THE INFLUENCES OF INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES IN INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAMS ON NOVICE TEACHER COGNITION: HELP OR HINDRANCE?

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THE INFLUENCES OF INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES IN INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAMS ON NOVICE TEACHER COGNITION: HELP OR HINDRANCE?

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Defined as “what teachers know, believe and think” (Borg, 2003, p. 81), teacher cognition has been a major research area in the field of language teaching in recent years. Previous research has revealed that teachers’ beliefs play an influential role in their instructional practices, suggesting significant implications for teacher education and development. Exploring L2 novice teachers’ cognition is yet a relatively neglected domain of inquiry (Borg, 2010; Farrell, 2008). In an attempt to address this gap in teacher cognition literature, this study investigated how novice English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers make sense of their teaching at a professional school culture with standards of conduct. The purpose is to explore the influences of the instructional policies implemented at an intensive English program on novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices and the factors interrelating with the policies in the shaping of them. The study also investigated novice teachers’ practice-based responses to the policies in language classrooms. Two Turkish novice EFL teachers took part in this study. Data was collected during a 15-week semester by means of semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews and think-aloud protocols. Findings revealed that the novice teachers had confusions about the
instructional policies they were expected to pursue in their teaching context. In addition, they experienced tensions between their beliefs and practices, which prevented them from teaching in line with their beliefs. The study also revealed that certain contextual factors (i.e., exam pressure, student profile and syllabus) and personal factors (i.e., background education and in-service teacher training course) were influential in the shaping of the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs. Finally, the study found that the novice teachers responded to the instructional policies in class in different ways mostly compromising their own beliefs. The teachers’ practiced-based responses to the instructional policies coupled with the influences of these policies on their teaching beliefs and practices (e.g., confusion, tension) indicated that the policies, as the teachers interpreted them, were a hindrance for them rather than help.

Keywords: teacher cognition, instructional policies, teaching practices, novice teacher experiences, intensive English programs
ÖZ

YOĞUNLAŞTIRILmiş İNGİLİZCE PROGRAMLARINDA UYGULANAN EĞİTİM POLITIKALARININ MESLEĞE YENİ BAŞLAYAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN BİLİŞSELLİĞİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: YARDIM MI YOKSA ENGEL Mİ?

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sağlayan görüşmeler ve sesli düşünme yöntemi ile elde edilmiştir. Sonuçlar mesleğe yeni başlayıp öğretmenlerin uygulamakla yükümlü olduklarını politikalar hakkında kafa karışıklığı yaşadıklarını göstermiştir. Ayrıca söz konusu öğretmenlerin inançları doğrultusunda öğretim yapamadıkları belirlenmiştir. Çalışma belirli çevresel faktörler (sınav baskı, öğrenci profili ve münfzedat) ile kişisel faktörlerin (eğitim geçmişi ve hizmet içi eğitim programının) öğretmenlerin inanç ve uygulama gelişimine yön verdiğini saptamıştır. Çalışma belirli çevresel faktörler (sınav baskı, öğrenci profili ve münfzedat) ile kişisel faktörlerin (eğitim geçmişi ve hizmet içi eğitim programının) öğretmenlerin inanç ve uygulama gelişimine yön verdiğini saptamıştır. Son olarak mesleğe yeni başlayıp öğretmenlerin uygulamakla yükümlü olduklarını eğitim politikalarının sınıf içerisinde farklı yansıtımları olduğu ve çoğunlukla söz konusu öğretmenlerin inançlarından feragat ettikleri gözlemlemiştir. Öğretmenlerin sınıf içerisinde uygulamaları ve eğitim politikalarının inanç ve uygulamaları üzerindeki etkileri göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu çalışmaya katılan iki öğretmenin yorumlarına dayanarak, bir yoğunlaştırılmış İngilizce programında uygulanmakta olan eğitim politikalarının mesleğe yeni başlayıp öğretmenlerin bilişselliği üzerinde engel teşkil ettiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğretmen bilişselliği, eğitim politikaları, eğitim-öğretim uygulamaları, mesleğe yeni başlayıp öğretmen deneyimleri, yoğunlaştırılmış İngilizce programları
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LIST OF SYMBOLS/ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used while reporting the results:

NT: Novice Teacher

PI: Pre-observation Interview

POI: Post-observation Interview

FI: Final reflective Interview

WF: Written feedback

R: Reading

GHO: Grammar Hand-out

LL: Language Leader

...: indicates omitted material from the interview extracts

[ ]: indicates additions or explanations inserted in an extract by the researcher
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Presentation

This introductory chapter provides a brief overview of the background to the study, the context and the aims of the study, followed by the research questions, the significance of the study and the definitions of terms.

1.1. Background to the Study

The work of teachers has been repositioned in educational research with the growing interest in exploring teachers’ mental lives over the past 30 years (Borg, 2006). Until the mid-1970s, driven by the process-product paradigm, general educational research was concentrated on the causal link between teachers’ behaviors and student learning. Teachers were then seen as people who mastered and readily applied a set of general principles and theories developed by experts (Freeman, 2002). However, with the advent of constructivism and cognitive psychology in the mid-70s, a new body of research that viewed teachers as the cornerstone of the teaching process emerged (Fang, 1996). The new paradigm recognized teachers as active decision-makers who could construct their own workable theories by taking many different factors into consideration before, during and after teaching (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). This made understanding of these cognitive processes crucial and paved the way for research on teacher cognition, defined as “what teachers know, believe and think” (Borg, 2003, p. 81).
Research on second language (L2) teacher cognition aims to deepen our understanding of the complexity of the teaching process by exploring the beliefs teachers hold as to all aspects of their work as well as by uncovering the factors that influence those beliefs. The studies also examine the relationship between teachers’ belief systems and their pedagogical practices. More specifically, these studies are interested in teachers’ thought processes, the motives behind their thoughts and the interaction between their thinking and teaching to inform teachers, teacher educators, policy makers and other stakeholders of the very nature of learning and teaching.

Exploring L2 novice teachers’ cognition is a relatively neglected domain of inquiry (Farrell, 2008; Richards & Pennington, 1998). The existing literature suggests that these teachers’ first year experiences are mediated by their previous schooling experiences, the nature of the pre-service teacher education programs from which they have graduated and their experiences of socialization into the general educational as well as the institutional culture (Farrell, 2009). Although “their knowledge and skills are necessarily limited by their recent entry into the classroom and their developing understanding of teaching and learning”, novice teachers are expected to share the same responsibilities as veteran teachers (Shoffner, 2011, p. 417). As such, these teachers encounter various challenges in their first years of teaching (Farrell, 2012; Urmston & Pennington, 2008). In fact, first-year teachers’ experiences are often described using such terms as frustrations, complexities and tensions (e.g., Farrell, 2003; Richards & Pennington, 1998). The problems that these teachers face are generally related to classroom management, lesson planning and delivery and lack of professional support as well as adapting to the contextual realities of their teaching environment (Farrell, 2003, 2006, 2012). The existing literature also indicates that novice teachers are not adequately prepared for dealing with these problems. Although novice teachers’ problems are well-documented in literature, there seems to be a paucity of research focusing specifically on how these teachers’ beliefs and practices are mediated by the instructional policies implemented in their teaching contexts.
1.2. The Context

The present study was carried out at Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus (METU NCC). The university is attached to its main campus, METU Ankara, in Turkey in all academic and administrative affairs. Therefore, this section provides an overview of the English language teaching in Turkish higher education context to form the background to the research setting.

The spread of English in Turkish higher education as a foreign language can be traced back to the 1950s, when the impact of American economic and military power was strongly felt both in the world and in Turkey (Dogancay-Aktuna, 1998). With the establishment of METU in 1956, Turkey adopted English-medium instruction in the higher education context to gain better access to scientific and technological information (Kırkgöz, 2009). Moreover, the university started to offer an intensive language program called *English Preparatory Language Division* as of 1961 to those students who lacked the required level of proficiency in English (for more information, please refer to the university website: [http://ydyom.metu.edu.tr/en/foundation-years](http://ydyom.metu.edu.tr/en/foundation-years)).

The education provided by METU has greatly influenced the foreign language policy in Turkey. As a result of the increasing demand for receiving an English-medium education, The Higher Education Act issued in 1984 by Council of Higher Education (CHE) acknowledged the instrumental value of English as a medium of teaching and learning in achieving scientific and technological competitiveness. Thus, universities were left to adopt Turkish or English as the principal medium of instruction. If they were to choose Turkish, they were required to incorporate English as a compulsory component of the program. Those universities that opted for English-medium instruction, on the other hand, were required to open *foreign language centers* for those students who were not proficient enough to pursue their academic studies in English-medium courses (CHE, 1984).
The aforementioned higher education policies were followed by a great increase in the number of universities and departments offering English-medium instruction in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2009). Today, nearly all private and most state universities offer English through preparatory schools, which are the only English intensive programs available in the Turkish education system (Coşkun, 2013). The programs administer a proficiency exam at the beginning of an academic year in order to determine those students whose level of English is inadequate to start their academic studies (CHE, 2008). Toker (1999) lists the main objectives of these programs as follows:

- To teach the students how to read and understand so that they can easily follow their courses;
- To learn the necessary writing skills so that they will be able to take notes during their courses;
- To be able to listen and speak in order to follow their lectures;
- To be able to ask questions to their lecturers when they start their education in their departments. (p. 1)

The programs last for two semesters and they have to offer at least 20 hours of instruction a week. At the end of the academic year, each preparatory school administers a proficiency exam and students who are successful on this exam become qualified to pursue their undergraduate studies (CHE, 2008).

The context of the present study, METU NCC, was established in response to an invitation extended to METU in the year 2000 by the Governments of Republic of Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. It aims to incorporate the academic standards of METU within the setting of Northern Cyprus. The research setting, METU NCC, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, section 2.

