. For instance, they can include up-to-date topics, special days and whatever they want in their plans. Similarly, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners claimed "I look through the book and I plan what to do, which materials and activities to use in the following week" (P 2).

As stated above, participants of this study either use a plan provided by the publishers or prepare their own activity plans. Within this framework, the responses revealed that participants' activity plans can be formed through themes, stories or the combination of both (Table 4.2). Selected examples of activity plans of participants are presented in Appendix C.

Table 4.2

Participants' use of curriculum designs

My plans are	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Theme-based	8	4	4
Story-based	7	4	3
Combination of both	5	3	2

To begin with, almost one third of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to VLYs (n=4) and 4 of the ones who did not stated that their plans are based on themes. Participants in both groups denoted this as "I select a theme and prepare my activities around it" (P 12), and "Each unit has it [a theme] in the course book, and songs, stories, games revolve around this specific theme" (P 7). Participants supported a theme-based curriculum because they proposed that themes help children learn better by engaging in different activities of a relevant topic. To illustrate, a participant revealed "Activities get integrated into a theme so they become relevant to each other, and children can make connections between activities" (P 11).

Likewise, four of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and three of the ones who did not indicated that they revolve their activities around a story. In this respect, they can "just pick up a story and plan activities about that story such as role-plays, colorings and tongue twisters" (P 14), as well as "activities about the characters in the story, target vocabulary, songs, puppet shows" (P 20). Participants explained they take stories as the base of their plans because children love anything related to stories and they "... feel more motivated when there is narration activities in which they [children] can also take place" (P 9).

In addition, three of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two of the participants who did not indicated they did not have a specific type of curriculum while making their plans, but they combine stories and themes while planning their lessons. They explained "I cannot choose one way of planning, but I use stories and/or themes as the focus." (P 13), and "I sometimes take a story as the basis for a specific unit because I consider

that it will work better. However, there are some units which are taught best through a theme, so I plan them accordingly" (P 3). They stated combination of stories and themes "....makes plans more powerful enabling teachers to choose the strengths of both" (P 8).

In addition to the types of plans and the use of books, the study revealed that participants give importance to several points while planning their lessons (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Participants' Considerations of Planning

How I plan should		Course	Course
	n	taken	not taken
1. attract children's attention	19	11	8
2. be developmentally appropriate for children	12	8	4
3. be parallel with what children's classroom teacher teaches	5	2	3
4. meet my expectations	3	2	1
5. not underestimate the number of children in the class	2	1	1

All the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=11) and almost all of the participants who did not (n=8) uttered the words "attracting children" as the basic point that they take into consideration while making their plans. Participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners claimed that an activity has to attract children in order to get them actively involved in learning. For example, for one of the participants, "when an activity manages to attract children, they feel motivated, and get naturally ready to learn" (P 15); therefore, "The first thing to consider is how to attract children's attention so that they can take part in the activities." (P 2), and "...that they actively involve in what they are attracted certainly results in better learning" (P 3). Participants who did not take a related course responded similarly and stated they try to benefit from what children are attracted. In this respect, two of the participants conceded: "I feel excited about some

activities, but then I stop and ask myself if this activity will make children excited, as well." (P 5) and "…if I can have a clue about what attract children, I definitely include it in my activity plans because I know that they will definitely take part in the activities and learn" (P 10).

Moreover, participants indicated that their plans should be developmentally appropriate for children. More than two third of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=8) and four of the one who did not stated "Plans should definitely take the capabilities of children into consideration to work out properly" (P 9). Participants who did not take a related course on teaching very young learners explained this in general ideas and stated that the characteristics of age groups have importance in the preparation of their plans, and they need to know if children can accomplish the activities that are intended to include in the plan. For example, one of the participants explained "Preschool children have different characteristics from adults, so I try to make my plans according to their developmental levels. I try to refrain from activities that are too difficult for my children." (P 16); participants who took a course indicated theoretical concepts such as "I remember Piaget's stages, so I know they can only deal with concrete ideas" (P 20) and "I consider if children can do the activity I plan in terms of physical development. I know their fine-motor skills are not developed for detailed activities" (P 3).

Besides that, two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language and three of the ones who did not stated that they wanted their plans to have parallel with what children's classroom teachers do claiming that children can learn better when they can relate what they learn in Turkish with foreign language. Participants explained "I ask the classroom teacher of children what they learn about that time, and I include the English version of what they learn in my plan." (P 4), and "Children have a learning program in general, and I check them before planning. … children learn easier then" (P 10).

Likewise, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=2) and who did not (n=1) considered that their own goals, objectives, and expectations about children's learning make the decision while planning. They indicated "Actually, I have some expectations from children and teaching, so I base them while planning my lessons." (P 1), and "No matter what

other factors are, I always include what I really expect from children in my plan to some extent" (P 2).

Finally, one participant who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one participant who did not expressed that the number of children is crucial while making their plans. They indicated "I have to take the number of children into consideration to make better plans so as to implement better." (P 15) because "… I have crowded classes, too, so planning accordingly is really important" (P 4).

4.2.2. Implementing

Participants were asked which language teaching techniques and methods they use while teaching young learners (Table 4.4). Besides, the activity plans in Appendix C reveals some of the techniques and methods, activities and materials used in implementation.

Table 4.4 demonstrates that there seemed to be difference between the number of participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not only in the use of Total Physical Response as a teaching technique. However, although participants who took a related course on teaching VLYs (n=9) outnumbers the ones who did not (n=5), they have similar ideas about the use of Total Physical Response (TPR) in implementation. They preferred this method because "...it is the action of language (P 20)". Besides, for participants, TPR is the best way for children to learn foreign language because of its characteristics, and they strongly argued that it is like a classic that every preschool foreign language teacher needs to make use of. One participant exemplified: "I mostly use TPR because children love moving around, jumping, etc. while learning." (P 8), and another participant explained:

> I realize that TPR is what I use. I teach vocabulary and songs with physical movements. For instance, if there are the names of animals in a song, then I find physical responses to define them and teach the song through these responses. Then, even if I do not say anything but show the movement, children can tell me the word (P 2).

Table 4.4

Language Teaching Techniques and Methods Used

Techniques and Methods	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Total Physical Response (TPR)	14	9	5
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	5	3	2
Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)	3	2	1
Post-method	3	2	1
Suggestopedia	2	1	1
I do not use any techniques and methods.	3	1	2

Although participants stated that TPR is the technique they mostly use, they revealed that there are also other techniques and methods they refer to. One of them is the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). One-quarter of the participants, three of whom are the ones who took a related course and two of whom are the ones who did not, explained that they utilize this method through functional activities to help children gain effective communication skills. To illustrate, there are explanations such as "I make use of CLT. I try to involve children in functional communication activities through games and group works." (P 18), by also focusing on social interaction as "Implementing CLT, children interact with each other in another language during the activities" (P 1).

Besides, participants expressed Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) can also be used while teaching foreign language to children. Both participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not indicated this as "I try to use ALM because repetition through drills is crucial while teaching children." (P 5) and "I prepare dialogue activities to repeat them with my children. This is a part of ALM" (P 20).

Similarly, the findings revealed that two participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one participant who did not make use of post-method while implementing their activities. Although they did not utter the name of this method as "I use post-method", they made their own definitions of their methods as "I cannot name a single method. I come up with my own unique teaching technique by merging the best strategies" (P16), by also giving

the reason as "Every single method has its benefits and deficits. In this case, I combine the benefits taking children into consideration and compose my own" (P 3).

Besides that, one of the participants who took a related course and one participant who did not highlighted the use Suggestopedia, since they "… try to teach in a playful manner (P 1)" by also "filling the environment with cushions, a piece of music behind and offering children to learn rather than force them" (P 18).

Apart from the techniques and methods mentioned above, three of the participants, one of whom took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two of whom did not, stated they do not remember any techniques and methods from undergraduate degree, and they do not use any. They claim "I do not remember any methods, and I guess I do not use a method." (P 12), and "A method is not necessary at this level. I do not know any methods, but I can teach" (P 4).

Participants recognize the implementation of these methods and techniques by using various activities in their lessons. They have several kinds of activities that they use while teaching a foreign language (Table 4.5).

The findings revealed that most of the participants make use of games while implementing their lessons. Participants who took a related course on teaching very young learners (n=9) and who did not (n=7) both indicated that games are the easiest and the most enjoyable way of teaching a language. For example, one of the participants illustrated: "Games are what children like most, which is a great advantage for me to know because when I include games in the activities, I can teach more effectively." (P11)

Table 4.5

Activities Used in Implementation

Types of activities	n	Course taken	Course not taken
1. Games	16	9	7
2. Songs	13	7	6
3. Stories	13	8	5
4. Coloring activities	13	7	6
5. Cutting and pasting	11	4	7
6. Drama	8	3	5
7. Listening	5	2	3
8. Group work	3	1	2

Besides, participants, seven of whom took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and six of whom did not, include songs in their activities since songs are very helpful for children to remember language structures and vocabulary. Participants illustrated that "Songs can teach language on their own because children do not forget any of the words they learn through songs." (P 5), and "…improve their [children's] memory as language is taught through music, which makes it easier to remember" (P 15). Stories, as well as songs, take place in participants' practices of implementation since teachers can present target vocabulary and language patterns through stories. Participants consider this noteworthy since one participant explained that "They [children] personalize characters and internalize language, so they learn better" (P 16). Coloring activities follow songs and stories because according to many of the participants (n=13), coloring is the way to make language concrete in children's hands. One participant said "The characters and vocabulary in the songs and stories become real in coloring activities. Children use their imagination and their own colors for their own learning" (P 9).

In addition, almost all of the teachers who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=7) expressed they make use of cut-and-paste activities, stating "By using various materials, they [children] cut the work sheets I bring [in the class], and prepare posters and decorate the class by

pasting what they cut" (P 17). However, most of the participants who took a related course on teaching very young learners revealed they do not use cut-and-paste activities considering that children cannot use scissors proficiently, and it becomes time-consuming, so they do not want to spend time on such activities. For example, one participant claimed "Children may hurt themselves since they are not totally ready to cut small pieces, and I do not want to waste time on this" (P 18).

Drama activities were preferred substantially by more than half of the participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to VLYs (n=5) compared to the ones who took a related course in undergraduate degree (n=3). Despite the difference in number, both groups indicated that "It [drama] fosters children's imagination and increases motivation." (P 6), the reason of which can be that "they [children] are in the center of learning in drama activities" (P 10). Listening activities follow drama. Participants who made use of listening activities (n=5) stated that "children listen to questions in the audio CDs and answer by circling, marking, or crossing out" (P 19). Finally, three of the participants stated they find group work activities helpful because "Children learn social rules such as sharing, listening, tolerating others, etc." (P 2) through group work.

These activities mentioned above are fulfilled by using various materials. Besides materials like colored pieces of paper, glues, crayons, pencils and so on, participants use several materials to teach English while implementing their activities (Table 4.6).

The findings revealed that participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not make use of similar materials. To begin with, participants in both groups make use of course books. They regarded course books as their basic materials from the beginning of the term till the end. One participant expressed the benefits of course books as "A book with up-to-date resources facilitates my work in the class by presenting various activities and materials to be used" (P 4). However, participants who do not use a course book as their materials connected this to parents since they do not want to spend money on a course book, and one of the participants explained this as "I do not have a course book this term because parents did not want to buy one, so I prepare a compiled course pack using the materials I have in hand" (P 9).

Table 4.6

Materials Used in Implementing

Materials	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Course book	18	9	9
Flashcards	14	8	6
Puppets	8	4	4
Interactive software programs	8	4	4
Extra work-sheets	6	3	3
Videos	5	2	3

Flashcards take the second place after the course book as the materials used in implementation. Participants expressed they want to enhance the use of flashcards because they are used for various purposes. For example, one of the participants indicated that "Flashcards are multitask materials. I use them for presenting new vocabulary and structures, in the games such as 'point to' or 'touch', in stories and so on." (P 20) and another participant expressed "Children can visualize what I mean to teach through flashcards" (P 1). Furthermore, for participants, puppets, as well as flashcards, help teachers substantially with regard to classroom management and as a facilitator of language learning. For instance, a participant asserted "Puppets help me manage the class, since children love to listen to Teddy [the puppet] and they do everything to kiss it" (P 15), and another participant exemplifies "I told them [children] Lily [the puppet] cannot speak English, so they have to teach her how to speak English. Children learn new words and try to teach it to her [the puppet]" (P 5).

In technologically equipped classrooms, teachers make use of software programs, which made participants state that they utilize these software programs mostly in games. They "… reflect the interactive games on the board [through a projector], and children can touch, move or even catch the characters." (P 8) or "…get involved in listening activities in which they need to use the colors they hear or match the items that are instructed to them" (P 19). In addition, participants reported that they prepare extra work sheets for their learners as a way of practicing what has been learnt in the class. These worksheets can be utilized in the class or can

be a part of homework to do with parents, which helps teachers "…strengthen the collaboration between school and families" (P 12).

Finally, participants indicated they make use of videos in the class since "Videos attract children and increase motivation" (P 18) as well as "... making learning more permanent by appealing senses" (P 10).

4.2.3. Assessing Children's Foreign Language Learning

This section firstly clarifies the views of participants on assessment of foreign language learning in preschool environment and then explains the practices that participants get in while assessing children's foreign language learning.

4.2.3.1. Definition of Assessment

Participants were firstly asked about the concept of assessment in foreign language education in preschools, namely, how they define the purpose of assessing children's foreign language learning of foreign language. Responses can be grouped into three categories in this framework (Table 4.7).

To begin with, most of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=7) and almost half of the participants who did not (n=4) regarded assessment as a tool to monitor children's development. Participants who took a related course defined assessment as "I ask a question about the topic I have taught. If the child can answer, this is assessment." (P 3), and "It is children's utterances of what I have taught, and my checking of their work to see if they have understood" (P 20). Participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners also gave similar responses and they stated "I monitor children to see their mind, namely, how they progress and how they respond to activities." (P 5), and "Assessment is to check if children have learned what I have taught" (P 4).

Table 4.7

Participants' Definition of the Purpose of Assessing Children's Foreign Language Learning

Assessment of children's foreign language learning is	n	Course taken	Course not taken
to monitor children's development	11	7	4
a concept that we do not have at preschool level /needs to be done at higher grades	7	3	4
to raise children's awareness of another language	2	1	1

A very small number of participants (n=2) defined assessment as checking if children raise awareness of another language. They made explanations such as "It [assessment] is to check if children get awareness of the differentiation between Turkish and other languages." (P 9), and "… it is to see if children are aware of another language, in a way that they can also perceive it as a way of communication" (P 8).

Besides all the responses indicated above, almost one quarter of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=3) and almost half of the ones who did not (n=4) claimed that assessment of child's foreign language learning is a concept they do not know, namely, they do not have a definition for assessing children's learning. While participants who did not take a related course explained this as "Actually, we do not and should not have this [assessment] at preschool level, especially for foreign language." (P 16), participants who took a course on teaching very young learners indicated "I cannot come up with a definition for this, since I do not think we can assess at this level." (P 12), referring to their undergraduate studies as "It is so abstract for preschool level. I do not even remember studying this concept in undergraduate degree" (P 2).

4.2.3.2. Self-Reported Assessment Practices

Participants took the view that they make use of four ways to assess children's foreign language learning, which include school reports at the end of the terms, portfolio assessment, observation forms and homework checks (Table 4.8). Examples of participants' tools for assessment can be found in Appendix D and Appendix E.

Table 4.8

Participants' Use of Assessment Tools

Assessment tools	n	Course taken	Course not taken
School reports	12	7	5
Portfolio	9	5	4
Observation forms	9	4	5
Homework and tasks	4	1	3

First of all, about two third of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=7) and more than half of the participants who did not (n=5) stated that school reports that they give at the end of the terms are how they put assessment into practice. They mostly have commonly used school reports that show that all of the children have been very successful throughout the term, so they deserve the best. For example, two of the participants stated "In the school report, I write them they all are high-achievers and decorate the reports with stars and full points." (P 7), and "I prepare school reports to children at the end of each term. I put stars and smiley expressions" (P 6). One participant favored the use of school reports as an opportunity which "… honors them [children] for completing their tasks properly and taking part in activities actively" (P 3).

Second of all, almost half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=5) and four of the ones who did not indicated that they assess children's learning through a portfolio system. Participants claimed that they find portfolios helpful to be able to monitor children's progress, needs and interests. Besides, they find portfolios as an opportunity for children to present their own work and to see how further they can go while learning.

To illustrate, one of the participants elaborated that "Through children's portfolios, I can assess children's performance and turn back to see their work when I need" (P 20). Another participant exemplified that "On special events, children show and tell about their portfolios to their friends, upper classes and parents. Therefore, everybody can see children's progress and work. Children feel very proud of themselves" (P 9).

Similar to the portfolio assessment system, four of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and more than half of the ones who did not (n=5) indicated that they make use of observation reports to assess children's foreign language learning. They can prepare their observation checklists on their own, which was explained by one of the participants as "I observe each child and write reports about him/her. At the end of each month, I share these reports with parents, so both I and they can have some ideas about their children" (P 18). Another participant explained "I have prepared a simple observation checklist for each child. … and I refer to them [observation checklists] when I need" (P 5). Participants can also make use of checklists that the book offers, and they can fill in this observation checklist on regular basis. For example, a participant asserted "I have a standard observation checklist the book has, and I fill in them observing children's performance." (P 1), and another participant elaborated "I have the observation checklists of the course book we use. There, I check if the child has performed well in a specific unit, or if s/he has learnt target vocabulary, etc. I share them with my colleagues and parents, as well" (P 17).

Finally, four of the participants (out of 20) expressed that they assign tasks to children as homework to be done with parents as a parent involvement activity in one part of assessment procedure. Participants explained this as "I assign worksheets with listening activities to children, and parents help them complete the tasks." (P 10), and "I give interactive CDs to children, and I want them to do it as homework with parents."(P 4), and similarly "Each student has a work book with CD. I assign them some tasks to do at home with their parents, and I check them from time to time" (P 2).

4.3. Challenges in Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Learning

4.3.1. Challenges in Planning

Challenges that participants face while planning their activities can result from teacher-related factors, child-related factors or other factors (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

Participants' Challenges in Planning

	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Teacher-related			
knowledge of child development	14	6	8
classroom management	2	1	1
Child-related			
individual differences of children	5	2	3
Others			
resources	17	10	7
expectations of administrators	9	5	4
expectations of parents	3	2	1

As presented in Table 4.9, participants face two challenges that are based on teacher-related factors. In this respect, the first challenge is related to participants' knowledge of child development. Except for one participant, all of the participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=8) revealed that not knowing the developmental characteristics of young children is a challenge to them. They expressed that they cannot decide on what children at these ages can or cannot do. In terms of making developmentally appropriate plans, participants explained:

> I had never experienced anything with children till I started to teach them. I cannot always decide what they can actually do. Sometimes they cut [the papers in the activities], sometimes they cannot. In some lessons, I prepare 6 activities, but they are stuck and they cry in the first one because they find it very hard to do. As I don't know what they can actually do, I feel very disappointed while planning appropriately (P 1).

As stated above, participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners find it difficult to measure up children's levels and developmental needs and interests, which obstruct them in adjusting their plans. One of the participants claimed that "I cannot always decide on when or why they are distracted from what, which makes it even more difficult to decide on how many activities I should plan per class" (P 8). Another participant related this to the undergraduate studies and stated "I did not learn about children's developmental characteristics at university level. I was planning my lessons according to the topic, and it was very tough to decide whether they would be very easy or very difficult for their levels" (P 17).

On the other hand, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=6) admitted that they know how young children learn, but they still "…feel in trouble while adjusting their activities to their level" (P 12). One of the participants revealed "I know they [children] learn if they have fun and they learn by doing, but I have difficulty in how to achieve in this" (P 13). Another participant referred to the related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners as "I was taught about the acquisition of language in theory [in undergraduate studies], but I do not know which activities should be presented in which order to make this acquisition process worthwhile" (P 20).

The other challenge that results from teacher-related factors is classroom management. One of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and 1 participant who did not indicated that they cannot involve the classroom management techniques in their plans. One participant clarified "I cannot figure out if my plans are good at managing the class." (P2), and another one elaborated "What I care in planning is the issue of classroom management. Before I involve an activity in my plan, I stop and ask if this activity can manage the class well, but I have not been able to achieve in this yet" (P1).

Related to lack of knowledge of child development and classroom management, individual differences of children is a challenge to participants being a child-related factor. Two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one third of the ones who did not (n=3) regarded "...adapting plans according to individual needs and interests of children uneasy" (P 9). Among them, one participant explained "Some children learn later

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than the others, which make me think twice in my plans to find interesting activities for them." (P 7), and another one complained "Some [children] do not want to color, sing, play, namely, anything! While planning my lessons, I always have to take them into consideration and find something that may attract them" (P 14).

In addition to teacher-related and child-related factors, participants face challenges due to other factors, which are lack of resources, expectations of administrators and expectations of parents. Among them, lack of resources seemed to be the biggest challenge to almost all of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=10) and almost all of the ones who did not (n=7). According to participants, teachers can only make the best plan if they have good resources. However, one of the participants asserted that "I am not provided with sufficient activities and materials [by the school and publishers]." (P 9) and another participant claimed "I have just one book and the whole long term, which necessitates getting extra materials; but finding CDs, songs, books is not easy" (P 14). More importantly, some of the participants explained they "… do not know how to obtain them [resources]" (P 12). In this respect, participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners focused on the lack of resources in Turkey as being the most important factor for this challenge, which they demonstrated as "the biggest problem of foreign language teaching in Turkey, since we do not have sufficient and qualified publications on very young learners, which makes it hard to find activities for educational purpose" (P 4). One of them took the view "I do not think we have enough [resources] in Turkey. I cannot find enough activities, good activity plans and materials. The existing ones [resources] are quite expensive" (P 5). On the other hand, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners associated resources with lack of time and stated that they prepared their own resources in undergraduate degree, but they do not have time for this now. They explained this as "We used to prepare our own teaching resources to make our own plans [in undergraduate degree], but they were at most three times in a term. Now, I teach 12 hours a week, and I do not have time for this" (P 2). Another participant elaborated "I prepared posters, puppets, work sheets and even books in this course [teaching foreign language to very young learners]; I know how to prepare them, but I do not have time, and I cannot find sufficient readymade resources now" (P 6).

Besides lacking in resources, involving the expectations of administrators in their plans is a challenge to participants. Not only the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=5) but also the ones who did not (n=4) explained that administrators demand show-oriented activities. One of the participants explained the reason for this as "What they care is getting more students to their schools, so they want me to include show-off activities in my plans" (P 9). Participants expressed that this has a relation with planning because they "…need to teach something new while getting prepared for the shows" (P 7). Similarly, another participant stated "The second term passes almost only by preparing shows for the end-of-the year party. I still have a schedule to follow, but not enough time. …a must by my administrators" (P 15).

Finally, as a small number, two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one participant who did not regarded administrators' expectations as a challenge to them while they are planning their activities. Each participant explained that "Parents ask for so many things, which I need to do as this is a private school, and planning my activities accordingly is a challenge." (P 9), and "Parents want to see children speak, and I feel obliged to include such activities in my lessons" (P 4).

4.3.2. Challenges in Implementing

Participants stated they face several challenges while implementing their plans, namely, during their activities. These challenges can result from teacher-related factors, child-related factors or other factors (Table 4.10).

As demonstrated in Table 4.10, all of the participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners revealed that they lack in knowledge of child development. All of them focused on the difference between young learners and adult learners, and they complained that they fail in understanding children's capacities and abilities. One of the participants confessed that "… I sometimes feel I underestimate how much necessary playing and moving, and similarly, being able to talk at their level are for them" (P10). Besides, participants focused on the importance of developmentally appropriate activities; however, they stated they get confused when "…they [children] cannot do an activity which has been thought to be perfect for the day." (P 1), and they "cannot understand why or when they cry, what they really like or not" (P 4). One of the participants

provided an example as "I bring 2 or 3 kinds of activities [to class] thinking that they will be enough, but they [children] finish so early and easily. The other day I have 9 activities, but they are stuck in the 1st one" (P 7).

Table 4.10

Participants' Challenges in Implementing

	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Teacher-related			
knowledge of child development	17	8	9
classroom management	16	8	8
Child-related			
individual differences of children	13	7	6
number of children/class size	4	2	2
Others			
resources	5	3	2
expectations of administrators	8	5	3
expectations of parents	9	5	4

Similarly, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=8) face similar challenges and difficulties in understanding the developmental characteristics of young children. They asserted they "…know children's characteristics in theory" (P 18) and they "…know children's attention span is limited, which means activities should be conducted considering this, but it is not easy to adjust this knowledge into activities." (P 20), and "… manage to fill the time with activities they [children] would like and get involved" (P 12). A participant verbalized her contradictions as "For me, it is an enjoyable activity. For children, it is boring because I guess it is not appropriate for their age level, but I cannot always guess it beforehand" (P13). Another one illustrated with an example:

> Once, I brought some materials to the class which needed a very detailed handcraft. Children were between 50 and 60 months old. They had very difficulty in completing the work. They cut, pulled the pieces, and then cried because they could not succeed. Then, I tried to

do all of them on my own and it was very difficult. Then I learnt they cried a lot that day. It was a very bad experience for me since I could not think that their fine motor skills were not that improved yet. (P3)

Another challenge which results from teacher-related factors is classroom management. Eight of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and almost all of the participants who did not (n=8) responded similarly that managing children is a challenge to them. Participants mostly focused on that they cannot control the class especially when everybody wants to do what one of them initiates. To illustrate, one participant stated that "In the middle of a song, one [child] gets thirsty, so is everybody. They just stop singing and go to drink water. I cannot manage this" (P 19). Another participant gave a similar example: "When a child wants to go to the toilet, I expect him/her to wait 5 more minutes as if he/she could manage this. He/she cannot wait, and I cannot take an action as it is too late" (P 17). In addition, participants contended that they face challenges in classroom management especially while playing games. While playing, children may lose control of themselves with the excitement and nature of games, and teachers may not always handle this. For example, one of the participants asserted "…in games, especially in competitions, since children get so involved that sometimes they can abuse each other. I do not want to shout at them, but I do not know any other ways to manage them" (P 9). Furthermore, these responses are in line with the expressions of participants in that classroom management problems obstruct them in the quality of teaching activities, as well. Participants indicated they "…start speaking English and children respond to this. However, when the class is out of control, it becomes obligatory to switch to Turkish to manage them" (P 18). One of the participants confessed that "I have to speak Turkish to them to keep them calm and listen to me" (P 20).

According to participants, one reason for classroom management as a challenge is that children accept their classroom teachers as the authority but not the foreign language teacher. One of the participants said that "The classroom teacher always comes first, and children wait for their teacher to obey the rules" (P 18). Another participant revealed that "… children accept their classroom teacher as the authority, so they do not listen to me and cry when their classroom teacher is not in the class" (P 12). Moreover, participants who took a related course on teaching

foreign language to very young learners added that they did not learn about how to handle classroom management problems in their courses. One participant claimed "I was taught on how to teach listening, vocabulary, speaking and so on, but I wish I had been taught how to manage children who always get thirsty together." (P 19), and another one expressed that "I actually refer to my course books in undergraduate degree, but there is nothing on classroom management of young children" (P 3).

In addition to the challenges that result from teacher-related factors, participants indicated that they sometimes face problems which are related to individual differences of children. These individual differences consist of children with learning and behavior problems. Seven of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two third of the ones who did not expressed that they have such children in their class, but they do not know how to deal with this situation. Among them, one participant indicated that "A hyperactive child in my class needs to be paid attention all the time. Otherwise, she disturbs the whole activity" (P 8). Participants focused on that this is an educational problem in the recent years, and they complaint they do not know how to help such children although they want, which was stated by one of the participants as "I have a hyperactive child almost in each class. We have too many of them in the recent years. I do not know how I can help them" (P 16). Similarly, another participant explained that "I have some children who are in special need such as hyperactivity and obsession... I have great difficulty in dealing with them during the lesson. I wish I knew how to help" (P 3). Besides behavioral problems, participants expressed that they cannot always help children who have learning difficulties. For them, "...some children cannot learn foreign language easily, and dealing with their learning problems is a challenge" (P 7). Two participants approached this from two different aspects. One participant mentioned the distraction of the process of activities since "When they [children] are not addressed, they feel disappointed and turn this disappointment into anger and fussiness" (P 17). On the other hand, another participant stated that "When these children are cared more, then children who can learn quicker get bored" (P 6).

The number of children in the class was considered to be a challenge as well as the individual differences of them for a small number of the participants. Two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very

young learners and two of the ones who did not asserted they "…cannot pay sufficient individual attention to children's foreign language learning when the classes are crowded" (P 1). One participant exemplified that "I have 22 children in my class, but individual attention to if they understand what I am trying to teach is almost impossible" (P 14). Another participant focused on the attention children must take and mentioned that "Some of my classes are really crowded…They [children] are just in their affective development process and they feel that they are just underestimated but I cannot spend time with them one by one" (P 2).

In addition to teacher-related factors and child-related factors, participants face challenges due to other factors, which are resources, expectations of administrators and expectations of parents. The first challenge is related to lack of resources. Three of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two of the ones who did not stated they lack in sufficient resources in the classrooms, which represent a challenge to them. Participants stated sometimes there is something wrong "…with the sound system of the class because it echoes and children get distracted" (P 3). Some of the participants mentioned the lack of technological devices; one explained "I do not have a laptop in the class. I take children to the computer lab to watch and listen, but then I have to take them back to class to sing and dance. It is a big effort and very tiring" (P 2). Participants related lack of resources with the quality of teaching and claimed "Lack of resources such as cartoons and videos in English, toys with English sounds, vocabulary games hinder teaching activities in the class." (P 17), which results in that "…children cannot get sufficient amount of input in target language" (P 14).

What is more to the challenges about the expectations of administrators, five of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one third of the ones who did not (n=3) indicated expectations of parents are a challenge to them while they are implementing their activities. Participants considered parents expect too much from teachers, which is also related to their expectations from their children. They assert "Parents think we have the magic to make children speak English from the first day." (P 2), and "Parents expect too much from the activities. They expect their children to speak fluent English just right after the first hour" (P 16). Participants claimed they understand parents since

their children study at private schools, which means a qualified foreign language education for them. However, according to participants, "…they [parents] do not help their children with that but just tell their expectations to teachers to make their children speak English" (P 12).

Finally, almost half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language (n=5) and almost half of the ones who did not (n=4) regarded expectations of administrators as a challenge in two respects, both of which are related to attracting more children to school. The first respect is related to their expectations of foreign language teaching. Participants complained these expectations hinder actual teaching practices. One participant claimed: "Administrators urge me to teach how to speak English to children as soon as possible so as to be proud of themselves as the quickest school to teach English to young children." (P 18), and another participant asserted: "I have to do what I hate: memorization. Administrators want to show that children can speak English, which makes me push my kids to memorize like a parrot" (P 11). The second respect regarding the expectations of administrators is related to shows that preschool foreign language teachers have to prepare quite often. One participant stated that administrators require her to prepare a show and to make time for preparations during the teaching time. Another participant revealed: "Administrators look for an end-of-the-year show, so the second term, I have to give up teaching after a while and get prepared for the show" (P 15).