1.3. Aims of the Study

The present study aims to investigate novice teacher cognition about instructional policies at a university setting. More specifically, the study explores how novice English as foreign language (EFL) teachers interpret instructional policies implemented in an intensive English program and how these policies affect their beliefs.
and teaching practices. The study also investigates the factors interrelating with the instructional policies in the shaping of novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices as well as these teachers’ responses to the instructional policies in language classrooms.

For the purposes of the research, the term *instructional policy* is operationalized as a set of teaching principles and norms followed at an educational institution that regulate the content, execution and process of English language teaching. Intensive English programs are among those institutions that provide teachers with structured guidelines regarding the manner and content of the instruction. However, as a review of the literature on novice teacher cognition suggests, these programs are relatively unexplored in research. Given that contextual factors are among the key influences that shape novice teachers’ beliefs and teaching practices (Flores & Day, 2006), elaborating on these factors, the present study seeks to give voice to the perspectives of individual first-year teachers as to whether they perceive the instructional policies they are expected to adopt in an intensive English program as help or a hindrance. In other words, the aim of the present study is not to have novice teachers evaluate the instructional policies in their workplaces but to explore how their beliefs and practices are influenced by these policies and what factors shape and/or reshape these beliefs and practices as well as how novice teachers respond to these policies in class. As such, that novice teachers cannot put their beliefs into practice is regarded as a hindrance whereas that they benefit from certain instructional policies as they learn to teach is considered help.

1.4. Research Questions

This exploratory study is guided by the following research questions:

1- How do institution-specific instructional policies influence Turkish novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices?

2- What are the underlying factors that interact with instructional policies in the shaping of Turkish novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices?

3- How do Turkish novice EFL teachers respond to institution-specific instructional policies in language classrooms?
1.5. Significance of the Study

The initial years of teaching are crucial in teachers’ career. During this period, teachers try to meet the demands of their workplaces while seeking ways to put their previously held beliefs about learning and teaching into practice. As Doyle (1977) articulates, they are involved in “learning the texture of the classroom and the sets of behaviors congruent with the environmental demands of that setting” (p. 31). As such, first-year teachers’ experiences have considerable implications for their future development and instructional practices as well as their professional identity. However, while the first year of teaching has been well-documented in mainstream education research, not many studies have been carried out in the field of L2 teaching (Farrell, 2008; Richards & Pennington, 1998). Borg (2010) maintains that “experientially we know a lot because we all work with these people [novice language teachers] but empirically in terms of research not much has been published” (p. 88). Therefore, exploring first year L2 teachers’ experiences, the present study attempts to contribute to the existing literature on novice teacher cognition. The context of the study also adds to its significance. Of the studies that have featured novice language teachers, most have been carried out in secondary school settings (e.g., Farrell, 2003; Hayes, 2008; Richards & Pennington, 1998; Urmston & Pennington, 2008). Very few studies have been conducted in the higher education context (e.g., Erkmen, 2010). As regards their investigated constructs, majority of these studies address the challenges novice teachers face in their initial years of teaching. Although nationwide policies and their implications for L2 teachers’ beliefs and practices have been widely explored in literature (e.g., Carless, 2003; Kirkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009), to the researcher’s knowledge, very few, if any, have yet been conducted on non-native novice EFL teachers’ cognition about instructional policies at an institutional level. This study thus aims to fill these gaps in the literature by looking into the first-year teachers’ beliefs about and practices of the instructional policies followed in an intensive English program.
The findings of this study can inform material developers, syllabus designers, educational leaders and teacher trainers about whether novice L2 teachers perceive instructional policies in an established university culture as help or hindrance. As such, the study aims to attract attention to the professional needs of these teachers in their initial years of teaching. In this way, the aforementioned bodies can provide first-year teachers with the necessary assistance and guidance so that these teachers can better negotiate the school culture and adapt to their teaching environment. In addition, the study aims to highlight the importance of novice teacher reflection to help them develop into more effective teachers. Thus, the findings also have implications for pre-service and in-service teacher training programs.

1.6. Definitions of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms according to how they are used for the purposes of this study are listed below:

- **Teacher cognition:** The term refers to “the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching—what teachers know, believe, and think” (Borg 2003, p. 81).
- **Teachers’ beliefs:** The term refers to a complex, interrelated system of teachers’ values, theories and principles consisting of both cognitive and affective structures that they consider to be true and that guide their thoughts as well as behaviors. No distinction is made between beliefs and knowledge in this study.
- **Pre-service teachers:** The term refers to student teachers who are attending an initial teacher education program or doing practice teaching as part of an undergraduate degree.
- **Novice teachers:** The term refers to teachers who have entered an established teaching context for the first time and who have less than two years of teaching.
- **Teacher education and training:** Teacher education and training refer to professional preparation of teachers through pre-service and in-service training respectively.
- **Teacher practices:** Teacher practices are the instructional activities done and behaviors displayed by the teacher while teaching the subject matter.
• **Instructional policies**: Instructional policies are the principles and norms followed at an educational institution that regulate the content, execution and process of English language teaching.

• **Intensive English Program**: Intensive English programs are foreign language centers for those students who are not proficient enough to pursue their academic studies in English-medium courses at a university setting. They are also referred to as *preparatory schools* throughout the study.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

The present study explores the role of the instructional policies in an established university culture in shaping novice teachers’ beliefs and their teaching practices. To do this, it focuses on the participant teachers’ beliefs about and classroom practices of the syllabus principles and their use of the materials to apply those principles. The study thus brings together two main areas: teacher cognition and novice teacher experiences. The review of the literature here aims to discuss these primary inquiry areas drawing on previously published work from mainstream education as well as from the field of L2 education.

2.1. Teacher Cognition

Teacher cognition is defined as “the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching—what teachers know, believe, and think” (Borg 2003, p. 81). The definition suggests that the term embraces many mental constructs such as beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, assumptions, perspectives and theories. Teacher cognition research aims to uncover these mental foundations and explore their relationship with teachers’ professional behaviors as well as practices.

The study of teacher cognition has been a primary research focus in the field of teaching and teacher education over the last three decades (Borg, 2006). The growing interest in teachers’ “mental lives” (Walberg, 1977, cited in Freeman, 2002) stretches
back to the mid-1970s, which saw a drastic change in how teaching and learning were conceived in research literature. Before then, it was believed that there was a causal link between teacher behavior and student success. Teachers were seen as “empty vessels” to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical principles that would yield effective teaching behaviors (Freeman & Johnson, 1988, p. 401). Therefore, driven by the process-product paradigm, research in general education until the mid-1970s mainly focused on how certain ways of teaching led to student learning (Freeman, 2002). This view of teaching and learning, however, started to be questioned towards the end of the 1970s with the new body of research drawing on cognitive basis of teaching (Fang, 1996; Shavelson & Stern, 1981). The new approach acknowledged teachers as active agents, who constructed and developed personal theories of teaching and made sound decisions about what to do in classrooms. As such, it became evident that teachers themselves, not solely their behaviors, were central to teaching. This paved the way for what is known as teacher cognition research that aimed to “explore the actual thought processes that teachers engaged in as they planned and carried out their lessons” (Freeman & Johnson, 1988, p. 400). The following section aims to elaborate on teachers’ beliefs, a sub-domain of teacher cognition, which is frequently referred to throughout this research.

2.2. Teachers’ Beliefs

Exploring teachers’ beliefs is a desire to discover what teachers actually know and how that knowledge comes into being as well as understand how the knowledge interacts with teachers’ instructional practices (see Borg, 2003). However, studies focusing on teachers’ belief systems face some problems regarding the very concept of belief. These problems involve the lack of a clear definition of the concept of belief, confusion over terminology and difficulty in distinguishing belief and knowledge (Borg, 2003; Pajares, 1992).

The term belief has been defined in many ways in literature. Rokeach (1968) defines belief as “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase ‘I believe that...’” (p. 113). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) refer to belief as the “information a person has about an object” and add “a belief links the object to some attribute.” This object can “be a
person, a group of people, an institution, a behavior, a policy, an event, etc., and the associated attribute may be any object, trait, property, quality, characteristic, outcome, or event” (p.12). Abelson (1979), on the other hand, defines belief as knowledge manipulated by people for a particular purpose or under a necessary circumstance. Even these definitions suggest that there is no general consensus on what belief denotes and that “defining belief is at best a game of player’s choice” (Pajares, 1992, p. 309).

In addition to the problem of definitional ambiguity, terminological abundance as to the concept of belief also causes confusion in research literature. Pajares (1992) labels beliefs a “messy construct” since different terms have been posited to describe beliefs. These include:

- attitudes, values, judgements, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertories of understanding, and social strategy (Pajares, 1992, p. 309).

This proliferation of terms, as Clandinin and Connelly (1987) point out, might be the result of defining identical terms in various ways as well as using different terms to describe similar concepts.

The last confusion is related to whether there is distinction between beliefs and knowledge. For some researchers, there are certain features that distinguish knowledge from beliefs. For example, Nespor (1987) maintains that beliefs rely on affective and evaluative components while knowledge is based on facts. Hence, knowledge is open to critical examination and can change according to well-established arguments. Beliefs, on the other hand, are less dynamic than knowledge. Since they include personal experience, they do not welcome outside evaluation, which makes them resistant to change. Having explained these differences, Nespor (1987) concludes that beliefs have stronger influence than knowledge in shaping how individuals define their problems and tasks as well as how they behave.