4.3.3. Challenges in Assessing Children's Foreign Language Learning

The findings of the current study revealed that 14 of the participants face challenges while assessing children's foreign language learning. The remaining six participants stated they do not face any challenges. Among them, two of the participants are the ones who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and four of them are the ones who did not. Participants who took a related course associated not facing any challenges with the assessment system they follow. One of them stated "I have a criterion which includes just "yes" and "no". I prepared it myself. … I just check "yes" if the child can do what I assess or "no" if he/she cannot, so I do not face any challenges. I am well-prepared." (P 9), and the other one mentioned the resources of the course book as "What I need to do

is already ready. The course book supplies me with observation forms, assessment checklists and the content of portfolio, so I do not face any challenges" (P 19).

Participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners related not facing any challenges with two factors. The first one is about getting prepared beforehand by "…making research from various sources which facilitates obtaining observation forms and portfolio lists, and the assessment process" (P 17). The second factor was explained by the participants as the lack of an assessment system which was practiced on regular basis at school. One participant explained that "I do not face any difficulty because I just observe informally. I do not just sit and prepare an assessment tool or any written documents" (P 4).

Contrary to participants who stated that they do not face any challenges while assessing children's learning, there are participants who stated lack of knowledge of children's foreign language learning assessment, their conceptions of assessment and lack of a portfolio assessment system at school are challenges to them (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11

Participants' Challenges in Assessing Children's Learning

	n	Course taken	Course not taken
Teacher-related			
knowledge of children's foreign language learning assessment	8	4	4
conceptions of assessment	3	2	1
Others			
portfolio assessment system	4	2	2

The first challenge participants face results from a teacher-related factor. Four of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and four of the ones who did not revealed that they lack in knowledge of assessing children's foreign language learning. Whether they took a related course on teaching very young learners or not, they responded similarly by mentioning they "feel stuck when it comes to assess children" (P 8). One of the participants clarified "My biggest challenge is that I do not know different ways to assess children at these

ages" (P 1). They explicated that children do not have literacy skills, which makes the ways of assessment limited to observation and portfolios. To illustrate, one of the participants stated "I do not know how to assess children. They cannot read or write. How can I prepare exams?" (P 18). For participants, this situation results in lack of information on children's foreign language learning. For example, a participant told: "I cannot decide whether they [children] have learnt or not, which causes hesitation to go on with the following topics and units" (P 2).

Another challenge that results from teacher-related factors is about participants' conceptions of assessing children's foreign language learning. Two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and one of the participants who did not indicated that they face challenges in assessing children's foreign language learning because assessment is not a serious conception to them. Participants who took a related course on teaching very young learners explained that assessment is something they "…underestimate, which causes a lack of information in children's learning. It is a pity for a teacher." (P 3) One participant confessed: "I do not have to submit anything to the administrators at the end of the year, so I do not put necessary effort to do something for assessment, but then I just teach but do not know if my kids can learn or not" (P 15). Similarly, a participant who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners confessed this as "… not only the school administrators but also I as a teacher do not take assessment seriously. It is a pity" (P 5).

Last but not least, two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two of the participants who did not claimed that not having a portfolio assessment system is a challenge to them. Participants in both groups expressed their wishes for the portfolio assessment system as "If only we had a portfolio system, then we could see how far we could go. We could see the improvement of children from the beginning to end" (P 3). Similarly, another participant expressed: "… and unfortunately, we do not have a portfolio system. I wish we had it so that I could recall them [children] better, or new teachers could get to know them [children]" (P 14).

4.4. Addressing Challenges in Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Learning

4.4.1. Addressing Challenges in Planning and Implementing

The findings revealed that participants have similar ways of addressing the challenges that they face while planning and implementing their lessons. Therefore, how they address these challenges is reported together.

First of all, not only the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=9) but also the ones who did not (n=7) regarded the importance of collaboration with their colleagues as soothing because "A helpful colleague is the best reference ever" (P 11). Participants also added that they can address the challenges better when they are together. One of the participants stated "We overcome the challenges as a group. Whenever I need, I can go and ask them for their help. They share activities and materials with me" (P 2). Participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners also focused on child development. A participant confessed "I ask so many questions [to my colleague] such as who they [children at these age group] really are, what they can do, why they do not listen, etc., and she listens and teaches me the characteristics of this age group." (P 5), and another participant stated "It is difficult to know what characteristics children at these ages have. It is my first time with them. I often ask preschool teachers when I am in trouble about children's needs and interests" (P 1).

Table 4.12

Addressing Challenges in Planning and Implementing

	n	Course taken	Not taken
I consult my colleagues	16	9	7
I make use of extra resources	16	9	7
I adapt materials and activities	15	8	7
I learn by experience	13	6	7
I inform parents	9	5	4
I try to spend more time with children	6	3	3
I attend seminars/workshops	1	1	-

Besides, 16 participants out of 20 stated that they try to make use of extra resources by researching different course books, teacher's books and the Internet. Participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=9) and who did not (n=7) focused on keeping various resources in their libraries. They claimed that they want extra resources from publishers so that they can refer to them when they need. One participant admitted: "I never throw away old books. I refer to them to find the most appropriate materials for the lesson" (P 14). They also talked about the importance of well-prepared teacher's book which helps them see possible challenges and show ways of addressing. For instance, one participant explained "I have plenty of extra resources, and the teacher's book is my favorite because they are like consultants whom you can ask what else you can do in the following day" (P 6). In addition to teacher's book, the Internet is a great source of activities for participants. Among them, one explained "Thanks to the Internet, I can find various songs and activities. Sometimes just googling is enough, but I sometimes check forums and specific web sites." (P 5), and they also gave specific examples of web sites such as "…Pbs kids, British Council and many others." (P 10) and "…the blog called supersimplesongs that creates its own songs by a group of American teachers who teach English in Japan, Korea and Thailand" (P 9). Furthermore, participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners mentioned general resource books about children. For example, one of the participants stated "I have a book at school about child development, and I refer to it to learn about their developmental stages" (P 8). On the contrary, participants who took a related course mentioned that they refer to the books and resources that they studied in the related course they had in undergraduate degree. One participant states "I refer to the book we had in young learners course. It has good plans that I can use." (P 2) and another ones related it to selection of materials as "Especially while selecting the course book, I refer to young learners [course] lecture notes and books because they have very helpful information" (P 3).

Another way that participants use to address the challenges they face while planning and implementing is adaptation. Regardless of taking a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=8) or not (n=7), three quarters of the participants explained that adaptation is an easy way of addressing challenges during planning and implementation. To illustrate, a participant proposed "…adding

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and omitting [parts in the activities], and sometimes slight changes in [the process of activities] what I already have in my plan are the easiest ways to solve the problems." (P 17), and another participant exemplified "Sometimes I do not want to use what the course book has for the lesson, but I do not want to search for other resources, either. …I change the order of the activities, or omit some exercises." (P 7) Furthermore, participants find adaptation of materials and activities necessary for addressing the challenges related to children's developmental characteristics. One of the participants explained about planning as "I sometimes omit the exercises in the book because I think it will not attract children's attention." (P 15), and another one focused on implementation as "I begin with an exercise, but I realize children are not interested in it. What I do is to redirect the course of events and adjust them to children's interests" (P 18).

In addition to consulting colleagues, adaptation and extra resources, more than half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=6) and almost all of the ones who did not (n=7) expressed that experience is a way above others to address challenges. One of the participants explained "I make a mistake, then I learn not to do it again. This is experience and it teaches a lot" (P 10). Similarly, they focused on that experience teaches what to do and what not to do, and sometimes foreseeing the challenges beforehand, which was realized by one of the participants as "I had much more challenges in my first year. To be honest, I face them again, but this time I can handle them better because I am more experienced. I can make better plans this year because I can see the potential challenges beforehand." (P 13) and another participant illustrated:

> If I realize I make a mistake, I try not to make them again. I remember when I first started teaching, I used to say "Ok! They are just children, so we will just sing and spend time together." Then I realized it was not that at all. After that, I started to make very detailed plans, which was also no good because it was very time-consuming and my plans did not always work out. These are all experiences I had, and now I am more careful and strategic about teaching. (P 4)

As stated in the challenges section, parents' expectations are a challenge to participants while they are planning and implementing their activities. In this regard, almost half of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to young learners (n=5) and almost half of the ones who did not (n=4)

revealed that they inform parents about their aims of foreign language teaching. They indicated meeting parents is an effective way of addressing challenges. For example, one of the participants revealed "When I feel that some parents may be potential challenges, I urgently hold a meeting, and explain the aims of the lessons." (P 10), and another participant explained "I inform parents at the meeting about what I aim at teaching and send them letters. I tell them what we have done and what they should and should not do, then they know what to expect" (P 14). Besides that, as parents usually require that their children speak foreign language as soon as possible, which puts pressure on participants' shoulders, they assign parents with some tasks so that they can help and understand how children learn languages. One of the participants expressed this as "When they [parents] started to demand too much, I began informing them about children's language learning and assigning them with tasks. They started to understand this, and it turned out to be alright." (P 3), and another participant revealed:

> At the beginning of this term, I had so many problems with parents. Then, I started to send them notes, which I called information reports. There, I give them homework, sending some links that they can play games with their children and many exercises. Now they stop criticizing because they know the nature of learning languages to some extent. (P 19)

In addition to informing parents, almost one third of participants mentioned that they try to establish close relationships with children and spend more time with them. Both participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=3) and the ones who did not (n=3) indicated that spending time with children outside the class helps them know children better and learn about their characteristics and individual differences. For example, one participant asserted "I realized that I face less challenges if I spend some time with children outside the class." (P 20), and another participant revealed "I now spend more time with children at school. For example, I have my breakfast together with them, so they get to know me better and feel closer. They ask me what this and that means in English" (P 1).

Finally, one of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners considers attending seminars as a way of addressing challenges by stating "Actually, I find seminars and in-service trainings really

helpful. I can learn how to deal with my problems with up-to-date information" (P 10).

4.4.2. Addressing Challenges in Assessing Children's Foreign Language Learning

Participants presented limited data on how they address challenges that they face while assessing child learning (Table 4.13).

About a quarter of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners (n=3) and one third of the participants who did not (n=3) stated that they do not do anything to address the challenges they face while assessing child learning. One of the participants gave the reason as "When I cannot assess children properly, I simple stop and skip it…no problem." (P 7), and another participant explained "We do not do anything serious about assessment, so I just skip it" (P 12). Another participant mentioned observation forms and expressed "We have observation forms, I do not know how to fill them accurately, but I do not take it seriously, so I do not do anything" (P 6).

Table 4.13

Addressing Challenges in Assessing Children's Learning

	n	Course taken	Course not taken
I do not do anything	6	3	3
I make use of extra resources	4	2	2
I consult my colleagues	2	2	-

In addition to the participants who do not do anything, two of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and two of the participants who did not revealed that they research into assessing child learning using extra resources, which is the Internet in this case. Participants in both groups explained that not knowing about assessment is not something they wish, which was expressed by one of the participants as "I notice that I have just hearsay information about assessment, and it disturbs me. Therefore, I have begun to read about it on the Internet." (P 1), and another participant explained "I read forums,

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especially about portfolio assessment. For instance, I now know that portfolio is something systematic, not collecting children's work and send them home" (P 8).

Finally, two of the participants, both of whom are the ones who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners explained that they consult their colleagues when they face a problem regarding assessment. One of them presented this as "I consult the classroom teacher of my learners while assessing child learning when I have problems. She leads me how to do it" (P 2), and the other one mentioned "A colleague of mine is writing a thesis on assessment and evaluation, so I ask her about how to assess children" (P 20).

4.5. Coursework on Teaching Foreign Language to Very Young Learners

Participants who took a related course and who did not have both similar and different responses in terms of their views on the purpose of foreign language teaching to very young learners, and their self-reports on the practices, challenges and addressing challenges in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning.

To begin with, in terms of the purpose of foreign language teaching to very young learners, both participants who took a related course and the ones who did not had similar responses. Both groups in similar number of participants stated children learn better than adults, and children can acquire languages like their mother tongues. However, for the second reason, participants who took a related course also responded more theoretically and mentioned Critical Period Hypothesis and Language Acquisition Device.

Within these reasons, participants had three main aims of teaching foreign language to very young learners. Participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and who did not had similar responses. Both groups stated that the main purpose is to make children develop an awareness of another languages, to make children get prepared for future foreign language activities, and to make children start to love foreign languages. However, for the third aim, which is about loving foreign language, there seemed to be a difference between participants who took a related course and who did not because although more than half of the participants with a coursework proposed this purpose, only one of the participants who did not take a related course came up with this aim.

In planning, participants with and without a related course both claimed they make use of the plans provided by publishers. Besides, both groups use the same types of curriculum designs, which are theme-based and story-based. While planning, participants in both groups asserted their main consideration is to attract children's attention. Besides, participants in both groups revealed that their plans should be developmentally appropriate for children, be parallel with what children's classroom teacher teaches, meet their expectations, and not underestimate the number of children in the class. Participants with and without a coursework on teaching foreign language to very young learners differed in that participants with a coursework mentioned theoretical concepts such as Piaget's cognitive development stages or fine-motor developments about their considerations on developmentally appropriateness.

In implementation, there seemed to be difference between participants with and without a coursework in the use of Total Physical Response. It was proposed mostly by the participant who took a related course on foreign language teaching to very young learners. Other methods, which are Communicative Language Teaching, Audio-Lingual Method, Post-Method and Suggestopedia are used similarly in both groups. Furthermore, participants with and without a coursework differed in their use of activities. Participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners stated they mostly make use of games, songs, stories and coloring activities whereas participants without a coursework mostly use cut-and-paste, drama, listening and group work activities. On the other hand, they did not differ in use of materials; participants in both groups explained they make use of course books, flashcards, puppets, interactive software programs, extra work-sheets and videos in similar number.

In terms of assessment, although most of the participants with a coursework on teaching foreign language to very young learners indicated assessment of children's foreign language learning is about monitoring children's development, less than half of the participants without a coursework expressed a similar idea. On the other hand, the number of participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners was more than the ones with a coursework for the idea that assessment is a concept that we do not have at preschool level but needs to be done at higher grades. Participants' assessment practices did not

differ in both groups in school reports, portfolios; however, the number of participants without a coursework on foreign language teaching to very young learners is more than the ones with a coursework in the use of observation forms, homework and tasks.

Participants in both groups face several challenges in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. In planning, the number of participants without a coursework on teaching foreign language to very young learners is more than the ones with a coursework in the challenge of knowledge of child development. However, the number of participants with a coursework is more than the ones without a coursework in finding necessary resources as a challenge. Other challenges about classroom management, individual differences of children, expectations of administrators and parents are face by the similar number of participants in both groups.

In implementation, there did not seem to be a difference between participants with and without a coursework in the challenges they face. Participants in both groups face challenges which are about knowledge of child development, classroom management, individual differences of children, number of class size, resources and expectations of administrators and parents.

Similarly, in assessment, both participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not asserted they face similar challenges. These challenges are about their knowledge of children's foreign language learning, conceptions of assessment and lack of a portfolio assessment system.

Moreover, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and who did not have similar ways of addressing the challenges they face in planning and implementing. There are slight differences in the number of participants in both groups, but they mostly address these challenges by consulting their colleagues, making use of extra resources, adapting materials and activities, learning by experience, informing parents, trying to spend more time with children and attending seminars and workshops. At this point, participants with a coursework differed in making use of extra resources since they asserted that they referred to the books they studied in related courses on teaching foreign language to very young learners. Besides, there was only one participants who regarded attending

seminars and workshops as a way of addressing challenges and that participant was the one with a related course.

The number of participant who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners was more than the ones who did not in terms of their ways of addressing challenges in assessing children's foreign language learning. However, they had similar responses in that they make use of extra resources as a way of addressing challenges. However, only the participants with a coursework regarded consulting colleagues as a way of addressing challenges in assessing children's foreign language learning.