There are also researchers who claim that belief and knowledge are inseparable. Smith and Siegel (2004) explain this bidirectional relationship, stating that “belief is a
necessary condition of knowledge, i.e., that a knowing subject can know something only if she believes it” (emphasis original) (p. 556). Similarly, Pajares (1992) problematizes the clear-cut separation between knowledge and beliefs and asks “What truth, what knowledge, can exist in the absence of judgment or evaluation?” (p. 310). This view seems to be corroborated by empirical research on teacher cognition. For example, in reporting their research results, Grossman, Wilson and Shulman (1989) describe the distinction between beliefs and knowledge as “blurry at best” (p. 31). Similarly, Woods (1996) reports that “it was difficult in the data to distinguish between teachers referring to beliefs and knowledge as they discussed their decisions in the interviews” (p. 195). The reason, as Verloop, van Driel and Meijer (2001) suggest, lies in the fact that “in the mind of the teacher, components of knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuitions are inextricably intertwined” (p. 446).

As the brief review of the literature above makes clear, the concept of belief has been interpreted in myriad ways by different schools of thought. However, thanks to the extensive body of research on teachers’ mental lives, it is possible to identify certain characteristics of beliefs that are commonly agreed upon. The following section aims to describe these characteristics referring to both general and L2 literature.

2.3. Characteristics of Teachers’ Beliefs

Beliefs are evaluative. They are accepted as true by individuals, and thus, are “imbued with emotive commitment”. Due to the affective nature of beliefs, individuals acknowledge that there might be alternative beliefs held by others around the same issue (M. Borg, 2001, p.186).

Beliefs are also considered to have an important role in shaping teachers’ instructional practices (e.g., Borg, 1998; Johnson, 1992b; Gaitas & Martins, 2014). In describing this relationship, Pajares (1992) articulates “beliefs are instrumental in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding such tasks; hence, they play a critical role in defining behavior and organizing knowledge and information” (p. 325). Referring to beliefs as “personal principles”, J. C. Richards (1996) also lends support to this relationship, stating that
teachers’ personal principles “inform their approach to teaching” and “guide many of the teachers’ instructional decisions” (p. 281). Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliwer and Thwaite (2001) further add that it is teachers’ underlying beliefs about educational processes that “influence how the teacher orchestrates the interaction between learner, teacher, and subject matter in a particular classroom context with particular resources” (p. 473).

Beliefs and practices, however, may not necessarily correspond. In her comprehensive review of the research on the correspondence between beliefs and practices, Baştürkmen (2012) indicates that other issues can prevent teachers from putting their beliefs into practice. These include contextual factors (e.g., institutional, curricular and social) and teachers’ teaching experiences. Research exploring the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices seems supportive of this idea (e.g., Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Farrell & Lim, 2005; Lee, 2008). In regard to contextual factors (to be discussed in detail further on), Lee (2008), for example, reports that the writing teachers in her study felt the need to respond to student writing in line with the students and parents’ expectancy as well as the school policy even though what they did did not reflect what they believed should be the case. As for the teaching experience aspect, comparing a novice and an experienced teacher’s beliefs and practices, Farrell and Bennis (2013) indicate the experienced teacher’s teaching practices were more aligned with their beliefs than those of the novice teacher. The lack of correspondence on the part of the novice teacher, as they report, might be because he was unsure of his beliefs as they were still in the process of formation.

The incongruence between beliefs and practices might also be related to the fact that beliefs are multi-faceted. They exist in a system that includes both core and peripheral beliefs (Pajares, 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Core beliefs are more resistant to change and have stronger impact on behavior as they are in more communication with other beliefs (Rokeach 1968, as cited in Pajares, 1992). These two belief sub-systems may also contradict with each other (Breen et al., 2000; Phipps & Borg, 2009). For example, a teacher who does not believe in the value of gap-filling activities may see that his/her students like and expect such kind of work, and thus, may value these exercises and use them in the classroom. However, Phipps and Borg (2009) do not
regard this kind of mismatch something undesirable, stating that teachers’ deeper and more general beliefs about language learning such as addressing students’ expectations and engaging them in the learning processes may outweigh their peripheral beliefs.

In sum, research on teachers’ mental lives suggests that beliefs are neither uniform nor simple but dynamic and complex and that there is a bidirectional relationship between beliefs and practices. Based on the definitions as well as the characteristics of beliefs in the existing literature, the definition of teacher beliefs used for this study can be established as the following: beliefs represent a complex, interrelated system of teachers’ values, theories and principles consisting of both cognitive and affective structures that they consider to be true and that guide their thoughts as well as behaviors.

2.4. Sources of Teacher Beliefs

Research on teacher cognition suggests that there are three main sources that influence the formation of teachers’ beliefs. The first source of teachers’ beliefs is teachers’ prior language learning experiences or what Lortie (1975) calls “apprenticeship of observation” (p. 61). Apprenticeship of observation suggests that teachers learn about teaching by observing their own teachers. Their prolonged exposure to the work of teachers helps them develop ideas about what good and bad teaching involve. Therefore, by the time teachers start teacher preparation programs, they already have a set of beliefs about being a teacher based on their vast experiences as learners (Pajares, 1992).

The impact of schooling on student-teachers as well as in-service teachers’ beliefs is also evident in research literature (e.g., Farrell, 1999; M. Borg, 2005; Numrich, 1996; Pahissa & Tragant, 2009; Yigitoglu & Belcher; 2014). For example, Farrell (1999) utilized a reflective assignment in his study to make the pre-service teachers more aware of their own approach towards teaching grammar in Singaporean context. The results showed that the student-teachers made reservations about inductive approach to grammar teaching due to their past experiences as learners. They had been taught grammar through deductive approach and felt that it was effective in their own context.
Therefore, they were more inclined to teach grammar the way they learned it. Similarly, student-teachers in Numrich’s study (1996) emphasized the importance of creating a positive and comfortable atmosphere in their own classrooms similar to the ones in their language learning histories.

Teachers’ negative language learning experiences also affect their beliefs about teaching. Numrich (1996) indicates that the teachers in her study who were corrected by their language teachers while speaking preferred not to interrupt their students’ flow of talk so that the students would not feel intimidated to talk as they once felt. The teachers’ narratives in these two studies suggest that teachers’ personal experiences as learners are one source of the beliefs they hold about language learning and teaching.

Another source of teachers’ beliefs is formal teacher education. Although there are studies claiming that there is a tenuous relationship between teachers’ beliefs and formal teaching training (Assallahi; 2013; Kagan, 1992; Nishimuro & Borg, 2013), several other studies suggest that teacher education/training help both student-teachers and teachers build up their own theories of language learning and teaching (e.g., Borg, 1998; Borg, 2011; Cabaroğlu & Roberts, 2000; Kurihira & Samimy, 2007; Lamie, 2001; Mattheoudakis, 2007; Özmen, 2012; Sandan & Roberts, 1998). For example, in a study that investigated the nature of the personal pedagogical system of an experienced teacher about grammar teaching, Borg (1998) found out that the teacher’s beliefs and classroom practices were largely based on the communicative principles embedded in his initial training course. Studies on student-teachers, on the other hand, aimed to track the changes (if any) in these teachers’ pre-existing beliefs about teaching and learning over the course of teacher education programs (e.g., Cabaroğlu & Roberts, 2000; Debreli, 2012; Mattheoudakis, 2007; Özmen, 2012). Among these, Cabaroğlu and Roberts (2000) used a sequence of three in-depth interviews with 20 students enrolled at a secondary postgraduate program at a British university to test whether the beliefs the students hold on learning and teaching remain inflexible during the course. They found out that except for one participant, the student-teachers’ beliefs showed cumulative development, which suggests that these teachers’ beliefs can be flexible and that their pre-existing beliefs develop when they are in pre-service programs.
In the field of EFL teaching, Debreli (2012) investigated the changes in the beliefs of three senior-year pre-service teachers throughout a nine-month teacher education program in North Cyprus using interviews and a diary writing activity. The findings revealed that the beliefs of these teachers exhibited changes especially in the second semester of the program with practice teaching sessions. The teachers had a chance either to confirm their previously held beliefs or to modify them according to their experiences in real classrooms. Overall, most research on teacher cognition acknowledges the impact of teacher education on teachers’ beliefs. However, it is important to note that the degree of this impact varies across studies as well as among the participants in the same study (Borg, 2003).

The third important source of teachers’ beliefs is teachers’ own language teaching experiences. As Richard and Lockhart (1996) point out, teachers may discover that certain teaching strategies may or may not work well in their classrooms, and this, in turn, leads them to “develop a personal repertoire of tried and favoured practices” (Breen et al., 2001, p. 495). Several other researchers also support this view (e.g., B. Flores, 2001; Mok, 1994; Yang & Gao, 2013). For example, in a study that explored the nature of bilingual teachers’ beliefs about bilingual children’s cognition, B. Flores (2001) refers to professional teaching experiences as “the mediums through which the majority of bilingual teachers’ notions of teaching and learning are further reaffirmed and reconceptualized” (p. 289). Another study that illuminates the influence of teaching experiences on teachers’ beliefs is that of Yang and Gao (2013), who investigated four Chinese EFL teachers’ beliefs and practices in teaching writing as well as the sources for the development of their beliefs and practices. In their study, the researchers refer to a teacher who considered good thinking as a prerequisite for good writing. The source of this belief, as they point out, was his teaching experience at a university in the USA, where the process approach to teaching writing was commonly adopted. Guided by the same view, the teacher decided to lay more emphasis on “creative and critical thinking abilities” in his teaching writing to Chinese students (p. 140). Hence, the study suggests that teachers’ experiences of teaching and the observations they make in their classrooms can shape their beliefs and practices in teaching and this may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives.
Overall, the studies reviewed in this section show that teachers’ beliefs generally derive from their experiences as learners, teacher trainees and classroom practitioners. The sources may all have a share in the formation of teachers’ beliefs or one might outweigh the others. That is, as the existing literature on teacher cognition indicates, teachers are affected by these sources in different and unique ways and form highly personalized educational theories which are reflected in their classroom practices.

2.5. Beliefs and Classroom Practices

Teachers’ beliefs in relation to their classroom practices have attracted considerable attention in the field of L2 teacher cognition research. Despite the conceptual, definitional and terminological variability evident in this large body of work, Borg (2003) identifies four intertwined areas of interest as to the complex relationship between teachers’ beliefs and actions. These are teachers’ decision-making processes, teachers’ improvisational teaching, the impact of context on teacher cognition and the relationship between teacher cognition and experience.

The first area focuses on the reasons that language teachers cite to explain their instructional decisions. Several studies (e.g., Johnson, 1992a; Nunan, 1992) have shown that teachers have varying motives for their L2 instruction. For example, Johnson (1992a) investigated the instructional actions and decisions of six pre-service ESL teachers during their practicum. Her study revealed that these teachers’ instructional decisions were directed by unexpected student behaviors, and they were mainly concerned about student understanding, motivation and involvement as well as instructional management. Different from Johnson (1992a), Gatbonton (1999) carried out her study with seven experienced teachers and explored pedagogical thoughts these teachers had while teaching. The findings showed that the experienced teachers’ thoughts and decisions were extensively guided by language concerns such as providing or explaining vocabulary and creating opportunities for meaningful language use. On the other hand, in a study that examined the nature of the professional decisions made by nine ESL teachers with varying experience, Nunan (1992) found out that the teachers’ decisions related little to language concerns (especially on the part of inexperienced...
teachers) but mostly to classroom management and organization such as the pacing and timing of lessons and the quality of their explanations and instructions.

Another particular area of interest involves teachers’ reasons for deviating from their lesson plans. Research on teachers’ decision-making processes has shown that teachers might feel the need to modify their lesson plans when faced with unexpected situations. Drawing on her study of six experienced ESL teachers, Bailey (1996) reports that teachers depart from their lesson plans (i) to serve the common good, rather than catering for students with problems individually, (ii) to teach to the moment, focusing on what students want to know, (iii) to further the lesson, by providing variety, (iv) to accommodate students’ learning styles and meet their needs, (v) to promote students’ involvement, and (vi) to distribute the wealth, by providing students with equal opportunities to participate. Osam and Balbay (2004), on the other hand, aimed to describe the role of experience in decision-making processes. Their study sought to explore the differences between student-teachers and experienced teachers when making decisions on diverting from their lesson plans (regarded as a “mental vision of what the teacher broadly intends to do” p. 750). The study included four cooperating teachers and seven student-teachers who were doing their practicum at a secondary school in Turkey. The results showed that the student teachers made changes in their lesson plans due to timing and classroom management. As for the experienced teachers, discipline problems were the major motive for such a choice. Both groups of teachers, on the other hand, were concerned with motivation, students’ language skills and physical conditions when departing from their lesson plans.

In addition to eliciting teachers’ reasons for not doing what they have planned to do, teacher cognition research has also investigated the role of context in teachers’ instructional decisions. Various studies (e.g., Crookes & Arakaki, 1999; Farrell, 2006; Flores & Day, 2006; Lee, 2008; Richards & Pennington, 1998) have revealed that contextual factors have considerable impacts on teachers’ actions and these factors might, in fact, hinder teachers from implementing practices that reflect their beliefs. For example, while investigating the source(s) of teaching ideas of a group of ESL teachers in an intensive English program in the US, Crookes and Arakaki (1999) found out that
due to heavy workloads (approximately 50 hours per week), these teachers tended to rely on “a proven repertoire of teaching ideas” rather than being innovative (p. 17). Although the teachers had a strong will to increase their teaching quality, they ended up applying “less sophisticated but readily applicable ideas” as they did not have sufficient preparation time (p. 18). This shows that these teachers’ pedagogical choices were adversely affected by their working conditions.

Another contextual factor that governs teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices is examination-oriented teaching culture. In their yearlong study, Sato and Kleinsasser (2004) examined 19 EFL teachers’ beliefs, practices and interactions in a private Japanese high school. They aimed to reveal how these teachers perceived teaching and how they actually taught in their workplaces where communication-oriented English was promoted. Data gathered from the interviews showed that even though the teachers were in favour of teaching English as a means of communication, they acknowledged the influence of the grammar-based exam-oriented English on their practices and tended to adopt a more traditional approach to teaching. In another study, Lee (2008) investigated how Hong Kong secondary English teachers’ written feedback practices were influenced by the recommended principles in their educational contexts. The study included 26 English teachers from 15 different secondary schools. Data was collected from marked-up student papers and interviews with six teachers. The results showed that examination culture was one of the factors that deeply affected the teachers’ feedback beliefs and practices. Although the teachers acknowledged the importance of context and organization in writing, they put more emphasis on accuracy while giving feedback since papers with good grammatical accuracy were rated highly in public exams. Also, the teachers did not require students to produce multiple drafts as they were more concerned about providing them with ample opportunities to write different text types for public examinations. These two studies clearly show that the beliefs and practices of teachers are profoundly shaped by the dominant exam culture in their teaching contexts.

The need for conforming to school norms and policies is also a crucial contextual factor that plays a role in influencing teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices. The teachers in Lee’s study (2008) described above stated during the interviews that their
schools implemented certain feedback policies stipulated by the English panel such as detailed marking, the use of correction symbols and grading students’ papers. They also mentioned about an inspection policy that allowed the English panel chair to check student compositions and teachers’ written feedback once or twice a year as part of teacher appraisal. Given that the teachers were held responsible for pursuing the norms and policies in their workplaces, it is no surprise to see that they “felt disempowered to act against the system” even when they did not see any benefit of what they were doing (p. 79). Another reason why the teachers in this study complied with the panel policy was their fears of being labelled as incompetent language teachers by the administrators. Based on these findings, Lee (2008) concludes that the teachers in this study lacked “the autonomy to practice what they believed” due to the institutional policies and the appraisal system that created unequal power relations between the teachers and the stakeholders (i.e., administration) (p. 81). A study by Flores and Day (2006) also illuminates how school culture led novice teachers to comply rather than to create. The study explored the role of context in shaping and reshaping the professional identities of 14 novice teachers from different subjects in Portugal using semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire, teacher written reports and pupil feedback. The findings showed that the novice teachers were negatively affected by the strained atmosphere and implicit rules in their teaching environments. Due to the lack of support and guidance from school leaders and colleagues, these teachers adopted “strategic compliance” in their practices (p. 229). Namely, they tended to act in line with the existing norms and values of their teaching contexts even though these did not reflect their beliefs. Hence, the teachers were pushed toward more conservative ways of teaching and lost their idealism.

Teacher cognition studies that focused on educational policies and curriculum innovations introduced by the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in various EFL contexts (e.g., China and Turkey) have also cited context as the major factor influencing teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding learning and teaching a language. These studies explored teachers’ perceptions of educational innovations and the impact of their perceptions upon their instructional practices as to new curriculum implementation. The studies on such nationwide policies include various contexts such as Saudi Arabia (Assalahi, 2013), Vietnam (Cahn & Barnard, 2009), Hong Kong
(Carless, 2003), China (Chen, 2008), Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2008); Japan (Sakui, 2004) and Libya (Orafi & Borg, 2009). As far as their methodological orientations are concerned, all of the studies employed qualitative approach incorporating either interviews (Assalahi, 2013) or classroom observations along with interviews (Cahn & Barnard, 2009; Carless, 2003; Chen, 2008; Kırkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Sakui, 2004). The participants of these studies comprise teachers with varying teaching experiences (from three to 29 years) working at primary, secondary or high schools. The studies report wide gaps between the intended reforms and teachers’ classroom instructions. They suggest that top-down language teaching policies might not be the only source that inform teachers’ classroom practices and that the cognitive and contextual realities of teachers’ work need to be taken into consideration in order to foster educational innovation. The contextual factors these studies commonly cited as the major impediments to communicative curriculum reforms involve (i) the mismatch between curriculum innovations and assessment (i.e., non-communicative assessment), (ii) rigid curriculum schedules, (iii) time constraints due to heavy workloads, (iv) contrasts between pedagogical goals and social expectations (e.g., students’ culture of learning and parents’ expectations) and (v) lack of appropriate sources and guidance to enact the innovations. Owing to these external factors, as Sakui (2004) articulates, “a documented curriculum takes unique shapes and colours as each classroom teacher introduces it into their own school” (p. 161).

In addition to the contextual factors, the studies report that teacher-related factors such as teachers’ proficiency levels (Cahn & Barnard, 2009) and their lack of understanding and knowledge of the curriculum reforms (Assalahi, 2013; Carless, 2003; Chen, 2008; Kırkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009 and Sakui, 2004) also pose obstacles to curriculum innovations. Overall, these studies underline the need “to bridge the gap between the idealized world of innovation designers and the realistic world of teachers” (Cahn & Barnard, 2009, p. 30). As such, they call for educational policy makers and curriculum planners to consider the contextual realities of the local settings where educational reforms are to be put in place and expand teacher training opportunities to better prepare teachers for successful curriculum implementation.
The last particular area of interest in the research on teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices addresses the relationship between teacher cognition and experience. As Borg (2003) points out, just as teacher cognition shapes what teachers do, it is shaped by the experiences teachers accumulate as they teach. Studies comparing novice and experienced teachers seem supportive of this view (e.g., Nunan, 1992; Richards, Li & Tang, 1998). For example, the novice teachers’ focusing more on classroom management than language issues compared to the experienced teachers in Nunan’s study (1992) might be linked to the fact that the novice teachers lacked personal repertoire of tried practices to deal with managing class, and thus paid less attention to the subject matter. In another study, Richards et al., (1998) found out some striking differences between student-teachers and experienced teachers while planning the same reading lesson with a given task. The researchers argue that unlike the novice teachers, the experienced teachers in their study had such shared characteristics as having deeper understanding of the subject matter, being able to present the subject matter more appropriately drawing on students’ background knowledge and being able to integrate language learning with other curricular goals. More recent studies by Farrell and Bennis (2013) and Gatbonton (2008) seem to back the findings of the two studies described above. The studies revealed that while the experienced teachers considered their students’ needs and learning outcomes and made their instructional decisions accordingly, the novice teachers were more concerned about their relationships with students than pedagogical procedures while giving language instruction. As such, the general conclusion that can be drawn from these studies is that since experienced teachers have relatively more “experientially-derived knowledge” (Woods & Çakır, 2011, p. 383) than novice teachers, they are more likely to better respond to students’ needs and develop comprehensive understanding of curriculum compared to their novice counterparts.