4.6. Summary of the Findings

In the first part of this section, participants' viewpoints on the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years are presented. Firstly, participants' reasons for foreign language teaching in preschool years can be grouped into two themes. The first reason is that children are better learners than adults. The second reason is about acquisition. For nearly half of the participants (n=8), children acquire foreign language like the acquisition of their mother tongue when they start to learn foreign language at an early age. With respect to these responses, six of the participants who took a related course on foreign language teaching and four of the ones who did not revealed that the main purpose is to make children develop an awareness of another language and culture. The second response is that through foreign language activities, children can get prepared for future foreign language activities as stated by five of the participants who took a related course on foreign language teaching and three of the ones who did not. The last purpose is to make children start to love foreign language as stated by six of the participants who took a related course on foreign language teaching and only one of the participants who did not.

Findings in the second section were presented according to the self-reported practices that preschool foreign language teachers carry out while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. To begin with, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not have similar practices of planning. They both make use of the plans provided by the publishers of the course book to be used (n=12). The remaining eight participants, though, prepare their own plans. Within the framework

of their plans, participants stated they make use of two different curriculum designs. The first one is theme-based curriculum design. Four participants in each group stated that they plan their activities around a theme. On the other hand, four of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and three of the ones who did not revealed their plans are mostly story-based, and finally, a quarter of the participants indicated that they make a combination of both theme-based and story-based curriculum designs and plan their activities according to the needs and interests of children.

In addition, while planning, all of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and eight of the ones who did not stated that their plans should attract children's attention to be successful. Similarly, for about two third of the participants who took a related course and about half of the ones who did not revealed that their plans should be developmentally appropriate for children. Thirdly, one quarter of participants' concern while planning their activities was indicated as being parallel with what children's classroom teacher teaches. Besides, for three participants, plans should meet their own expectations, and for two of the participants, their plans should not underestimate the number of children in the class.

While implementing their activities, almost all of the participants (n=9) who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners indicated they make use of Total Physical Response (TPR) as a teaching technique. TPR was also reported to be used by five of the participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners. There did not seem to be a difference between these groups in the other teaching techniques and methods used. Five of the participants stated they use Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT). Besides, the findings revealed that three participants use Audio-Lingual Method, three of them form their own method (Post-Method), and two of them use Suggestopedia. On the other hand, three of the participants stated they do not remember any techniques and methods, and they do not use any of them.

In terms of activities used in implementation, it was concluded that games, songs, stories and coloring activities are mostly used by the participants who took a related course on foreign language teaching to very young learners. However, cutting and pasting, drama, listening and group work activities are used mostly by the

participants who did not take any courses on teaching foreign language to very young learners. In terms of the use of materials, both groups seemed to make use of similar materials, which are course books, flashcards, puppets, interactive software programs, extra work-sheets and videos.

Regarding assessment, most of the participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and about half of the ones who did not stated that the purpose of assessing children's foreign language is to monitor children's development. The other purpose is to raise children's awareness of another language as stated by two participants. However, for seven participants in the current study, assessment is a concept that is not present at preschool level but needs to be done at higher grades. Furthermore, participants stated they make use of school reports, portfolios, observation forms and homework and tasks to assess children's foreign language.

Participants face some challenges while planning and implementing their activities. These challenges are that they do not know about child development, they cannot prepared their activities in a way that helps them with classroom management, they cannot foresee the individual differences, they do not have enough resources, and they cannot put the expectations of administrators and parents into their activity plans. Among them, knowledge of child development and classroom management are the two significant problems that participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners face mostly. While assessing children's foreign language learning, 6 of the participants stated that they do not face any challenges. On the other hand, the remaining 14 participants in both groups revealed they face challenges while assessing children's foreign language learning, and these challenges are about their lack of knowledge in child development, misconceptions of assessment and lack of a portfolio system in their schools.

Participants have several ways of addressing the challenges they face. Both participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners and the ones who did not address the challenges they face while planning and implementing their activities by consulting their colleagues, making use of extra resources, adapting activities and materials, learning by experience, informing parents, trying to spend more time with children and attending workshops and

seminars. Finally, to address the challenges that participants face while assessing children's foreign language learning, six of the participants indicated that they do not do anything. On the other hand, four of the participants search on the Internet, and two of the participants consult their colleagues.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a brief summary regarding research questions, methods and key findings of the study. Besides, it presents the discussion of the findings in addition to education implications and recommendations for future studies.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The best time to learn a language for ultimate attainment was described by Penfield and Roberts (1959) as the period before puberty in their Critical Period Hypothesis which necessitates an early start to learning foreign language for children at an early age. This necessity of an early start was also recognized by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey. In terms of teaching foreign language to children, the Ministry of National Education first declared that children would have compulsory English beginning from the 4th grade in 1997. In the same year, the departments of foreign language education put teaching foreign language to children in their curriculum. These developments went further, and in 2000, and the Ministry of National Education put English as an additional language in preschools, to 5 and 6-year-olds with the aims of showing children that learning foreign language is fun, introducing children that there are other languages besides their native language, making children have fun while learning and making them gain active speaking and listening skills (MoNE, 2000). However, there is no standardized curriculum for foreign language education for preschool foreign language teachers, which makes it difficult to know the challenges and the ways of addressing challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning.

Apparently, the current study was conducted to investigate the viewpoints of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of teaching foreign language to

very young learners; their self-reports on how preschool foreign language teachers plan, implement and assess children's foreign language learning as well as what challenges they face and how they address these challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. In this respect, twenty foreign language teachers who work at preschool level were purposefully selected and interviewed. Among these participants, 11 of them stated that they took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners in undergraduate degree, and nine of them stated they did not.

The findings of the study were presented in four sections. In the first section, participants' views on the purpose of foreign language teaching in early childhood were presented. The findings revealed that whether they took a related course on teaching foreign language or not, according to participants, when young children start to learn foreign language in preschool years, they can learn better than adults, and they can acquire foreign language like their mother tongue. Taking these points into consideration, the responses on the views of preschool foreign language teachers on the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years can be grouped in three statements. According to participants, young children need to start learning foreign language in preschool years so that they can develop an awareness of another language and culture besides their mother tongue, they get prepared for future foreign language activities that they will get involved in compulsory courses in primary level and they can start to love foreign language in the early years of their lives with fun and enjoyable activities.

The second section of the findings indicated preschool foreign language teachers' self-reported practices of planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. It was revealed that teachers plan their activities through themes or stories, or they make a combination of stories and themes while planning their activities. Besides that, teachers take several points into consideration while planning their activities. First, almost all of them support the idea that their activities should attract children's attention. Second, activities should be planned considering the developmental levels of children. Another consideration is about the activities performed by the classroom teachers of children. In this sense, preschool foreign language teachers stated that foreign language activities should be planned parallel to the activities implemented by classroom teachers so that learning becomes more

related to what they have in their native language. In addition, teachers take their expectations into consideration while making their plans, that is, they decide on their objectives of teaching and prepare their plans accordingly. Finally, teachers take the number of children in the class into account in planning to make better plans.

While implementing their activities, teachers mostly use Total Physical Response (TPR) as a technique to teach the target language to children. Besides TPR, they also make use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in functional communication activities, Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) using drills and repetitions, Post-method by adapting other methods to form their own technique of teaching, and Suggestopedia by trying to offer activities using music and a comfortable environment. There are also teachers who do not know or who do not find using techniques and methods necessary in early childhood level. While implementing the foreign language teaching techniques and methods mentioned above, teachers use several activities. These activities include games, songs, coloring activities, stories, cutting and pasting, drama, listening and group work activities. In accordance with this, teachers make use of several materials to conduct their activities such as course books, flashcards, puppets, interactive software programs, extra work-sheets and videos.

Self-reports on the practices of planning and implementing activities follow the responses related to assessment of children's foreign language learning. Teachers in this study defined the purpose of assessing children's foreign language learning as monitoring children's development to check if they have learnt what has been taught and to check if they need more support. The second purpose of assessment is about children's raising awareness of another language besides Turkish. On the other hand, teachers also defined assessment as a concept that is not present at preschool level but needs to be done at higher grades. Within these explanations, teachers state put assessment into practice by making use of school reports at the end of the school term, a portfolio system, observation forms and homework and tasks to be completed at home.

After the responses on the views and self-reported practices of preschool foreign language teachers, the third section of the findings revealed their challenges in planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. These challenges can be grouped into three factors, which are teacher-related factors, child-

related factors and other factors. In planning, teacher-related factors include teachers' knowledge of child development and classroom management. For teachers in the current study, making plans that are appropriate for children's developmental level is a challenge in terms of knowing what they can or they cannot do at these ages. In this respect, making plans that can help teachers manage the class is also a challenge to them because they may find it difficult to figure out beforehand what kind of activities can facilitate classroom management. The only child-related factor as a challenge is the individual differences of children while planning. Teachers can find it difficult to plan their activities according to personal differences of children. Other factors that result in challenges while teachers prepare their plans are related to lack of resources, expectations of administrators and expectations of parents. About resources, teachers in this study stated that they cannot find enough materials and activities while planning their activities. Similarly, they cannot meet the expectations of administrators about their insistence on programs related to shows and expectations of parents about the hastiness of making their children speak foreign language as soon as possible.

While implementing their activities, teacher-related challenges are similar to the challenges in planning. Teachers have difficulty in implementing developmentally appropriate practices in the class, that is, they do not know about developmental level of children. In this respect, they also find it challenging to handle with classroom management problems, which means they cannot deal with discipline problems during their activities in the class. In addition, individual differences of children and number of children in the class are challenges to teachers which result from teacher-related factors. Teachers cannot deal with children who have learning and behavior problems in the class such as hyperactivity and obsession. Besides, number of children in the class can be a challenge to teachers because they cannot pay individual attention to each child about their learning processes in crowded classrooms. Other factors that cause teachers to face challenges while implementing their activities are about lack of resources, expectations of administrators and expectations of parents. While implementing, lack of resources is a challenge to teachers when their technological equipment does not work, or when they do not have sufficient amount of videos, games and activities. Similar to the challenges in planning, teachers have difficulty in meeting the expectations of

administrators during their activities which are mostly related to end-of-the-year shows which result in language practices like memorization that teachers do not want to get involved. Finally, expectations of parents cause challenges for teachers when parents urge teachers to make their children speak foreign language as quickly as possible.

Challenges that preschool foreign language teachers face while assessing children's foreign language learning consist of teacher-related factors and other factors. As the challenges in planning and implementing, teachers do not know how to assess children in terms of their foreign language learning practices regarding their developmental characteristics. Besides, teachers stated they cannot take assessment serious, so they cannot practice assessment procedures appropriately. The last challenge preschool foreign language teachers face is about a lack of portfolio system. Teachers indicated they do not have a portfolio assessment system, so they cannot assess children as they wish.

The last section of the findings was composed of how preschool foreign language teachers address the challenges they face while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. The first way of addressing which was indicated by most of the teachers was about consulting colleagues. Teachers get help from other foreign language teachers or preschool teachers when they face challenges. Secondly, they make use of extra resources they have such as previously used course books, activity sheets or books related to child development. Similarly, teachers adapt the materials and activities according to needs and interest of children. They can also address these challenges by learning how to deal with them through experience, that is, when they face a challenge and make a mistake once, they learn from it, so they do not repeat it but know how to handle with challenges. Besides, teachers try to inform parents about their foreign language teaching practices and children's learning of foreign languages. They also try to spend more time with children so that they get to know about them better. Finally, teachers, though just one of them, attend seminars and workshops to address the challenges they face while planning and assessing.

Finally, to address the challenges they face while assessing children's foreign language learning, several of the teachers do not do anything because they think they do not need since they do not take assessment serious, so when they face a challenge,

they just skip the assessment procedure. On the other hands, some of the teachers search on the Internet to get information about how to assess children's foreign language learning and which methods to use in assessment. Lastly, teachers also consult their colleagues who are classroom teachers or teachers with experience of foreign language assessment about the challenges they face.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1. Views on Teaching Foreign Language in Early Childhood Years

This study revealed that for participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language and the ones who did not, the reason for teaching foreign language to very young learners is that they learn better than adults, and they acquire foreign language like their acquisition of mother tongue. In this respect, the purpose of teaching foreign language in early childhood years varies according to preschool foreign language teachers, who stated they teach foreign language so that they can develop an awareness of another language, get prepared for their future language activities and children can start to love foreign language learning when they are introduced with language at preschool level. At this point, it can clearly be noticed that these responses are mostly what the Ministry of National Education (2000) put into practice regarding teaching foreign language to 5 and 6-year-olds stating that the aim is to introduce children with fun activities for a better beginning of foreign language, to familiarize children with the existence of other languages, and to give them the basic language skills without putting pressure on them. The main points of MoNE are to introduce children with another language in a fun way that they can love and get prepared for future activities. Similarly, the main points of teachers' responses contribute to this and they all focus on children's love of foreign language by having fun and developing an awareness of another language. The study by Dominguez and Pesso (2005) also made a contribution to this idea as the study indicated that learners who started foreign language in kindergarten developed positive attitudes towards foreign language compared to late starters.

Considering teachers' responses, they have two points, which are about children's learning better than adults and their capacity to acquire the target language as they acquire their mother tongue at that age. The reasons for these responses are quite related to what Penfield and Roberts (1959) suggested in their Critical Period

Hypothesis (CPH) which stated that children develop an innate capacity to acquire a language if they get introduced with it before puberty. This period is a sensitive period, and children can achieve in ultimate attainment in languages when they get sufficient input in this sensitive period (Lenneberg, 1967). However, when this sensitive period is over, a native-like level of proficiency in target language is not possible (Johnson & Newport, 1989), which can be the explanation of participants focusing on children's capacity to acquire languages like their mother tongues as well as their being better learners than adults. Apparently, regarding the responses of participants related to children's being better learners than adults and acquisition of foreign language like the mother tongue, a comparison of adult and child learners' foreign language proficiency was beyond the scope of this study. However, several studies can be connected to support these views in various parts of language learning (Bongaerts, 2005; Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson, 2009; Johnson and Newport, 1989; Larsen-Hall, 2006; Mayberry and Lock, 2003; Oh, et al., 2010; Oyama, 1976; Ramsey and Wright, 1974; Yeganeh, 2013).

To begin with, Mayberry and Lock (2003) revealed in their study that participants who had early language experience outperformed late starters in grammatical judgment and sentence to picture matching tasks. The study of Johnson and Newport (1989) also backed up this viewpoint revealing that Chinese and Korean learners of English who started learning English between three and seven years old outperformed adult learners in the proficiency in English. Similarly, Larsen-Hall's study (2006) asserted students who started learning foreign language between three and 12 years old were better learners than adults in completing phonemic tasks of the target language. Just like Larsen-Hall, Ramsey and Wright (1974) concluded in their study that participants who started learning another language before they were six years old were much better in language tests compared to the ones who started after this age. More recently, Yeganeh (2013) supported the view that young learners are better than adult learners in a study which resulted in that participants who took English courses as a foreign language before puberty outperformed the ones who started learning English after puberty. All of these studies support the responses in the current study regarding the purpose of an early start. On the other hand, the findings of this study does not go beyond the general idea of children's being better learners and does not give much details about the

specific skills or patterns of foreign language such as grammar, syntax and morphology.

However, there is one part of language that participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners elaborated: pronunciation. These participants focused also on children's being better learners in the pronunciation of the sounds in the target language. In this respect, this idea was supported by relevant studies regarding the pronunciation and accent of children in foreign language. For instance, a longitudinal study conducted in Japan to compare the pronunciation of English sounds between young learners and adult learners revealed that although learners who started to learn English in their adulthood seemed to produce the sound more accurately in the beginning of the study, they made no improvement. On the other hand, young learners improved their production of sounds so significantly that they attained a native-like proficiency in specific sounds of English (Oh, et al., 2010). Similarly, Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2009) supported this idea in their study in which native-speakers judged the pronunciation proficiency of learners who started learning another language as young learners and who started when they were adults, and found that early starters of language performed native-like pronunciation whereas none of the late starters could achieve in this. In the same respect, Bongaerts (2005) supported learning foreign language at a younger age in his article, in which he stated young learners can achieve native-like pronunciation, but adult learners cannot attain native-like pronunciation. Long before, though, in 1976, Oyama already indicated in a study with Italian speakers of English that participants who started to learn language at a younger age outperformed adults in terms of their accent in the target language.