Overall, research on teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices suggests that there is a “symbiotic relationship” (Foss & Kleinsasser 1996, p. 441) between what teachers believe and what they do in the classroom. Following Borg (2003), studies explaining this relationship were grouped according to four themes: teachers’ decision making processes and their reasons for deviating from their lesson plans as well as the influence
of context and experience on teacher cognition. The following section aims to elaborate on the experience factor focusing on first-year teachers’ beliefs, practices and experiences.

2.6. Novice Teachers

The term *novice teacher* has frequently been used in teacher cognition studies to refer to beginning teachers. However, as Farrell (2012) points out, there is no general consensus on the definition of a novice teacher in literature. A novice could be anyone who is teaching something for the first time or who has become a member of a new cultural context for the first time. Therefore, it is important for a research study to clearly define what is meant by a novice teacher. For the purposes of this study, a novice teacher was defined as a teacher who has entered an established teaching context for the first time and who has less than two years of teaching.

Literature on novice teachers suggests that the first year of teaching has a crucial role in the future careers of beginning teachers (e.g., Farrell, 2008; Lortie, 1975). This career phase is believed to have considerable implications for future development and instructional practices of these teachers as well as their career length. When novices enter their work environment, they encounter various challenges since they have two roles in their first years: “teaching effectively and learning to teach” (Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, & McLaughlin, 1989, p. 471). If these teachers are left alone to deal with their problems and carry out new responsibilities without any support from the school and colleagues, they may feel ineffective and even leave the profession in their initial years of teaching (Farrell, 2012; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). As such, exploring novice teachers’ experiences is significant since it might contribute to “better understanding of their needs, their expectations and their commitment, and help to provide them with meaningful opportunities for professional development” (Flores, 2001).

2.7. Novice Teachers’ Beliefs and Experiences

This section is limited to studies that focus on the first year of teaching in both ESL and EFL contexts due to the investigative construct of the present study. A perusal of the literature on first-year teachers reveals a number of focus areas. These involve
novice teacher socialization (Farrell, 2003; Hayes, 2008), factors influencing novice teachers’ beliefs and practices (Farrell, 2006; Urmston & Pennigton, 2008; Akbulut, 2007) and changes in these teachers’ beliefs and practices while they are learning to teach (Erkmen, 2010; Kang & Cheng, 2013). The existing studies were mostly conducted in secondary schools (Farrell, 2003, 2006; Hayes, 2008; Urmston & Pennington, 2008). Those by Kang and Cheng (2013) and Erkmen (2004), on the other hand, were carried out at a middle school and a university setting respectively. As far as their methodological orientations are concerned, the studies all adopted qualitative approach except for one (Akbulut, 2007) which employed a mixed method approach. The ultimate aim of these studies was to gain insights into novice English teachers’ beliefs, behaviors, experiences, challenges and conflicts in their first year of teaching.

One of the major areas of interest in the research on novice teachers is teacher socialization. The studies on novice teacher socialization aim to explore the influence of support these teachers receive (from the school and colleagues) on their development as teachers in their first year of teaching. Among these, Farrell (2003) and Hayes (2008) focused on secondary school teachers’ experiences as they socialize into the life of their schools in Singapore and Thailand respectively. Farrell (2003) collected data from interviews with the participant teacher and the school principal, classroom observations, post-observation conferences and diary entries regularly written by the beginning teacher along with his field notes and written-up log. On the other hand, Hayes (2008) conducted a series of unstructured in-depth interviews with four mid-career teachers reflecting upon their first year of teaching. The studies both revealed that the teachers were not provided with any guidance as to the formal structures of the schools as well as the curriculum they were expected to follow. In fact, the schools seemed to exhibit “a culture of individualism” (Farrell, 2003, p. 103) and “professional isolation” (Hayes, 2008, p. 67). There was lack of communication and collaboration between teachers, which led the novices to deal with their problems on their own (e.g., workload, discipline problems, marking, pressure from senior teachers, and lack of guidance about instructional materials).
The novice teachers in these studies, however, did not give up. They adopted different strategies to solve their problems. The teachers in Hayes’s study (2008) took personal responsibility and found their own informal mentors to familiarize with the professional culture and practices of their schools in their first year of teaching. Farrell (2003), on the other hand, reported several phases the beginning teacher in his study went through all alone in his first year of teaching. The teacher started teaching with early idealism, aiming to make a difference in his students’ lives. Then, he experienced a reality shock stemming from the workload, discipline problems and lack of support in his workplace. However, with his growing awareness of his teaching situation, he began to recognize the difficulties and their causes. This enabled him to enter the stage called “reaching a plateau” (Maynard & Furlong, 1995, cited in Farrell, 2003, p. 104), where he developed his own teaching routines and tried to become a part of the school culture. The teacher entered the last stage, “moving on” (ibid), as he became more concerned about the quality of his students’ learning.

Overall, these aforementioned studies suggest that teaching is more than “knowing what to do in the classroom”. It also involves “knowing how to operate in a school culture” (Hayes, 2008, p. 71). Therefore, it is only thanks to the collaboration between the school and the teacher that novice teachers can adjust to the realities of the job and develop successfully in their initial years of teaching.

The second group of studies reviewed in this section is on factors influencing novice teachers’ beliefs and practices. Among these, Farrell (2006) elaborated on his previous work on a novice teacher (i.e., Farrell, 2003) and illuminated how the teacher’s view of teaching clashed with that of the school he worked for. The study reported two major conflicts that the teacher faced in this respect. First of all, there was a mismatch between how the teacher wanted to teach and how he was expected to teach English. Although he wished to adopt a learner-centered approach, he realized that this strategy was not welcomed in his school, where conventional methods of teaching were highly favored. Another conflict the teacher experienced was related to the mismatch between what he wanted to teach and what the school required him to teach. He believed that the institutional materials to be covered in the syllabus prevented him from trying out new
teaching ideas in class. The teacher expressed his desire to supplement his lessons with additional materials from different sources, but he still felt constrained as he had to consider the relevance of these materials to the exams which were largely based upon the syllabus followed in the department. However, Farrell (2006) reports that the teacher in his study did not completely abandon his beliefs despite the clashes he experienced with the institution’s expectations. Rather, he tried to maintain a balance between his beliefs and the norms and demands of his workplace by considering his learners’ needs as well as the contextual realities.

Urmston and Pennigton (2008) and Akbulut (2007) were particularly interested in the role of teacher education programs in informing novice teachers’ beliefs and practices in Hong Kong and Turkey respectively. The teachers in both studies had earned their BA degree from teacher education programs which promoted CLT. Urmston and Pennigton (2008) adopted qualitative approach in their study incorporating interviews, classroom observations and follow-up interviews with three newly-qualified teachers. Akbulut (2007), on the other hand, collected data through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with 13 teachers who graduated from the same university. The studies both revealed that although the novice teachers had a strong desire to put what they gained in their teacher education program into practice, they could realize this only to a limited extent. The studies cited exam-oriented system of teaching and learning, students’ low proficiency levels and rigid syllabus as the major factors that prevented them from being innovative. The findings of these two studies suggest that novice teachers tend to adopt innovative approaches upon graduation. However, when faced with the constraints of the educational institutions, they are more likely to abandon their beliefs and practices about teaching and adopt those prevailing in their professional environment.

The last group of studies focuses on possible changes in novice teachers’ beliefs and practices in their first year of teaching. Kang and Cheng (2013) investigated a first-year EFL teacher’s cognition development focusing on factors (if any) that led to changes in her practices while she was learning to teach in China. Data was gathered from interviews and classroom observations as well as informal talks and email
messages. The analysis of the findings revealed that the teacher changed her practices considerably over the course of the study. The researchers identified three major factors that contributed to these changes: the teachers’ learning and teaching experiences, her reflection on practice and the teaching context. They reported that the teacher greatly benefitted from the teaching and research activities provided by her school and district educational administration regarding the new curriculum reform in China. In addition, she gained more awareness of the culture of the teaching in her school thanks to the informal chats with her colleagues. The interviews conducted with the teacher also helped her reflect upon her practices and prompted changes in her practices. As regards the context, the school culture and parents’ expectations seemed to have exerted a powerful influence on the teacher’s decision-making. An interesting finding regarding the school culture was that when the shared practices in the school were in line with the teacher’s experiences as a learner, the teacher tended to employ what she experienced rather than what she studied in her classroom.

The study highlighted that the factors that led to the changes in the teacher’s practices were closely related to her thinking. They enabled her to confirm her existing beliefs, elaborate on them or form new ones. Hence, the study cited in-service teacher development opportunities and supportive working environment as well as teachers’ active role in their own professional development as the key elements in successful novice teacher growth.

Finally, Erkmen (2010) sought to explore beliefs about teaching and learning of nine non-native EFL novice teachers and any development/change in these teachers’ beliefs throughout their first year of teaching at a private university in Northern Cyprus. Data was gathered from multiple sources including semi-structured interviews, credos, classroom observations, post-lesson reflection forms, stimulated-recall interviews, diaries and a metaphor-elicitation task. The findings showed that the novice teachers’ prior learning experiences had a significant impact on their initial beliefs and these beliefs changed only to a limited extent over the course of a year. The factors that led to the small changes involved student behavior and expectations, teaching experience, and the teacher training course the participants were attending at the time of the study. In
addition, the study indicated that beliefs the novice teachers held were not always reflected in their classroom practices. The teachers felt constrained due to the syllabus, students’ expectations and the proficiency exam which was going to be held at the end of the academic year. The changes in their practices, on the other hand, did not necessarily lead to changes in their beliefs. That is, the teachers changed some of their teaching practices not because they had stopped believing in the effectiveness of their beliefs but because they had developed an awareness of the applicability of their beliefs and changed their teaching technique accordingly. Erkmen (2010) concluded that although the first year of teaching had a significant role in shaping novice teachers’ beliefs and practices, these teachers’ beliefs were still inclined to change at the end of the year since they were in the process of learning to teach. Hence, the study highlighted the importance of raising teacher awareness as to the bidirectional relationship between their beliefs and teaching practices.