In addition to children's better pronunciation performances than adults, participants who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners in the current study also related children's acquisition of foreign language just like their mother tongues with Critical Period Hypothesis and Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG) and Language Acquisition Device (LAD) unlike participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners who provided similar expressions without referring to theory. Within this respect, it can be indicated that participants who combined the acquisition of language with Universal Grammar and Language Acquisition Device meant a more

innate point of language acquisition. Universal Grammar states that each and every person is born with a device in his/her brain which is responsible with language abilities. This device is called Language Acquisition Device that makes human brain have the capacity to learn languages. It is activated by input and stimulus for child to acquire the language (Chomsky, 1972; Fromkin, et al., 2000; Fromkin, et al., 2003; Morrison, 2003; Ritchie & Bhatia; 1996). Therefore, children acquire their mother tongue because their LAD is activated by the input of the mother tongue. In this respect, apparently, participants made a relationship between first language acquisition and additional language learning procedures in the brain. This point of views was supported long ago by Cook (1977), who concluded in an experimental study with different areas of language with various participants that additional language can be learnt in the same was as the acquisition of first language in terms of the mental processes in the brain. However, it should be noted that the concern here is the cognitive process in the brain rather than the learning and teaching activities. On the other hand, the use of UG in second language and the similarity between first language acquisition and additional languages are controversial issues in linguistics, and there are studies that support this or not (Cook, 1985; Dulay & Burt, 1972; Hale, 1996; Natalico & Natalico, 1971; Politzer, 1974; Ritchie, 1978; Schmidt, 1980). Among them, Cook (1985) related UG with CPH, and indicated that the use of UG rules can be applicable until a period of time, mostly before puberty, which was defined as CPH by Penfield and Roberts (1959) and Lenneberg (1967), which indicates children can make use of their mechanisms structured in the brain for additional languages, as well.

5.2.2. Self-Reported Practices of Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Learning

According to the results of this study, most of the teachers use a plan that is already provided by the publishers of the course book they intend to use. The reason for using the plans provided by the publishers can result from the lack of a specific curriculum for foreign language education in early childhood in Turkey. Actually, the Ministry of National Education suggested a frame program in 2000, when it declared the inclusion of foreign language teaching activities in preschools, as well. This frame program suggested that teachers make their plans to introduce young children with conceptions such as getting to know colors, learning the names of

animals, flowers, vegetables and objects, learning about family members and counting from 1 to 10. However, the contents of the plans and course books provided by the publishers were beyond the scope of this study, so whether the course books include the concepts suggested by MoNE for this age group is not known.

Besides, teachers also indicated that their plans are mostly theme-based, story-based or combination of both. Using themes, stories and combination of them can be regarded as positive because findings of a study with young learners stated that they develop more positive feelings to foreign language when they are taught through themes when they enjoy the themes taught (Yang, 2009). In Turkey, an experimental study conducted with young learners of English also revealed that children develop high proficiency when they are taught through themes, which stated that themes focus on meaning of language so children can relate their existing knowledge with the additional language (Alptekin, Erçetin, & Bayyurt, 2007). This relationship between children's existing knowledge and foreign language is supported by activities which revolve around one theme (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, as Pinter (2006) stated, children learn in a meaningful environment by getting involved in activities deeply so that they can make connections between them, which is beneficial because children learn foreign language naturally through a content rather than the form of the target language (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). Similarly, teaching through stories is supported by Cameron (2001) and Li and Seedhouse (2010), claiming that stories are directly related to language because they are actually a part of language. Therefore, stories can offer a lot of opportunities to children to enrich their input in target language. Besides, they can help children develop positive attitudes towards foreign language and develop learning skills as well as motivating them to link their imagination with foreign language (Ellis & Brewster, 1991), which result in children's getting optimum help in educational settings (Louka, 2006). On the other hand, no teachers in the current study mentioned that they teach through tasks. There are studies, though, which focused on the importance of tasks for young children in learning foreign language. Willis and Willis (2007) asserted tasks help children learn target language naturally and unconsciously because children are actively involved while carrying out their tasks in the classroom environment. Besides, tasks are considered as essential in foreign language education due to it being learner-centered, attracting students' attention, productive and helping children

acquire the language in a natural context (Hashemi, Azizinezhad and Darvishi, 2011; Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011; Swan, 2005).

The findings of the study regarding implementing indicated that Total Physical Response (TPR) is the technique which is mostly used by preschool foreign language teachers. TPR is also the teaching technique suggested by MoNE (2000) its frame program as a teaching technique which is appropriate for children's foreign language learning. In the study, the responses regarding TPR were mostly stated by teachers who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners in undergraduate degree. This can state that teachers studied TPR in their related undergraduate courses. Within this respect, the use of TPR while implementing activities can be considered to be a constructive point. As Asher (1977) asserted, children can learn foreign language like the acquisition of their mother tongue when TPR is used in implementation. This is also related to teachers' responses regarding the reason for foreign language teaching in preschool years and the acquisition of languages. Besides that, children can develop their motor skills and language skills at the same time when they are taught using TPR since they use their left side of the brain for language practices and right side of the brain for physical activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The responses of teachers regarding the use of TPR is also supported by Hashemi and Azizinezhad (2011) since children get involved in the activities with various kinds of stimulus such as visuals, games, drama and movements so that teachers can keep them motivated to learn foreign language. More importantly, when teachers use TPR, they help their young children learn foreign language in a more natural setting and they lower the anxiety of learning language as Krashen (1982) mentioned in his Affective Filter Hypothesis as asserting that the affective filter of people should be at a level which is neither so high nor so low for ultimate attainment. The point here is that teachers should let children internalize the actions and language as a concept in their mind so as to take active involvement in practices, which is also a procedure in first language acquisition (Asher, 1993). Furthermore, what the responses of teachers in the current study revealed is quite in accordance with Kalaycıoğlu, Olgan and Seferoğlu's (2012) study. The researchers conducted an experimental study with preschool foreign language teachers and analyzed the impact of TPR games on vocabulary teaching. Their results revealed that children who were taught through TPR games

performed much better in vocabulary performances compared to children who were not. Within this respect, the use of TPR in the classroom by most of the teachers in this study brings the responses related to activities performed by participants. To begin with, Murphey (1992) related the use of TPR with music and songs, and stated songs should be a part of language. Similarly, appropriate songs, combined with actions are considered to be very beneficial in language education (Edwards, 2002). In addition, TPR definitely includes games in implementation as a part of combination of action and language (Asher, 1993; Kalaycıoğlu, Olgan, & Seferoğlu, 2012; MoNE, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Apparently, most of the teachers in this study prefer games and songs as their frequently used activities in implementation. Together with games and songs, they make use of coloring activities, stories, cutting and pasting activities, drama, listening and group work activities. Besides, they mostly use course books, flashcards, puppets, interactive software programs, extra work sheets and videos as materials. The importance of these activities and materials has been discussed by various researchers, as well. There are studies that stated that children love learning when they play games because they can discover the world, they can form good relationships with their friends even in multilingual settings, and they can get the full attainment when they play their games in cooperation with their peers, which also help them learn language when teachers implement appropriate games (Ara, 2009; Björk-Willen, 2007; Cimcim, 2008; Cortez, 1974; Llach & Gomez, 2007; Tavil-İşisağ, 2009; Yong Mei & Yu-jung, 2000). Among them, in Turkey, Tavil and İşisağ (2009) conducted an experimental study in which they compared the use of games and songs for teaching vocabulary in foreign language teaching, they figured out at the end of the study that games are more powerful activities than songs in vocabulary achievement of children. Similarly, Cimcim (2008) asserted in a study with young learners for teaching the body parts through games that use of games has a significant effect on foreign language learning. The use of other activities reported in this study was also discussed by Elvin, Maagero and Simonsen (2007). In their project, they revealed that children learn easier, they become intrinsically motivated and they acquire the native accent of speaking when they are involved in activities such as games, stories, songs, role-plays and listening. In accordance with this, İşpınar (2005), Baran and Halıcı (2006), and Damar (2009) also reported that the activities to teach foreign

language to young learners should include songs, role-plays, games and drama. All of these activities and materials that teachers in the current study came up with are appropriate for the age level of preschoolers and overlap with what the Ministry of National Education (2000) suggested in its frame program as using flashcards, posters, realia, listening activities, videos and puppets as materials and songs, dances, drama, games, tongue twisters, mimes and gestures as activities. These activities and materials are also suggested in several books that have been written about teaching languages to children (Cameron, 2001; Lewis & Bedson, 1994; Linse, 2005; Phillips, 1999; Pinter, 2006; Wright, 1995). All of them reveal that the activities and materials mentioned by the teachers in the current study can be used for teaching foreign language skills, vocabulary, grammar structures as well as assessment of foreign language learning.

One significant point in this study was participants' difference in the use of cut-and-paste activities during implementation. Teachers who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language very young learners stated that they frequently make use of cut-and-paste activities. On the other hand, teachers who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners stated that they do not prefer cut-and-paste activities in implementation because it is time-consuming and children do not feel comfortable when they cannot cut the materials as expected. Clearly, it is important for both groups to know about fine-motor skills of children, which includes that children can cut only simple shapes after 36th month, and they can improve this a little bit after 48th month when they can control their muscles while using scissors. However, they cannot succeed in cutting detailed and small pieces (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001). Even if they try, it can take more time than teachers have allocated for cutting, so teaching activities can slow down or fail. This can be related to teachers' knowledge of child development for both groups. Participants who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners may be overestimating the fine-motor skills whereas the ones who took a course underestimate and refrain from cut-and-paste activities.

Furthermore, the responses in the current study indicated that there are certain language teaching approaches, methods and techniques which preschool foreign language teachers make use of. However, teachers do not make use of the

intercultural approach to teaching, the Whole Language Learning, Cooperative Language Learning, Neurolinguistic Programming, Content-Based Instruction, creative drama and multiple intelligences. Although the reasons for not using specific techniques and methods was beyond the scope of the study, there may be several reasons for this such as not studying them in undergraduate degree, not reading and learning about the cornerstones of teaching approaches, techniques and methods, not finding them effective in teaching, or not following the latest developments and so on. For Richards and Rodgers (2001), practicality of them is the key point for teachers. When a new concept is submitted to teachers, they may have to change their beliefs of teaching and education, which is not something they can easily achieve. They can ask some questions to themselves, which may influence the use of an alternative method or technique (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Teachers can ask themselves if the new method, technique or approach is advantageous compared the existing one; how compatible it is for their beliefs and attitudes; how easy or difficult it is to use in the classroom; if it has been tested beforehand; and how clear and practical it is to implement. If teachers find it easy to implement, effective in teaching which means it is worth changing their existing methodology, then they can use others.

Besides the self-reported practices of teachers in planning and implementation, the current study indicated that participants view assessment as monitoring children's progress for future practices, checking if children raise awareness of another language and a concept that is not present at preschool level. One of the statements, which is about raising awareness of another language is directly related to what participants responded regarding the purpose of foreign language teaching in preschool years and how MoNE (2000) indicated as one of the main aims of it. Therefore, assessing whether children can develop awareness of target language will give the opportunity to observe if the goals can be achieved. Another response, which is about monitoring children's progress, is also regarded as a significant point in assessment by Chen and McNamee (2007), Leavitt and Eheart (1991), Katz (1997) and Nutbrown (2006). Chen and McNamee also asserted that assessment can be conducted to monitor children's progress in the classroom. Moreover, this specific purpose is assessed through techniques such as listening, observing and standardized testing. Regarding the assessment techniques, the

findings of the current study did not indicate that teachers make use of listening and standardized testing. However, they use observation as a method of assessing children's foreign language learning. In Turkey, a study conducted with teachers who work in elementary level about their perceptions of assessment tools indicated that most of the teachers make use of observation method in assessment since they believe that observation is an effective way of assessing students' performance (Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007). Similarly, another study in Turkey revealed that teachers prefer observations in primary level besides the formal assessment tools they are used to (Anıl & Acar, 2008) since teachers stated they have high level of knowledge about using observation in assessment (Şaşmaz-Ören & Ormancı, 2011). In addition, related to the responses in this study on the purpose of assessment, Katz (1997) also stated that one of the purposes of assessment is to monitor and set children's progress for further achievement. On the other hand, Katz (1997) also came up with other purposes that the teachers in the current study did not mention. They are about diagnosing educational problems in classroom settings, improving the quality of curriculum and instruction, and reporting parents. That participants in this study did not mention as many points as Katz (1997) did can be related to their point of views on assessment, which is that assessment is a concept that is not present at preschool but needs to be done at higher level, which bitterly discloses a gap between preschool foreign language teachers and assessment practices. No other studies or books indicate that assessment does not take place at that level. On the contrary, many books and studies report that assessment is a very significant part of learning and teaching. It is an opportunity for teachers to understand the value each and every child in their class in a way that each child is unique, teachers can help him/her improve his/her skills and develop better in each domain (Leavitt & Eheart, 1991). Moreover, teachers can gather information about children (Linse, 2005), and they can only improve the quality of education if they integrate the information they gather about children in assessment and use it for improving children's learning process (Black & William, 1998; Callahan, 2006; Mitchell, 2008; Nutbrown, 2006), which is significantly necessary in early childhood period when children can deliver optimum performance and attainment in developing their skills and qualifications (Crain, 2005). The responses of participants in this respect can also be discussed taking the Zone of Proximal Development into account. Vygotsky (1978) focused

many years ago that adults can support children's development by scaffolding them when they cannot achieve in tasks independently (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Morrison, 2003). This assistance for children cannot be possible if teachers do not know about children and their progress, in short, assess. Furthermore, if they do not assess, it will be quite difficult for them to be able to know about their efficiency of their teaching which can help them make necessary adaptations for their own development by assessing themselves (Ross & Bruce, 2007). On the other hand, the responses of teachers can be taken into account as an implication for their misconceptions of assessment, since responses revealed that teachers consider assessment as "determining children's success or failure in language". However, this is not assessment, but evaluation, which is used in education to determine or judge the effectiveness of educational practices including grading students, and deciding on their success or failure of learning (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Patton, 1987; Scheerens, Glas & Thomas, 2003).

5.2.3. Challenges in Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Learning

The findings of this study revealed that teachers face several challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. Though it is explicit from the study that the number of teachers who took a related course on teaching foreign language to very young learners is less in percentage compared to teachers who did not in terms of the challenges they face, the kinds of challenges are quite the same in both groups. To begin with, while planning their activities, teachers claimed that they face challenges such as getting to know about developmental characteristics of very young learners and classroom management, dealing with expectations of administrators and parents, individual differences of children, and obtaining sufficient resources. Similarly, while implementing their activities, teachers reported to face challenges that include developmental characteristics of children, classroom management, individual differences of children, number of children in classrooms, expectations of administrators and parents and resources. Most of these challenges were also presented in various studies (Alagözlü, 2012; Çakır, 2004; Garton Copland & Burns, 2011; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Moon, 2005; Saraç, 2012; Vale & Feunteun, 1996). Among them, Moon (2005) revealed that compared to teachers who deal with adult learners, teachers of young learners

have to deal with expectations of parents and other educational stakeholders. That they expect too much from teachers put pressure on their shoulders; therefore, these expectations become a real challenge to teachers. The teachers in the current study also stated that parents' expectations are a challenge to them while planning and implementing. However, what Moon (2005) stated can be a more general idea, but not detailed as planning or implementing or a challenge in a specific part of educational practices. Besides, Moon's study (2005) also figured out that the Ministry of Education puts too much pressure on teachers. Teachers in this study did not mention that the Ministry of National Education is a challenge to them. The reason for this can be a lack of a curriculum about foreign language education in preschool years. On the other hand, how Moon (2005) elaborated the challenges caused by the Ministry of Education is the same as how teachers in the current study explained it for the expectations of administrators. In this case, apparently, teachers face the power of administrators rather than the Ministry of National Education; therefore, administrators expect them to show the foreign language teaching practices in public without sufficient time and energy instead of the ministry. Just like the statement of Moon (2005) regarding the expectations of parents, Fantilli and McDoughall (2009), Saraç (2012), and Vale and Feunteun (1995) argued that parents expect too much from teachers because they expect their children to speak foreign language as quickly as possible, which becomes hard for teachers to tolerate from time to time, which can be because of the responses that teachers in the current study revealed as parents can blame teachers for their children's not speaking the target language as they wish.