2.8. Summary of the Literature Review

The review of the literature on teacher cognition and novice teacher experiences provided in this chapter has led to a number of general conclusions. Research has shown that the beliefs teachers hold are influential in how they approach teaching and learning and what they do in the classroom. These beliefs derive from teachers’ experiences as learners, teacher trainees and classroom practitioners. Teachers’ beliefs, on the other hand, may not always converge with their practices since other issues (e.g., experience) might influence their decision-making and prevent them from putting what they believe into practice.

Research on novice teacher cognition has revealed that these teachers face difficulties in relation to classroom management (i.e., discipline problems), foreign language learning and teaching (e.g., appropriate methodology; use of teaching materials), professional support (i.e., lack of administrative, collegial and mentor support) and contextual realities of their teaching environment (e.g., exam-oriented education, a set syllabus) in their initial years of teaching. Owing to these problems, novice teachers might abandon the practices they believe to be right and adopt the established routines and practices in their workplaces. The changes in their practices,
however, do not necessarily lead to changes in their beliefs and vice versa. As such, it can be argued that novice teachers’ beliefs are still in the process of formation at the end of their first year of teaching and that teacher education programs fail to equip novice teachers with the necessary skills for smooth transition to life in real classrooms.

The work on first-year teachers’ experiences reviewed in this chapter has also revealed gaps in the research literature. Table 2.1 below presents an overview of the focus and context of these studies as well as the methods they employed.

**Table 2.1 Summary of research literature on first-year language teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Data Collection Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richards and Pennington (1998)</td>
<td>5 novice ESL teachers’ experiences (BA, TESL graduates)</td>
<td>secondary schools in Hong Kong</td>
<td>belief-system questionnaire, reflection forms, observations, monthly meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrell (2003)</td>
<td>1 novice ESL teacher’s socialization/development (PGDE graduate)</td>
<td>a secondary school in Singapore</td>
<td>interviews, observations, post-observation conferences, journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrell (2006)</td>
<td>1 novice ESL teacher’s transition from a teacher education program to real classroom (PGDE graduate)</td>
<td>a secondary school in Singapore</td>
<td>interviews, observations, post-observation conferences, journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akbulut (2007)</td>
<td>13 novice EFL teachers’ beliefs (BA, ELT graduates)</td>
<td>teaching context not given, in Turkey</td>
<td>a questionnaire, interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes (2008)</td>
<td>4 novice EFL mid-career teachers reflecting on their first year of teaching: occupational socialization</td>
<td>secondary schools in Thailand</td>
<td>unstructured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>Data Collection Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urmston and Pennington (2008)</td>
<td>3 novice ESL teachers’ beliefs and practices (BA, TESL graduates)</td>
<td>secondary schools in Hong Kong</td>
<td>interviews, observations, post-observation interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erkmen (2010)</td>
<td>9 novice EFL teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning (BA, ELT graduates)</td>
<td>a preparatory school at a private university in North Cyprus</td>
<td>interviews, credos, observations, post-lesson reflection forms, stimulated-recall interviews, diaries and a metaphor-elicitation task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kang and Cheng (2013)</td>
<td>1 novice EFL teacher’s cognition development (BA, ELT)</td>
<td>a middle school in China</td>
<td>interviews and observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the information gleaning from this review of literature suggests, studies on first-year teachers are mostly case studies with multiple data sources. The studies have looked at these teachers’ socialization into schools and factors influencing their beliefs and classroom practices as well as possible changes in their belief systems and teaching practices. They all have acknowledged the profound impact of context on the beliefs and practices of first-year teachers. However, scant attention has been paid to the influences of instructional policies implemented in first-year teachers’ working environment on their beliefs and teaching practices. In addition, the overwhelming majority of novice teacher cognition studies are of secondary school teachers, which suggests that further research is needed in other educational contexts. In order to address these gaps in literature, the present study attempts to dig deeper into the contextual factors by taking an in-depth look into novice teachers’ beliefs about the instructional policies at an established university setting. More specifically, the study will discuss whether the participants consider the policies and established practices followed at a preparatory school of an English-medium university as help or a hindrance.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the methodology employed in the study. The chapter consists of six sections. The first section presents detailed information about the research design. The following section delineates the context of the study and explains the instructional policies followed in this particular context. The third section outlines the sample selection and introduces the focal participants. The fourth section discusses my role as a researcher during the data collection process. The fifth section describes the data collection methods along with the rationale behind their selection. The chapter ends with the steps and procedures followed for data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Qualitative Research Paradigm

To investigate novice teachers’ cognition about instructional policies in the context of an intensive English program, this study adopted a qualitative research design. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as inquiry “involving a interpretive naturalistic approach to the world”, which requires researchers to “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). This definition suggests that qualitative researchers “support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of
a situation” (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, qualitative inquiry usually focuses on a small number of individuals, groups or settings employing a variety of methods to provide different perspectives on the relevant issues (Richards, 2003).

Qualitative research has become a highly favored research method in the field of education in the past few decades. The growth of qualitative research lies in the fact that it enables researchers to get “a first-hand sense of what actually goes on in classrooms [and] schools” (Eisner, 2003, p. 54). The change in the way teachers are viewed in research literature has also contributed to the increase in the number of qualitative studies. Freeman (2002) informs us that the traditional way of seeing the teacher as a doer and as an implementer of other peoples’ thinking was left in the 1980s with the growing interest in investigating teachers’ mental lives. The shift from exploring teachers’ behaviors towards their thinking and experience has led to qualitative “learning-to-teach studies” (authors’ emphasis) focusing on “the cognitions, beliefs, and mental processes that underlie teachers’ classroom behaviors” (Kagan, 1992, p. 129).

The present study employed a qualitative research method for three intertwined reasons. First of all, adopting qualitative research was considered to be appropriate due to the investigated construct of the study. The aim of this study was to explore how novice teachers interpret instructional policies in an intensive English program and how these policies affect their cognition and teaching practices. This required an in-depth understanding of the participants’ views and experiences within their own contextual conditions. Therefore, with its particular emphasis on participant meaning and natural setting, qualitative research paradigm would enable the researcher to explore how the participants navigated their first year of teaching in a professional culture with standards of conduct. Secondly, the study adopted qualitative approach since it empowers individuals to share their stories and hear their voices (Creswell, 2007). Given that novice teachers have been relatively silent in the L2 teacher literature (Farrell 2008), by employing qualitative methods, this study aimed to present how these teachers interpret their own reality in their own words, and thus make their voice heard. Finally, a review of literature on teacher cognition suggested the use of qualitative approach. Teacher cognition research aims to “understand teachers’ professional actions, not what or how
they think in isolation of what they do” (Borg, 2003, p. 105). Hence, studies employing qualitative methods are more likely to obtain a fuller picture of teacher cognition rather than those relying only on self-report instruments (e.g., questionnaires) (Phipps & Borg, 2009). In sum, to be able to tap into the participant teachers’ cognition and gain an in-depth understanding of their classroom practices, the present study adopted qualitative research methodology.

3.1.2. Case Study Approach

Case study is one type of qualitative research which aims to provide a thick description of a bounded phenomenon, a case, such as a person, a program, a group or a specific policy (Merriam, 1998). There are many definitions of case study in literature. Among these, Creswell (2007) offers a generic definition of case study as “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description or case based themes ” (p. 73). The key characteristics of case studies can be summarized as “boundedness or singularity, in-depth study, multiple perspectives or triangulation, particularity, contextualization and interpretation” (Duff, 2008, p. 23).

Case study has proven to be an effective research design in addressing the complexities found in the field of education (Nath, 2005). Yin (2003) suggests that it is appropriate to employ case study methodology when (a) the study aims to answer “how” and “why” questions, (b) the researcher cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study, (c) the researcher wants to cover contextual conditions because s/he thinks they are relevant to the phenomenon under study, or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

The present study aimed to contribute to the existing literature on novice teacher cognition by investigating the role of instructional policies in informing these teachers’ beliefs about language teaching and their teaching practices in the context of an intensive English program. To achieve this, a case study design was adopted since the study required a comprehensive description of the context and intensive analyses of the
two cases under study to be able to delineate the particularity and complexity of the participants as well as the institution involved. The following section describes the context of the study in detail along with information about the instructional policies followed in this particular context.

3.2. The Context

METU NCC, a branch of a state university in Turkey, is a state university with a special law in Northern Cyprus (see http://ncc.metu.edu.tr for detailed information). It serves Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot students as well as students from the international community. The university offers internationally recognized degree programs in engineering and social sciences. It is made up of 15 undergraduate and three graduate programs. At METU NCC, the medium of instruction is English, so students need to demonstrate the required level of English language competence in order to pursue the degree program they are admitted in. They can prove their proficiency level in two ways. They can either sit an English proficiency exam (EPE) prepared and administered by the university and get a score of at least 60% or provide a document certifying their success in one of the following language exams: Paper based TOEFL score 537, Internet based TOEFL score 75 and IELTS (academic version) grade 6. Those who fail to fulfill one of these requirements have to complete a one-year preparatory program at School of Foreign Languages (SFL).

SFL aims to equip students with the necessary language skills and prepare them for their English-medium academic studies. The program includes the teaching of grammar and vocabulary as well as four macro-skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking). Before the start of an academic year, students, mostly aged between 18 and 21, are grouped according to their performance in the Placement exam. They are usually grouped in beginner, elementary and intermediate classes in the fall semester. As the continuation of these levels, they are placed in pre-intermediate (PIN), intermediate (INT) and upper-intermediate (UINT) groups in the spring semester depending on their fall year performance. Those in the PIN level are required to attend an extended program after the spring semester ends to better prepare for the EPE. While beginner and PIN level students receive 30 hours of instruction, those in elementary, INT and UINT levels
receive 20 hours of instruction per week. The assessment process for each level consists of quizzes, announced quizzes, portfolio assignments, speaking assessments and midterms. The average taken from these determines whether a student is eligible to take the EPE. That is, the students who have achieved a yearly total of at least 64.50 out of 100 (74.50 for PIN level) are allowed to take the EPE in June.

The PIN level students who cannot obtain the required yearly total score continue their studies during the extended spring semester period and they are supposed to keep their yearly achievement grade 50 or above to be able to take the July EPE at the end of the semester. On the other hand, INT (and UINT if any) level students who are unable to qualify to take the June EPE, or who have taken but failed this exam may attend the Summer School. These students take the EPE administered in July together with the PIN level students. For those who are not successful on the previous EPEs, the last EPE is administered in September, and students can take this exam irrespective of their proficiency levels. If the students cannot get a minimum grade of 60 on this EPE, they have a right to repeat the foundation year. Those who fail at the end of their second year are dismissed from the university, but they are entitled to take the September EPEs.

SFL employs teachers on full-time basis. All the prospective teachers take the METU NCC SFL Instructor Recruitment Exam, and those who are successful in the written exam are called for an interview and demo lesson. Once appointed, teachers are expected to teach up to 20 hours a week and carry out some other job-related duties such as counseling in the Self-Access Center, substitution, materials development and taking part in teacher development activities. They may also be expected to perform administrative duties. The newly recruits might be experienced teachers as well as teachers with little or no experience in teaching. The teachers might be asked to teach any level; however, novice teachers are usually assigned to teach beginner level in their first year at SFL.

SFL staff mainly consists of non-native speakers of English. Most of them are graduates of English Language Teaching (ELT) departments or other departments also dealing with English such as the Department of Linguistics, the Department of Translation and Interpretation, the Department of English Language and Literature and
the Department of American Culture and Literature. All teachers teach 20 hours per week; however, level coordinators might have fewer class hours depending on the number of classes.

SFL encourages teachers to develop professionally. At the beginning of each academic year, it offers an Induction Program for the newly recruited teachers, which aims to support them in their adjustment to METU NCC and familiarize them with the rules and regulations as well as materials used in SFL. In addition, SFL provides an in-service teacher training programme for all teachers teaching there. The training program, Cambridge University ICALT (In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching) course, aims to enrich teachers’ knowledge and help them improve their teaching (see [http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/](http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/) for detailed information). Especially novice teachers are strongly encouraged to attend the program in their first year at SFL.

METU NCC is tied to the main campus in Ankara in all academic and administrative affairs. Due to the continuous assessment system utilized at METU NCC, all teachers are expected to cover the items in class within the allocated time as indicated in the syllabi. The following section provides information about the PIN level second semester syllabus. The reason why PIN level syllabus is included in this study is that all the novice teachers were teaching this level at the time of the study.

### 3.2.1. PIN level syllabus: An overview

At METU NCC SFL, PIN level classes have 6 hours of instruction per day which is divided into two-hour slots (see Appendix B). Each class has two teachers. One of them (A and C instructors) teaches four hours a day whereas the other (B instructor also called jumper) teaches the remaining two hours to the same class. This means that B instructors have two classes, and they teach two hours each, adding up to four hours of instruction a day. PIN level instructors do not have a fixed schedule. Their programme is developed by the academic coordinator to ensure that all the instructors have the same work load. There is no criterion to be A, B or C instructors; however, it is mostly novice teachers that work as B instructors in their first year at SFL.
PIN level syllabus consists of receptive (listening, reading, vocabulary) and productive (speaking, writing) skills (see Appendix C). To provide as objective data as possible, an e-mail interview was conducted with a member of the administration from the main campus regarding the objectives for each syllabus component under study. The member will be referred to as Deniz in the following paragraphs. The aim of the syllabus, as Deniz puts it, is to provide a basis for testing and evaluation (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). At the beginning of each span (a semester is divided into two or three spans at SFL), teachers are provided with the syllabus and expected to know and follow it. The objectives indicated in the syllabus for each skill are achieved with the use of both in-house and internationally published materials (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014).

For investigative purposes, the present study limited itself to investigating the reading, speaking and writing components of the program focusing on teachers’ use of instructional materials and teaching practices for each component. The following sections aim to outline the criteria used for determining the objectives stated for each language skill as well as introduce the instructional materials that provide a basis for the teaching policies at SFL.

3.2.1.1. Reading

Reading constitutes an important part of the PIN level syllabus in the second semester at SFL. The school incorporates two reading books into the syllabus: “www.offline.readings1” (OLR1) and “More to Read I” (MTR I). OLR1 is also supplemented by another book which includes reading passages, vocabulary exercises and listening texts. The books are all house-made written specifically for SFL students. SFL considers several criteria to determine the reading objectives. These are students’ background knowledge and repertoire from the previous semester (PIN students are either from the beginner or the elementary group), their likelihood of revising and practicing academic vocabulary items that appear in other house-made and/or course books, their revising and practicing the reading skills provided by OLR1 and OLR Supplementary Books and their revising and practicing for EPE type questions. (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014)
The present study focused on reading lessons in which MTR I was used for two main reasons. Firstly, the book comprised a substantial part of the second semester reading syllabus. Moreover, as far as the participating teachers’ programme was concerned, it was seen that they were not going to teach sufficient number of OLR1 reading lessons for the data collection of this study in the second semester. Hence, the data gathered for the reading component of the syllabus was based on MTR I book.

MTR I is used by all the proficiency levels at SFL except for the beginner level. The reason why it is incorporated into the PIN level syllabus is basically to provide supplementary skills for EPE through multiple choice questions and questions asking the writer’s aim, attitude and tone (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). The book is comprised of several texts grouped under different themes. The reading texts to be covered in the class are selected in accordance with the themes specified in OLR1 or those in the course book to give students a chance to revise vocabulary. The syllabus also includes additional reading texts that may cover specific language points taught in a certain week (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014).

In addition to the teaching of reading skills, teachers are also expected to present the target vocabulary items indicated in the OLR1 and MTR I active vocabulary lists for each text in reading lessons because the syllabus does not include separate vocabulary lessons. However, for the most part, as Deniz puts it, students are expected to take the responsibility for working on the target vocabulary items indicated in Vocabulary Journals of each reading book and come to the class prepared for the reading texts. The criteria considered while determining the target MTR I vocabulary items are giving students a chance to revise and practice the vocabulary items that often appear in academic environments as well as in books such as OLR1 and the course book (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014).

3.2.1.2. Speaking

Although the PIN level syllabus includes speaking component for the productive skills section, there is no separate speaking lesson in the group’s programme. The students’ speaking abilities are assessed by means of video projects in which they talk
about a topic they have chosen for about three to five minutes. Teachers watch the videos and grade the students’ performance according to the grading criteria provided by the institution. The speaking objectives given in the syllabus are based on the course book, Language Leader (LL), and the grammar hand-outs (GHOs) prepared by the main campus. Hence, it would be more appropriate to describe the speaking objectives referring to these instructional materials as will be seen in the following paragraphs as well as in the results section.

3.2.1.2.1. LL

PIN level classes use LL PIN and INT books in their course book lessons in the second semester. The book was chosen to provide a basis for communicative approach and lead students into discussion with a focus on integrated learning (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). The objectives indicated for the speaking component of the syllabus are often determined by the grammar points and vocabulary items located in each unit (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014).

LL INT book comprises a larger portion of the syllabus compared to LL PIN book since PIN level students coming from either beginner or elementary level classes start using LL PIN book in the first semester. Therefore, this study focused on LL INT classes for the speaking component of the syllabus.

LL INT book consists of twelve units. Each unit is divided into five lessons. The lessons are covered within two class hours. Each lesson aims to prepare students for the next. The first lessons basically provide vocabulary input related to the topics of the units. They are followed by the grammar input located in the second and third lessons so that students can engage in either spoken or written production activities provided in the fourth and fifth lessons. However, not all the lessons are covered in class. The fifth lessons, which focus on writing skills, are omitted in the programme. This is because the writing objectives of SFL do not match with the book. Similarly, the remaining units may have exercises which are either omitted or left optional as these exercises are not part of the testing syllabus. The omitted and optional exercises are mostly those requiring students to produce either spoken or written work in the production stage of
each lesson. In addition to the course book, PIN students are also responsible for the Language Reference and Extra Practice pages at the end of the book since these items are included in the testing syllabus.

3.2.1.2.2. GHOs

PIN level classes have separate grammar lessons where they use GHOs prepared by the SFL main. The hand-outs are included in the PIN level syllabus to supplement the grammar points that are not covered by the course book as well as to prepare students for EPE level (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). There are approximately 12 to 15 GHOs in a semester. The time allotted for the hand-outs in the programme depends on their length as well as the grammar points presented in the hand-outs. Hence, the teachers of the same class may share the hand-outs as indicated in the programme, and they are expected to complete their parts within their class hours.

The GHOs start with an input section which explains the rules for the target grammar points and provides example sentences. Some hand-outs also include reading passages to reinforce the previously learnt grammar points related to the target structure. The input section is followed by several mechanical exercises such as gap-filling, mistake correction and sentence combining as well as sentence transformation exercises. In addition to these, some hand-outs include meaningful exercises such as sentence completion or those requiring students to respond to a situation provided.