Besides expectations of parents and administrators, this study figured out that individual differences, classroom management, number of children, lack of activities and materials, time and developmental characteristics of children some of the main challenges to teachers. Alagözlü (2012) and Saraç (2012) also noted lack of materials and activities as challenges whereas Garton, Copland and Burns (2011) indicated that class size, motivating children, individual needs are some of the main challenges. In addition to them, Fantilli and McDoughall (2009) focused on similar challenges in their study, which also added communicating with colleagues, salary and lack of in-service trainings. As a positive argument, communicating with colleagues is not a challenge to the participants in this study; instead, it is a way to address challenges,

which can also be considered to be the reinforcement of relationships among teachers as colleagues, which verifies both early childhood education teachers and foreign language teachers work in collaboration.

All of the teachers who did not take a related course on teaching foreign language in undergraduate degree stated that they do not know about children's developmental characteristics. However, this challenge is faced by most of the participants who took a related course, as well. Apart from knowledge of child development, all of the challenges, including classroom management, are faced by both teachers who took a related course in undergraduate degree and not. There can be several reasons for teachers to face these challenges. Teaching very young learners is quite a different experience when it is compared to teaching adults (Moon, 2005). Teaching them requires a need to know about child development, that is, teachers need to know how children develop languages, how they develop physically, emotionally and socially. First of all, children at these ages are in their preoperational stage in their cognitive development (Piaget, 1959). Teachers in this study may not know that children cannot grasp abstract concepts. Besides, because of their egocentric point of view, children cannot perceive their environment from the point of others. They can focus on concrete representations of image to be able to internalize events (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003). In this case, language activities need to be implemented with sufficient and beneficial concrete materials, and they need to be given in a way that children can internalize it from their own point of views so that they can form the relationship with language activities cognitively.

Besides, the reason for teachers' challenge in planning and implementing can be about their lack of knowledge in children's social and emotional development domains. Children at these ages can get involved in group activities, express their feelings, take part in communications, share toys, and like being praised and like helping. Most importantly, they are positive to their environments and have the inner motivation for getting involved in activities. Physically, children can use their gross-motor skills for activities such as turning around and dancing, as well as using their fine-motor skills for activities such as drawing, cutting simple shapes, coloring with crayons, spoons and so on (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001). If teachers know about these characteristics, they can form their expectations from children according to their needs and abilities, which help them

prepare and implement their activities better, so the challenges they face can decrease.

Furthermore, while assessing children's foreign language learning, participants' challenges are mostly related to their lack of knowledge on assessing young children's learning, which is quite in line with their conceptions of assessment. Similarly, as they have challenges about child development, they also face problems regarding their assessment of learning. In a study about the challenges teachers face while assessing students' learning in Turkey, it was found that class size, lack of time, difficulty in preparing and implementing assessment procedures, lack of parent support, reluctance of children, insufficiency of explanations for assessment in the program they use, and the inappropriateness of assessment tools for students are challenges to teachers (Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007). That study did not give information about the reasons for these challenges; however, the challenges they face are quite related to the challenges teachers in the study face while planning and implementing their activities, but not in assessment. The lack of responses mentioned in Gelbal and Kelecioğlu (2007) in the current study can be related to teachers' lack of knowledge in assessment, which was actually found as the main challenge in other two studies about the challenges of teachers regarding alternative assessment techniques (Öztürk, Yalvaç-Hastürk & Demir, 2013; Sağlam-Arslan, Devecioğlu-Kaymakçı, Arslan & 2009). These studies are not related to foreign language; however, they still support the idea that teachers do not have enough information about assessment, especially alternative assessment for young learners. Lack of knowledge of assessing young children's learning can result from participants' background related to assessment and their background of child development. Apparently, participants in this study have not had sufficient experience of assessment in teaching. This can result from that they did not study assessing children's foreign language learning in undergraduate degree or that they have not had the opportunity to put the theory they learnt into practice. In this respect, lack of time for assessment procedures, the need for resources for assessment, the burden on the shoulders of teachers in their teaching practices can also be considered as some of the reasons for not being able to reach information about assessment procedure (Gelbal & Kelecioğlu, 2007; Özdemir, 2009; Öztürk, Yalvaç-Hastürk & Demir, 2013; Sağlam-Arslan, Devecioğlu-Kaymakçı, Arslan & 2009).

Yet another challenge to be is a lack of portfolio system, which can be quite considered to be related to their educational practices with regard to the significance of assessment and a portfolio system as a part of alternative assessment in undergraduate degree. On the other hand, the awareness of the importance of portfolio assessment by the teachers in this study is of great value, since how portfolios are effective in foreign language learning is supported in many other studies (Endacott, Gray, Jasper, McMullan, Miller, Scholes & Webb, 2004; García-Carbonell, Watts & Rising, 1998; Kohonen, 2000; Lucas, 2007; Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Pierce & O'Malley, 1992; Wray, 2007). Among them, Lucas (1997) conducted a study on using portfolios in foreign language education and proposed that portfolios help students improve their skills, independence and self-autonomy in language. Another paper focused on that portfolios in language education have pedagogical advantages for teachers since they can understand children better to be able to arrange their activities for the learners' progress perfectly (García-Carbonell, Watts & Rising, 1998). Kohonen (2000) asserted portfolios make learning more visible for teachers and learners because they make it possible to see the strengths and weaknesses of students, which enables educational stakeholders to revise and improve the quality of learning and teaching. All of these studies are in line with the importance of portfolio assessment, and they are all related to what Moya and O'Mallay (1994) supported. They suggest the portfolio assessment in language classrooms for several reasons. To begin with, portfolios are comprehensive, that is, through portfolio assessment; teachers can understand children's capabilities since portfolios show them both the process and the product of learning as well as helping teacher recognize children's development in linguistic, cognitive, meta-cognitive and affective domains. Secondly, portfolios are predetermined and systematic. They are prepared for a purpose and the portfolio assessment process takes place in this purpose. They are informative, as well, since not only teachers but also parents, administrators, and children can learn about the children's foreign language process by having a look at portfolios because portfolios can reveal a lot of information about children. Finally, they are authentic, which directly reflects language learning in natural learning environment.

5.2.4. Addressing Challenges in Planning, Implementing and Assessing Children's Learning

Participants in this study have several ways to address the challenges they face while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning. They consult their colleagues, adapt their materials and activities, make use of extra resources, learn by experience, search on the Internet, inform parents, refer to books, try to spend more time with children, and one of the participants attends seminars and workshops.

The point of view that they consult colleagues can make a contribution to the power of working in collaboration with early childhood education teachers, the situation of which can also help and qualify foreign language teachers for improvement in learning the developmental characteristics of this age group benefiting from their colleagues. Against what Fantilli and McDoughall (2009) found in their study as colleagues being a challenge to teachers, teachers in the current study regarded their colleagues as the most frequently used way of addressing challenges. The reasons for addressing challenges through colleagues were not studied in detail. However, a study with teachers about their colleagues also revealed that when colleagues work in collaboration, they become more committed to their school, other teachers and more importantly to their students as well as becoming more effective in their instructional strategies (Lee, Zhonghua, Yin, 2011). Similarly, another qualitative study with teachers indicated that colleagues support teachers for improving their teaching practice and reflection on teaching, organizing a more professional environment and increasing the quality of teaching (Park, Oliver, Johnson, Graham & Oppong, 2007).

Closely related to this, and apparently, almost all of the responses above are related to participants' personal and mostly informal efforts to address the challenges they face. Only one of the participants referred to professional help and focused on attending seminars and workshops as a way of addressing challenges. Fantilli and McDoughall (2009), and Öztürk, Yalvaç-Hastürk and Demir (2013) had similar results in their study that explained that teachers usually consult their relatives and colleagues as an informal way of addressing challenges, but they also get formal support of a qualified mentor. This point of having a qualified mentor who can also be competent and professional language teachers (Alagözlü, 2012) for preschool

foreign language teachers in Turkey can be a much better way of addressing challenges in professional settings.

Hashemi and Azizinezhad (2011) asserted in their study that teaching foreign language to young learners is a challenging job; however, there are some ways of addressing them which are all related to being a successful teacher. The basic way of achieving in this is about loving children. When they love children, they feel more energetic and patient, and they pay more attention to individual differences. Besides, when they know the techniques of teaching and showing children the beautiful aspects of language, they can be more effective teachers, which help them address the challenges.

In addition, although none of the teachers in this study indicated, various ways of addressing challenges are also suggested. As most of the teachers face the challenge of classroom management, there can be several ways of addressing these challenges. First of all, teacher can establish their main rules for the classroom and activities, and inform children about the procedures of the activities beforehand. These rules can be about their expectations in general, use of materials, children's behaviors in the group works and so on. Besides, teachers can try to strengthen their relationships with children through informal conversations and noticing individual differences and accomplishments. In addition, they can try to manage time of the activities and space of the classroom, which necessitates a well-designed plan (Marzano, Gaddy, Foseid, Foseid & Marzano, 2005; Wright, 2005). In addition to classroom management, Garton, Copland and Burns (2011) suggested that organizing small group works, rewarding children and motivating them to involve in the activities are possible. These ways of addressing challenges can be considered as positive in relation with the current study because these suggestions are quite in line with children's social and emotional stages at these ages.

As mentioned above, children at preschool level love group works, they enjoy being praised and help each other, and they are already intrinsically motivated to get involved the activities (Berk, 2006; MoNE, 2006; Linse, 2005; McClellan & Katz, 2001). Furthermore, Cameron (2003) pointed out the importance of appropriate materials, activities and assessment tools. In terms of appropriate activities, Shin (2010) put forward the implementation of poetry, songs, picture stories, and making necessary adaptations just like Cheatham and Ro (2010) who added narratives to

facilitate challenges, especially in implementation. Additionally, Baran and Halıcı (2006), Damar (2009) and Bardakçı (2011) advised child-centered activities that include songs, role plays, games, story telling and drama, and Biricik and Özkan (2012) added motivational, challenging and achievable tasks into these activities. İşpınar (2005) inclined towards using self-assessment tools and Örsdemir (2010) recommended alternative assessment techniques. These activities and techniques suggested are all in accordance with the characteristics of very young learners. As mentioned earlier, very young learners are already motivated when they find anything interesting, so appropriately-selected songs and poems can attract them easily. Besides, they learn through experience and activities by getting the meaning of language rather than the form, they can make logical connections between events, as well as using interaction patterns and intonations, which means that using stories and narratives help teachers decrease their challenges regarding the knowledge of child development and classroom management. Moreover, they are more open to differences, and more flexible attitudes, which can help teachers come up with new and alternative tasks and activities to address the challenges they face while planning, implementing and assessing children's foreign language learning (Eichman & Fori, 1977; Moon, 2005; Read, 2003; Scott and Ytreberg, 1990).

5.2.5. A study on the Self-Reports of Teachers

In the current study, participants' planning, implementation and assessment practices were studied through their self-reports. It was believed that self-reports are the best way to obtain rich explanations of participants' views through interviews. Fontana and Frey (2008) also proposed the use of interviewing as a method when the purpose of the researcher is to obtain in-depth information about a part of experiences in the participants' lives. Therefore, with the aim of learning the participants' self-reports on the purpose of foreign language teaching to very young learners, planning, implementation and assessment, interviews were used as the primary data source.

Other studies that investigated challenges also obtained self-reports of participants to learn teaching experiences through their eyes. To begin with, in Turkey, a study was conducted to obtain preschool teachers' self-reports on the challenges they face regarding inclusive education (Dikici-Sığırtmaç, Hoş & Abbak,

2011). The researchers discussed in their study that self-reports of participants helped them obtain important results about accessing the meanings of participants' experiences. Besides, they stated self-reports and views of participants on the ways of addressing challenges gave new insights to solve future problems. Although the subjects of that study and the current one are different, both of them used self-reports of participants. In addition, in both studies, participants revealed rich explanations of what challenges they face and how they address these challenges. However, the current study detailed the challenges and addressing them under 3 sections as planning, implementation and assessment.

In another study, researchers presented self-reports of pre-service preschool male teachers on the challenges they face about teaching in early childhood level (İnan, Bayındır, Doğan-Temur & Bartan, 2010). They stated that they could have different categories of challenges through interviews. Besides, they asserted that studying with participants using qualitative methods to get their self-reports gave them the opportunity to obtain first-hand information about real challenges they face. Like in the current study, the researchers obtained valuable information to decrease the challenges participants face. Furthermore, that study recommended that obtaining self-reports for such challenges can help educational stakeholders increase the quality of teaching standards by conducting other related studies. However, in the current study, instead of a comparison between male and female teachers, findings were compared according to the coursework on foreign language teaching to very young learners.

Similarly, the study results conducted by Karaca and Aral (2011) indicated that learning about preschool teacher candidates' challenges in practice teaching, self-reports provide information about improving the quality of education in various areas from adaptations in undergraduate courses to practices of teaching. Besides, such views also help to decrease the possibility of having problems. These discussions about self-reports of participants are quite in line with the study that was conducted with English teachers to gain insights to their experiences and challenges (Yunus, Hashim, Ishak & Mohammad, 2010). They stated that participants' self-reports give rich information about their teaching experiences and challenges. Therefore, making use of such reports, all of the educational stakeholders can get to know about dealing with problems in the learning process, and they can obtain

information about being a good teacher that will lead to a better understanding of teaching profession as a whole. In the current study, the participants were foreign language teachers who work at preschool level contrary to participants mentioned. However, self-reports of the participants in both studies gave in-depth information about participants' experiences, which proposes an increase in the quality of teaching through recognizing challenges and decreasing the possibility of having them.

5.3. Educational Implications

This study was designed to investigate preschool foreign language teachers' viewpoints of teaching foreign language in preschool years, their self-reported practices, challenges and addressing challenges while planning, implementing and assessing children's learning. A great deal of data was obtained at the end; therefore, several implications can be discussed for educational settings.

First and foremost, most of the participants stated that getting to know about the developmental characteristics of that specific age group and classroom management are challenges to them. Therefore, foreign language teachers can be introduced with the characteristics of very young learners. There are several ways of achieving in this. When they are appointed to teaching at preschool level, teachers can be supplied with meaningful pre-service trainings before they start teaching. There, they should be provided with basic and necessary information regarding the characteristics of that age group, and teaching them. When they start teaching, in-service trainings should go on, and teachers should complete the related sessions which should include lectures, observation of actual classrooms and having an experienced colleague as a mentor. Early childhood education teachers should also get involved in sessions as mentors by elaborating on the characteristics and by offering practical solutions to address possible challenges and drawbacks. These trainings can be put into practice by the Ministry of National Education, which can have representatives to train school administrators and foreign language departments so that schools can sustain these trainings for their new foreign language teachers to teach at preschool levels (Çakır, 2004; Fantilli & McDoughall, 2009; Kocaman & Kocaman, 2012)

Similarly, the Ministry of National Education, the Departments of Early Childhood Education and Foreign Language Education in the Faculties of Education can work in collaboration to raise awareness on the issue. They can organize

seminars and in-service trainings for not only recently-appointed teachers but also the whole target group who teach foreign language at preschool level. One distinctive feature is that these seminars and trainings need to be well-organized, that is, they need to be meaningful to teachers and include real-life classroom settings, provide examples, and solutions to possible challenges as well as informing teachers about the recent developments in the field (Alagözlü, 2012; Kampmann & Brownie, 2012; Kocaman & Kocaman, 2012)

In this respect, publishers can also be included and requested to support foreign language teaching in early childhood years with a sufficient and constant supply of various kinds of course books, materials, technological equipments and organization of seminars and workshops with people who lead the field.