The GHOs aim to address both form and function in the teaching of grammar (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). However, it seems that form plays relatively more important role compared to function in the hand-outs given that the majority of the grammar practices in these hand-outs are sentenced-based exercises. Students are assumed to have acquired the function of the grammar points upon completion of the hand-outs, though, and they may be tested accordingly in quizzes and exams with dialogue completion and response to a situation type questions.
3.2.1.3. Writing

As a productive skill, writing is another important component of the PIN level syllabus. PIN students start practicing writing on a sentence level in the first semester as either beginner or elementary level students and they complete the second semester with a thorough knowledge of paragraph writing. The ultimate aim of the second semester writing lessons is to prepare students for writing different types of academic paragraphs. The paragraph types covered in writing lessons are cause-effect, advantage-disadvantage, compare-contrast and argumentative paragraphs. At SFL, the teaching of writing skills is carried out through the writing hand-outs prepared by the SFL main. There are approximately eight to 12 writing hand-outs in one semester. The hand-outs are correlated with almost each unit in the course books so that students can learn and revise the necessary structures and skills to be able to express themselves in written work.

There are several steps followed in a typical writing lesson in the second semester. First, students are presented the necessary input for the paragraph type covered in the hand-outs. Then, they do various exercises that prepare them for their own production. The exercises are followed by pre-writing activities, which enable students to brainstorm ideas and make an outline for their paragraph. Students compose two drafts before their final work. They write the first drafts in class and go over the checklist and revise the writing developing it into second drafts outside class. Teachers then collect the second drafts and point out students’ mistakes using a prior code-set to make them recognize and work on their own mistakes (Deniz, personal communication, July 10, 2014). Students write their final drafts in line with the feedback provided and hand them in to their teachers. Finally, teachers correct the mistakes (if any) in the final drafts and give them back to students. Students are expected to keep their writing hand-outs in a portfolio. At the end of each span, certain hand-outs are selected, and they are evaluated by the teachers according to the grading scale provided by the group coordinators.
The present study focused on the teachers’ written feedback practices for the writing component of the syllabus given that writing instruction happens not only in classrooms but also in the margins of student papers (see Leki, 1990). At SFL, teachers are provided with a code-set at the beginning of the semesters and are encouraged to use it while giving written feedback to students’ second drafts. It is the use of this code-set as an instructional policy that was discussed in the present study.

3.2.2. Brief Information about the EPE

The syllabus explained above aims to prepare students for the METU EPE, which is held in two sessions. The morning session consists of Listening Comprehension (30 multiple-choice questions / 30 pts.) and Reading Comprehension (30 multiple-choice questions / 30 pts.) sections. The Listening Comprehension section includes statements, dialogues, mini-talks and interview as well as lecture parts. It takes 60 minutes. Upon completion of the section, students start the Reading Comprehension section without any break. The section is comprised of sentence completion, paragraph completion, supporting ideas and text comprehension questions. It also takes 60 minutes. When the morning session is over, students have a 90-minute lunch break.

The afternoon session of the exam consists of the Note-Taking and Writing (20 pts.) and Language Use (20 pts.) sections. The session starts with the Note-taking part of the exam. Students listen to a talk and take notes to for an open-ended question to be answered at the end of the talk. They may also use their notes in fulfilling the related writing task. The writing task is a paragraph of about 180-200 words. The Language Use section, on the other hand, includes cloze test, response to a situation and dialogue completion parts. Students are given 100 minutes to complete both sections. They are advised to complete the Note-Taking and Writing section in 55 minutes and spend 45 minutes on the Language Use section.

3.3. Participants

This study used both purposive sampling and convenience sampling to select the participants. Purposive sampling allows researchers to choose a case because it holds particular characteristics being sought (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). For this
study, it was necessary to invite novice teachers who had no experience of teaching in an established school culture to better explore how instructional policies in one of such institutions influenced the way they developed a practice of L2 teaching. Moreover, given that there are a considerable number of teachers coming from alternative teaching certificate programs among the English language teachers working both in public and private sectors in Turkey (Çelebi, 2006) as well as in the context of the study, it was equally important to invite these teachers to participate in this study.

In addition to purposive sampling, the study employed convenience sampling, which enables researchers to gather data from individuals who are available and willing to be involved (Dörnyei, 2007). At the time of data collection, I was teaching at SFL as well; thus, it was relatively easy to elicit verbal commentaries and conduct classroom observations for my study. Moreover, since the participants were asked to spare considerable amount of time and energy during the data collection process, their interest in participating in the study was crucial.

To select the focal participants, I explained the purpose and procedures of this study to five newly-recruited novice teachers at SFL. The teachers had different academic backgrounds. Three of them were ELT graduates while the remaining two were graduates of Translation and Interpretation Department. Among the prospective participants, two teachers, each with different majors, did not wish to participate in the study. The remaining ELT graduates both volunteered to participate but one of them expressed her reservations regarding the intensive data collection process. For investigative purposes, it was necessary that the participants be open to being interviewed and observed repeatedly, so she was not chosen as the ELT graduate participant of the study. Consequently, the study was conducted with two novice EFL teachers who showed interest in this study and expressed their willingness to participate.

The participants were Turkish non-native speakers of English. They had different educational backgrounds. Both were in their 20s. In addition to their first semester at SFL, one of them had 9 month’s teaching experience as a part-time teacher at a private language course. The other, however, had no teaching experience. Both of them were attending the ICELT course at the time of the study, and they were teaching PIN level
classes. They were given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. The Table 3.1 provides demographic information about the participant teachers.

Table 3.1 Participant profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>Graduation Year</th>
<th>Other Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Translation and Interpretation</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICELT (in progress at the time of the data collection)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>ICELT (in progress at the time of the data collection) MA in Literature (in progress at the time of the data collection)</td>
<td>9 months at a private language course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.1. NT1

NT1 started learning English when she was in kindergarten and continued her primary and high school education at a private school in her hometown. The reason why her parents chose to send her to that particular private school was the importance attached to language teaching in the educational policy of the institution. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Translation and Interpretation from Hacettepe University, Turkey. After graduation, she worked at non-governmental organizations for two years. When NT1 started to work at METU NCC SFL, she had no teaching experience and any kind of teaching certificate.

NT1 believes that she has learned English in a communicative way. She remembers having a lot of fun in English. Since she loved English lessons and became interested in linguistics, she chose foreign languages as her academic track. NT1 did not think of studying ELT at the time because it was more appealing for her to learn the English language itself rather than learning to teach it. She wanted to become an academician, yet she was more attracted by the teaching aspect of being an academician than the research aspect. However, she decided to pursue a Translation and
Interpretation degree when she obtained a high score from the national university entrance examination.

Having had her “field experience”, as she names it, in different civil society initiative projects, NT1 thought she could be an instructor of English and applied to METU NCC SFL. Taking a professional development course was her priority when she started teaching there as she did not want to enter a classroom without knowing what she was doing. Hence, as a novice English teacher, NT1 seeks for every opportunity to improve professionally since she feels great responsibility to the institution she works for in implementing its instructional policies.

3.3.2. NT2

NT2 studied at various schools in her educational life. Upon completion of her primary school education, she went to a private school for three years and finished her middle school education there. She continued her secondary education at a public high school. However, she had to move to another school since the high school she attended did not offer the foreign languages track when she entered the 10th grade. At the end of high school, NT2 took the national university entrance exam, but she decided retake the exam the next year to have better university options. She got a better score in her second attempt and chose to study ELT at METU NCC. After graduation, she continued her studies at postgraduate level in the Department of English Literature at METU Ankara campus. At the time, she also worked at a private language course as a part-time English teacher. When she completed her master’s courses, she applied to METU NCC SFL and came back to her university as an English teacher.

NT2 describes the way she learned English as inconsistent and far from ideal. This was because of the poor quality education she received especially in her high school years. However, this did not prevent her from choosing the foreign languages track. She thinks that thanks to her self-motivation, she was able to develop her level of proficiency. At the time, NT2 did not want to become an English teacher. She was deeply interested in literature. However, after the university entrance exam, she heeded her parents’ advice and enrolled at the ELT Department of METU NCC with full
scholarship. After graduation, NT2 applied to METU NCC SFL and was employed as an instructor, but following her passion for literature, she decided to pursue an MA degree first. Upon completion of her courses, she reapplied for the job and became an SFL member.

NT2 wanted to begin her teaching career at METU NCC SFL since she was familiar with the context and informed of the extensive in-service training activities provided there. She believes that her teaching experience at a private language course did not benefit her at all due to the unsettled working environment and lack of interest on the part of the administration in improving the quality of education there. Therefore, she views SFL as a professionally demanding teaching environment where she can gain a genuine teaching experience.

3.4. My Role as a Researcher

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative researcher can be described as a “bricoleur, (authors’ emphasis) as a maker of quilts, or, as in filmmaking, a person who assembles images into montages” (p. 4). These metaphors suggest that qualitative research is based on the interpretations made by the researcher who seek for pieces to create the whole picture. This, in turn, shows that those adopting qualitative methodology acknowledge subjectivity and the existence of multiple realities in their studies (Yin, 2011). Therefore, qualitative researchers should include relevant information about the self, their biases and assumptions as well as their experiences so that those reading their work can be informed of the values influencing their research (Greenbank, 2003).

In the context of my study, I was an insider researcher. Insider researchers study a group, organization or culture they belong to (Breen, 2007). Since the context of this study was my working area and the participants were my colleagues, I had detailed familiarity with the research domain and similar work roles and responsibilities with the participants. This enabled me to have a greater understanding of the group’s culture, interact with the group members naturally and enjoy the previously established intimacy with them (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002). However, being an insider researcher is not
without disadvantages. DeLyser (2001) cautions that due to over-familiarity with the context and participants, these researchers may lose their objectivity and make wrong assumptions based on their previous knowledge. Moreover, they might find it difficult to balance their insider role and role of the researcher. Familiarity factor might also pose challenges during data collection process. Participants may