In addition, although there is no specific curriculum for teaching foreign language in preschool years yet, there is an early childhood education program prepared by the Ministry of National Education (2006; 2012) that includes not only developmental characteristics of young children but also general goals and objectives of teaching preschoolers. The current study showed that most of the participants do not know about this program. Therefore, faculties, MoNE and schools can introduce this program to teachers and require them to examine it carefully and adapt their activities and materials accordingly so that foreign language teachers can at least have information about developmental characteristics of the age group and main goals and objectives of early childhood education.

Besides, the Ministry of National Education can design a specific curriculum for foreign language teaching in early childhood education. A well-designed curriculum which is put into practice after pilot studies can specify common goals and objectives by also giving example lesson plans, frame programs or even suggesting how to select the most appropriate course books (Kocaman & Kocaman, 2012; Moon, 2005). According to Sert (2004), Common European Framework (CEF) principles can also be taken into consideration while designing the curriculum in terms of goals and objectives to be able to meet European standards. At this point, it is possible to design a standardized curriculum after analyzing foreign language in early childhood education programs and curriculum worldwide, having the opinions of foreign language teachers and experts, conducting pilot studies, observing the progress of these pilot studies and making necessary adaptations.

Furthermore, as the current study findings presented that FL teachers believe that administrators and parents have unreal expectations according to the participants, it is necessary that parents and administrators need to be informed about the process of foreign language education beforehand. Küçük (2006), and İlter and Er (2007) already found in their study that administrators and parents consider foreign language education in preschool years as a very significant part of education, so involving in the practices and informing them about the procedure of foreign language teaching can help. Within this respect, teachers can provide them with necessary information at seminars and parent meetings. Therefore, they can get to know what to expect and how to approach to their children's foreign language learning practices, which is also helpful for parents to improve their children's learning practices (MoNE, 2006). Furthermore, teacher and parent collaboration will definitely improve the quality of children's learning. Teachers need to take an initiative to involve parents in early childhood settings through partnership, respect, communication and commitment (Hornby, 2011). For this, they need to have open doors to parents, and they can come up with formal and informal communication ways such as telephone contacts, parent-teacher meetings, home visits, handbooks, brochures, school diaries reports (Hornby, 2000).

Last but not least, Departments of Foreign Language Education in the Faculties of Education can enrich the contents of their courses about Teaching Foreign Language to Young Learners and provide comprehensive information about very young learners, their developmental characteristics, needs and interests, strategies for classroom management as well as assessment practices. The findings of this study presented that teachers need more detailed knowledge, and they need to be well-supported about teaching very young learners in undergraduate degree, so this study can help these departments in terms of detecting the challenges that teachers face and making adaptations in the programs of related courses by offering practical ways to address these challenges in the best possible way. The contents of these related undergraduate courses on teaching foreign language to very young learners are beyond the scope of this study, but the findings indicated that teachers need to be well-prepared to teach young children, so they need experience and practice before they graduate and start teaching (Çakır, 2004). Therefore, departments can include practicum in preschools in the contents of their courses regarding school experience

and practice teaching so that teacher candidates can have experience in teaching very young learners and make conscious decisions on working with them or not in their careers. Finally, faculty members of related departments, experienced teachers and other stakeholders of education can form a committee and work in collaboration to correct mistakes that deteriorate educational practices, make necessary adaptations, organize trainings and seminars and so on (Işık, 2008). It is believed that a combination of recommendations mentioned above can decrease the likelihood of facing challenges while teaching foreign language to preschoolers, which results in an increase in the quality of teaching practices.

5.4. Recommendation for Future Studies

Several recommendations can be provided for further research regarding foreign language education in early childhood settings.

To begin with, this interview protocol has been conducted only once and in this study. Therefore, replications of this study with different samples can be possible. Interviews can be conducted with more participants and teachers of different foreign languages besides English. Similarly, as all of the participants in this study work at preschools in Ankara, different samples can be formed in various cities. Studies with more participants and teachers of different foreign languages can ensure the generalizability of the findings.

Secondly, a similar study can be conducted with different qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. Namely, observations, document analysis, case studies can be included in the study besides interviews. Again, a longitudinal study can be conducted with participants collecting data about the procedures participants go through while planning, implementing and assessing children's learning over a specific time. In addition, the patterns obtained in this qualitative study can be adapted into quantitative research, and a survey or a questionnaire can be designed including scales so that detailed data for each of the item can be provided from a larger sample. As this type of a quantitative study involves more participants, the data of a greater number of preschool foreign language teachers can be obtained.

Regarding the challenges in this current study, further research can be conducted with other stakeholders of education. "Parents' unrealistic expectations" as a challenge as asserted by the teachers in the current study can be analyzed in detailed with a survey conducted with parents, or data can be conducted from

administers to reveal their viewpoints about foreign language education in preschools. Furthermore, faculty of universities can be interviewed and possible reasons for these challenges can be discovered and pinpointed so that necessary precautions can be taken.

In addition, as contents of the related courses on teaching foreign language to very young learners were out of the scope of this study, a further investigation can be possible in which a content analyses can be conducted so as to gather detailed data on the contents of these courses from all of the foreign language education departments in Turkey.

Last but not least, as this study includes planning, implementing and assessing children's learning of foreign language, further studies can be designed to obtain more detailed data about each domain. Planning can be studied independently, and the reasons for choosing specific type of planning, selecting materials and activities, or relationships with colleagues to address challenges and so on in a more comprehensive study. Similarly, implementing can be a longitudinal case study. Teachers can be pre-interviewed and observed, and then they can be given sessions regarding the challenges found in this current study, and they can be observed and post-interviewed. Finally, assessment can be studied in detail in itself. The current study present that participants do not regard assessment as significant as they do about planning and implementing. Therefore, a study can analyze the reasons behind this viewpoint and conduct a research on the role of assessment in preschool foreign language education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.   Interview Protocol (Turkish)

OKUL ÖNCESİ KURUMLARDA GÖREV YAPAN YABANCI DİL ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ERKEN DİL ÖĞRENİMİ VE BU KONUDA KARŞILAŞTIKLARI ZORLUKLAR HAKKINDAKİ ÖZBİLDİRİMLERİ

Kişisel Bilgiler

1. Eğitim Durumu

2. Bölüm

3. Görev Yapılan Okul Türü

4. Öğretmenlik Tecrübesi

5. Sınıflardaki çocuk sayısı

6. Haftalık Ders Saati

7. İlgili lisans Dönemi Dersleri

Okul Öncesi Yabancı Dil Eğitiminin Amacı

1. Sizce okul öncesi dönemde yabancı dil eğitiminin amacı nedir?

Planlama

1. Etkinlik planlarınızı nasıl hazırlıyorsunuz?

2. Etkinliklerinizi planlarken nelere dikkat edersiniz?

3. Etkinliklerinizi planlarken karşılaştığınız zorluklar nelerdir?

4. Etkinliklerinizi hazırlarken karşılaştığınız zorluklarla nasıl başa çıkıyorsunuz?

Uygulama

1. Sizce hangi dil öğretim metotları okul öncesi dönemde kullanılabilir?

2. Etkinliklerinizde hangi tür aktiviteleri kullanıyorsunuz?

3. Sizce okul öncesi dönemde çalışan yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin etkinlik sırasında karşılaştıkları zorluklar hangileridir?

4. Bu karşılaştığınız zorluklarla nasıl başa çıkıyorsunuz?

5. Çok iyi/çok kötü geçtiğini düşündüğünüz bir etkinliği anlatır mısınız?

Ölçme

1. Sizin için okul öncesi yabancı dil öğretiminde ölçme ne ifade etmektedir?

2. Okulunuzda/etkinliklerinizde ne tür bir ölçme süreci işleniyor?

3. Ölçme sırasında ne tür problemler yaşıyorsunuz? Bir örnekle anlatır mısınız?

4. Bu problemlerle nasıl başa çıkıyorsunuz?

SELF-REPORTS OF PRESCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RELATED CHALLENGES

Demographic Information

1. Educational Background

2. Department

3. Preschool Taught

4. Teaching Experience

5. Number of Children

6. Teaching Hours

7. Related Undergraduate Courses

Purpose of Foreign Language Teaching in Early Childhood

1. What is the purpose of foreign language teaching in early childhood for you?

Planning

1. How do you plan your activities?

2. What are your concerns while planning your activities?

3. What challenges do you face while planning your activities?

4. How do you overcome the challenges that you face while planning your activities?

Implementing

1. Which teaching techniques and methods can be used in teaching foreign language to very young learners?

2. What kind of activities do you use while implementing your activities?

3. What challenges do you face while implementing your activities?

4. How do you overcome the challenges you face while implementing your activities?

5. Can you tell an activity that went very good/very bad while teaching?

Assessing

1. What is the purpose of assessment in early childhood?

2. How do you assess children's foreign language learning in you class/school?

3. What challenges do you face while assessing children's foreign language learning? Can you give an example?

4. How do you overcome the challenges you face while assessing children's foreign language learning?

APPENDIX C.   Sample Activity Plans

Activity Plan 1 (Theme-based, from the course book)

Hello Mickey!

(A TPR song to greet the children with the puppet.)

- Put the Mickey puppet inside a box without the children seeing you. Place the box on your table (This box will be Mickey's box). In L1, tell the children that they are going to meet a good friend of yours. Slip your hand inside the box and take the puppet out very slowly while you say: Hello, Mickey! Have him reply: Hello, (your name)!
- Invite the children to listen to the puppet. Play or sing the following song while Mickey waves hello.

2
Hello, hello
I'm Mickey
Hello, hello
Say hello to me!
[Chorus]
Hello,
Hello,
Hello, Mickey!
Hello, hello, hello!

- Play the song twice more and do one of the following activities each time: **1** The children wave their hands when they hear the word hello. **2** Encourage the children to join in the chorus.
- Leave the puppet 'sitting' on his box so he can participate in the class.

Ring game

(An activity to practise Hello, I'm ...).

- Take the children to the play area in the classroom. Take one child by the hand and ask the rest to form a line behind you and join hands as you lead them to the play area while reciting the following chant:

Follow me, follow me.
Let's make a ring.

- Ask them to stand in a circle. Repeat the chant until the ring is complete. Then, sit on the floor with them while you say: Let's sit down. Show them the soft ball and say: Hello, I'm (Maria). Roll the ball towards one child and encourage him or her to reply: Hello, I'm (Ken) while rolling the ball back to you. Repeat this until all the children have had a chance to say their name.

Chant (p. 2)

(A chant to present **red** and **blue**.)

- Take the children back to their seats. Point to Mickey on his box and say: This is Mickey! Ask the children to say: Hello Mickey!
- Ask the helpers to hand out the books. Open your book at page 2 and focus the children's attention on the scene. Point to Mickey and ask them what is happening in L1. Explain that Mickey is a wizard and that he is making the brooms dance. Point to the buckets and say: Look, this is red. This is blue.
- Present the chant using the CD/cassette and the book. Encourage the children to listen and look at the colours while you point in your book. Say: Let's listen to Mickey.

4
Abracadabra!
Red, red, red!
Red, red, red!
Abracadabra!
Blue, blue, blue!
Blue, blue, blue!
Abracadabra!
Red, red, red!
Red, red, red!
Abracadabra!
Blue, blue, blue!
Blue, blue, blue!
Abracadabra! Abracadabra!

- Play the chant twice more and do one of the following activities each time: **1** Ask the children to point to the colours in their books. Say: Listen and point. **2** They cast the spell with Mickey by waving their hands when they hear: Abracadabra!
- Ask the children to point to the buckets according to your instructions. Say: Point to red! Point to blue! Repeat the activity several times. Finally, ask the helpers to collect the books.

Goodbye Mickey!

(A TPR song to say goodbye to Mickey.)

- To end the class, pick up the puppet and say: Goodbye Mickey! Encourage the children to repeat. Play the Goodbye song and encourage them to wave goodbye to Mickey.

3
Goodbye, goodbye!
Say goodbye
Goodbye, goodbye!
Say goodbye to me!
[Chorus]
Goodbye,
Goodbye,
Goodbye, goodbye Mickey!
Goodbye, goodbye Mickey!

- Put the puppet back in the box and 'wave' goodbye to the children. Encourage them to wave back and reply: Goodbye!

Activity Plan 2 (Theme-based, prepared by a participant)

Theme: All about me

1. My Family

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: A CD player, My Family Song, Colors Song, Family Flashcards

Procedure: These activities are the revision of the previous weeks and a preparation for the coloring activity. Play the song about colors and sing together with children. To revise, say each child sentences such as: "Sinem, give me a red pen!" or "Taner, where is the purple car?" After that play the Family Song, and repeat the family members by asking questions to children. Then put family flashcards on a table and tell children that they will play a game. In the game, choose 2 children, and give them commands such as "Touch the mother!" or "Bring me the baby!" Go on with this until each child takes part in the activities.

2. My Bear

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: A coloring page like teddy bear, house, car it is optional

Procedure: This is a game that shows children that they are unique but also allows them to see things that they have in common. It probably works best in smallish groups (about 10) for 5-6 year olds. Give each child a black and white bear. Ask them to listen to your questions and color in their bears in answer to the questions. For example you might say "Do you have any sisters or brothers? If you have a sister color the bear's tummy red, if you have a brother color it blue, if you have both color the bear's tummy purple". It is best to keep questions down to two or three answers, particularly with younger children.

When they are finished ask the children to look at one another's bears. Are any the same? Can they spot similarities and differences between them?

Questions for My Bear

1. Do you have any sisters or brothers?
If you have a sister, colour the bear's tummy red;
If you have a brother, colour it blue;
If you have both colour, the bear's tummy purple

2. Do you have any pets?
If yes, colour the bear's feet green;
If no, colour the bear's feet black.

3. How do you like to get about?
If you prefer to ride your bike, colour the bear's bow yellow;
If you like to ride a scooter more, colour the bear's bow pink

4. What do you like to do most, read a book or draw a picture?
If you like to read a book, colour the bear's nose grey;
If you like to draw a picture, colour the bear's feet orange

5. Do you like summer or winter best?
If you like summer best, colour the bear's fur brown;
If you like winter best, leave the bear's fur white.

www.ActivityVillage.co.uk - Keeping Kids Busy

What is it good for: It is good to revise the words about family and it helps the child to get to know his/her family.

Activity Plan 3 (Story-based, from the course book)
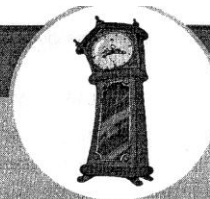
Lesson focus Listening to the story for the first time
Main language children use *mouse, clock, run up, run down*
Main activities
- Say hello and sing *Robby's song*
- Play *Mouse or clock*
- Predict the story
- Listen to the story (1)
- Draw the mouse running up and down the clock (Activity Sheet 1)
- Sing *Bye-bye*

Materials (in addition to Pupil's Book and Cassette/CD)
Robby Rabbit puppet, bag for the puppet, story cards for story 2, flashcards (mouse, grandfather clock), pencils, crayons

On the carpet together

Say hello and sing *Robby's song*

1 Sit in a circle. Use the Robby Rabbit puppet to greet the children.

2 Sing *Robby's song* (Cassette/CD1: Track 2) and/or do another favourite song or chant the children know.

Play *Mouse or clock*

3 Show the flashcard of the mouse very quickly and children guess what it is. Remodel their answers by saying *Yes, it's the mouse!* and the children repeat the word several times. Do the same with the flashcard of the clock.

Say *squeak, squeak* and pretend to be a mouse as in Lesson 1. Demonstrate that children should respond by pointing to the correct flashcard and calling out *mouse!* Repeat the procedure for the clock. Then say *Come here ...* (and name two or three children). Whisper to them e.g. *tick-tock* and they pretend to be the clock. The rest of the class points to the clock flashcard and calls out *clock!* in the same way. Repeat the procedure several times with different children pretending to be the mouse or the clock.

Predict the story

4 Say *It's story time!* and open the palms of your hands like a book. Point to the flashcards and say *It's a story about the mouse and the clock.* Use L1 to ask the children if they can guess what happens in the story and listen to their response. Then say e.g. *Now listen* (pointing to your ears), *look* (pointing to your eyes) *and ssh!* (finger on your mouth) *and then I'll begin!*

Listen to the story (1)

5 Tell the story or play the Cassette/CD1 (Track 9), using the story cards and following the guidelines on page 15.

🎧 **Story 2: Hickory, dickory, dock**

STORY CARD 1
Clock: Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock... (Point to the clock.)
Mouse: What s that? (Point to the mouse, look puzzled.)
Clock: It s me. I m the clock. (Point to the clock.)
Mouse: Squeak, squeak. Squeak, squeak... (Point to the mouse.)
Clock: What s that? (Point to the clock, look puzzled.)
Mouse: It s me. I m the mouse. (Point to the mouse.)
Clock: Hello Mouse. (Point to the clock, look happy.)
Mouse: Hello Clock. Let s play! (Point to the mouse, look happy.)

STORY CARD 2
Mouse: Run up... Run down... (Point to the mouse, then move your finger up and down the clock.)
Run up... Run down...
Run up... Run down...
Wheeeeee... This is great!

STORY CARD 3
Clock: Tick... tock... tick... tock... tick... tock (Gradually slow down. Point to the clock and pretend to be sleepy.)
Mouse: What s the matter? (Point to the mouse and look worried.)
Clock: I m sleepy. (Point to the clock and yawn.)

Mouse: Wake up! Oh, please!... Aahah, yes, I can help! (Point to the mouse, look worried and then look as if you've had a bright idea and mime turning the key.)

Clock: Tick... tock... tick... tock... tick-tock, tick-tock. (Gradually increase speed.) *Oh, thank you. Dong! Dong! Dong! Dong!* (Point to the clock three times as it chimes and smile to show he's feeling better.)

Mouse: One..., two..., three! (Hold up three fingers in turn.) *Hee, hee, hee, hee. Let s play again!* (Point to the mouse and give a big smile.)

* **6** Make one of your hands into the shape of a mouse and say *Look. Here's the mouse!* and get the children to do the same. Run your hand up your arm as you say *run up*, and down again as you say *run down*. Repeat the procedure several times and get the children to do the actions with you and join in saying *run up* and *run down*.

Transition

Go to your table

7 Invite three to six children to stand up. Get them to make one hand into the shape of a mouse and say *run up, run down* as they make their 'mouse' run up to the top of their arm and down again. Then say e.g. *Very good! Now go to the table. Sit down, please.* Repeat the procedure until all the children are sitting down.

At our tables

Draw the mouse running up and down the clock
(Activity Sheet 1, Pupil's Book page 19)

8 Either give out the Pupils' Books, hold up Activity Sheet 1 and say *Find this page* or give out Activity Sheet 1. Say *run up, run down* and demonstrate that children should join in saying this with you and follow the line of the mouse up and down the clock with their finger. Repeat the procedure several times.

9 Point to the icons at the top of the page. Say *Now draw like this* (and demonstrate drawing the line of the mouse running up and down the clock) *and colour the mouse.*

Children draw the line and colour the mouse. Praise the children and say e.g. *Very good! What a lovely mouse!*

Ending the lesson

Sing *Bye-bye*
10 Sing the *Bye-bye* song (Cassette/CD1: Track 3). Use the Robby Rabbit puppet to say bye-bye to the children.

* If you are short of time, you can omit stage 6.

Extra activities

If you have additional time, you can do one or more of the following activities:

- **Game** *Run, mouse!*: Sit the children in a circle making sure there is room to walk round behind them. Walk round the circle with a sock. Put the sock behind one child. Get that child to stand up, pick up the sock and run after you round the circle until you get back to their place and sit down. As you run round the circle, say *Run, mouse! Run, mouse!* etc. and get the children to join in. The child with the sock then has the next turn walking round the circle. Repeat the procedure several times.
- **Playground or gym activity** Do this only if you have suitable equipment available, e.g. a climbing frame or slide. Children take turns to go up and down the climbing frame or slide. The rest of the class say *up, up, up* and clap when their friends get to the top, and say *down, down, down* and clap when they get to the bottom.
- **Craft** Prepare circles and strips of different coloured gummed paper. Children stick them on milk cartons to make them look like the face and hands of a clock. They then use their fingers to pretend to be a mouse and say *run up, run down* as they play with the milk-carton clock.

Activity Plan 4 (Story-based, Prepared by a participant)

ACTIVITY PLAN

Week: 8	
Age Group: 6	
Objectives: to listen to the story; to meet new vocabulary: bike, car, truck, train, plane; to act-out; to play a TPR game, to color transportation vehicles.	
Story: Transportation	
Activities:	

1. Hello Song

2. Story: Make children sit down. Read the story of a bike, a car, a truck, a train and a plane twice. During the second time, focus on target vocabulary and structures.

3. Make a circle. Make children pronounce the vocabulary correctly by repetition.

4. Group children into 5. Give each group the flashcard of a vehicle. Show the picture and tell them they represent this vehicle now. For 2 minutes, let children go around the classroom as the vehicle they represent.

5. Read the story again, stop before the vehicle names and their sounds. Let groups act-out the sounds and movements.

6. TPR Game: Stick the flashcards of the vehicles on different places on the wall. Tell children to move around the classroom. Play a piece of music and let them dance. Tell them that you will stop the music and say a vehicle name. Children need to stand in front of the correct vehicle on the wall.

7. Distribute coloring pages to children, tell them to take their favorite vehicle and color it as they wish.

8. Goodbye Song

APPENDIX D.   **A Sample Portfolio Design**

My Junior Language Portfolio

NAME: _____

CLASS: _____

TEACHER: _____

All about me

⭐ **Read and (✓).**

☺ ☹

★ Some members of my family speak English.   ☐ ☐

★ Some members of my family are from an English-speaking country.   ☐ ☐

★ I often watch English TV programmes.   ☐ ☐

★ I often listen to English songs.   ☐ ☐

★ I have extra English lessons.   ☐ ☐

★ There is someone at home who speaks English to me.   ☐ ☐

★ I have contact with people from English-speaking countries.   ☐ ☐

★ I have visited/lived in the following English-speaking countries: ☐ ☐

_____

_____

_____

_____

Sayın Veli,

Bu sene İngilizce dersimizde her çocuğumuz kendi dil portfolyosunu oluşturacak. Bu nedenle sizden ricamız portfolyoların kapak sayfasına koymak üzere çocuğunuzun seçtiği bir fotoğrafı bize iletmeniz ve ekteki "All about me" başlıklı kısmı doldurmanız.

"All about me" bölümü çocukların İngilizce geçmişini öğrenmemiz ve etkinliklerimizi uyarlamamız açısından önem taşıyor. Bölümdeki İngilizce cümlelerin Türkçe açıklamaları şu şekilde:

1. Some members of my family speak English: Ailemde İngilizce konuşan kişiler var.

2. Some members of my family are from an English-speaking country: Ailemde anadili İngilizce olan kişiler var.

3. I often watch English TV programmes: Genellikle İngilizce televizyon programları seyrederim.

4. I often listen to English songs: Genellikle İngilizce şarkılar dinlerim.

5. I have extra English lessons: Okul dışında da İngilizce dersi alıyorum.

6. There is someone at home who speaks English to me: Evde benimle İngilizce konuşan biri var.

7. I have contact with people from English-speaking counries: İngilizce konuşulan ülkelerden iletişimde bulunduğum kişiler var.

8. I have visited/lived in the following English-speaking countries: Aşağıda belirttiğim İngilizce konuşan ülkelerde bulundum/yaşadım.

Dil portfolyomuzu oluşturabilmemiz için 28 Eylül Cuma gününe kadar fotoğraf ve belgelerin elimizde olmasını bekliyoruz.

Teşekkür ederiz.

İngilizce Öğretmeni

Observation Form 1 (from the course book)

Observation of individual child

Name of child: ..   ..   Class: ......**6**...............

	STORY UNITS	1	2	3	4	5	6
The story							
listens to the story with attention		+	+				
shows interest and enjoyment in the story		+	+				
makes guesses and predicts the story		+	+				
shows global understanding of the story		+	+				
produces key words from the story		+	+				
produces key sentences from the story		+	+				
responds to repeated patterns in the story		+	+				
is able to follow the story in the Pupil's Book		+	+				
participates in following the story with sticker cards		+	+				
participates in acting out the story		+	+				
shows understanding of concepts in the story		+	+				
is able to relate the story to his/her experience		+	+				
is able to relate the story to things in the real world		+	+				
expresses personal opinions about the story		+	+				
Other classroom procedures and activities							
enjoys relating to the puppet		+	+				
participates in greetings and goodbyes		+	+				
shows interest and enjoyment in doing activities		+	+				
follows routines for learning		+	+				
understands and follows instructions		+	+				
understands and responds to classroom language		+	+				
recognises and responds non-verbally to language in context		+	+				
recognises and responds verbally to language in context		+	+				
participates in singing and acting out the songs		+	+				
participates in saying and acting out the rhymes and chants		+	+				
participates in playing games		+	+				
participates in activities involving drama and physical movement		+	+				
completes Activity Sheets independently		+	+				
completes Activity Sheets with care		+	+				
completes activities using stickers independently		+	+				
completes activities using stickers with care		+	+				
General criteria							
shows interest in learning		+	+				
shows curiosity in finding out about the world		+	+				
feels secure in the classroom		+	+				
relates to others		+	+				
has an appropriate degree of physical coordination and control		+	+				
has an appropriate level of fine motor skills		+	+				
is able to concentrate		+	+				
cooperates with the teacher		+	+				
cooperates with other children		+	+				
listens to others		+	+				
is willing to take turns		+	+				
respects classroom norms		+	+				
makes an effort		+	+				
feels confident in him/herself		+	+				
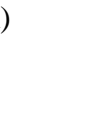
Observation Form 2 (from the course book)

Child's report

Name of child _____

Term __1__   Date _____

Statement	A	S	N
I show interest in learning English.	A	(S)	N
I participate in activities.	A	(S)	N
I like listening to the stories.	A	(S)	N
I like acting out the stories.	A	(S)	N
I like singing the songs.	(A)	S	N
I like saying the rhymes and chants.	(A)	S	N
I like playing the games.	A	(S)	N
I like movement and drama activities.	(A)	S	N
I respond non-verbally to language in context.	A	(S)	N
I respond verbally to language in context.	A	(S)	N
I understand and follow instructions.	A	(S)	N
I respond to classroom language.	A	S	(N)
I complete my work independently.	A	S	(N)
I complete my work with care.	A	S	(N)
I finish my work.	A	S	(N)
I cooperate with others.	A	(S)	N
I speak clearly and with confidence.	A	(S)	N
I make an effort.	A	(S)	N

Comment

Observation Form 3 (from the course book)

PUPIL'S NAME: _____

CLASS: _____

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING

UNIT 1: MY FAMILY

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the colours: *red, yellow, green, blue.*	✓	
Identifies and recognises the members of the family: *mum, dad, baby, family.*	✓	
Understands the following instructions: *stand up, sit down.*	✓	
Shows interest in learning English.	✓	
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.	✓	

UNIT 2: MY HOUSE

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the house and the following rooms: *house, living room, bedroom, bathroom.*		✓
Shows interest in learning English.	✓	
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.	✓	

UNIT 3: MY BODY

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the following parts of the body: *head, legs, arms, body.*	✓	
Shows interest in learning English.	✓	
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.	✓	

UNIT 4: FOOD

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the following food: *biscuit, apple, banana, milk.*		
Can count up to three: *one, two, three.*		
Recognises the symbols 1 to 3.		
Shows interest in learning English.		
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.		

UNIT 5: ANIMALS

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the following animals: *fish, butterfly, bird, rabbit.*		
Can count from one to four: *one, two, three, four.*		
Recognises the symbols from 1 to 4.		
Shows interest in learning English.		
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.		

UNIT 6: MY TOYS

	VERY GOOD!	PROGRESSING
Identifies and recognises the following toys: *drum, teddy bear, train, ball.*		
Identifies and recognises the sizes big and small: *big, small.*		
Shows interest in learning English.		
Participates actively in the proposed tasks.		

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Observation Form 4 (prepared by a participant)

CHILD OBSERVATION FORM

UNIT: 2

Name:

	YES	NO
He/she learnt vocabulary	x	
He/she completed the course book	x	
He/she took part in games, role plays, group works	x	
He/she was motivated	x	

Name:

	YES	NO
He/she learnt vocabulary		x
He/she completed the course book		x
He/she took part in games, role plays, group works	x	
He/she was motivated		x

Name:

	YES	NO
He/she learnt vocabulary	x	
He/she completed the course book	x	
He/she took part in games, role plays, group works	x	
He/she was motivated	x	

Name:

	YES	NO
He/she learnt vocabulary	x	
He/she completed the course book	x	
He/she took part in games, role plays, group works	x	
He/she was motivated	x	

Name:

	YES	NO
He/she learnt vocabulary	x	
He/she completed the course book	x	
He/she took part in games, role plays, group works	x	
He/she was motivated	x	

APPENDIX F. Consent Form

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu çalışma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Bölümü öğretim üyesi Yrd. Doç.Dr. Refika Olgan danışmanlığında, yüksek lisans öğrencisi İrem Bezcioğlu Göktolga tarafından yürütülen bir çalışmadır. Çalışmanın amacı, okul öncesi dönemi öğrencileriyle çalışan yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin etkinliklerini planlama, uygulama ve ölçme faaliyetlerinde karşılaştıkları problemler ile ilgili bilgi toplamaktır. Çalışmaya katılım tamimiyle gönüllülük temelindedir. Görüşmede, sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamimiyle gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir ve elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Görüşme, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek soruları içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumu görüşmeyi uygulayan kişiye bildirmeniz yeterlidir olacaktır. Görüşme öncesinde bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız detaylı olarak cevaplanacaktır.

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek isterseniz Okul Öncesi Bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencisi İrem Bezcioğlu Göktolga (0 505 807 48 88, irembezcioglu@gmail.com) ve/veya öğretim üyesi Yard.Doç. Dr. Refika OLGAN (Tel: 0 312 210 3671, rolgan@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad   Tarih   İmza

                               ----/----/-----

APPENDIX G. Permission from Middle East Technical University Research Centre for Applied Ethics

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816/109 285

26 Mart 2013

Gönderilen: Yrd.Doç.Dr.Refika Olgan
İlköğretim Bölümü

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen
IAK Başkanı

İlgi : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Bölümü Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi İrem Bezcioğlu Göktolga'nın "Okul Öncesi Dönemi Öğrencileriyle Çalışan Yabancı Dil Öğretmenlerinin Etkinlikleri Planlama, Uygulama ve Ölçme Faaliyetlerinde Karşılaştıkları Problemler" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

26/03/2013

Prof.Dr. Canan ÖZGEN
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
(UEAM) Başkanı
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

APPENDIX H.   Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ■

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Bezcioğlu Göktolga
Adı   : İrem
Bölümü : Okul Öncesi Eğitimi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Self-Reports of Preschool Foreign Language
Teachers on Early Childhood Foreign Language Teaching and Related Challenges

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ■   Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ■

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: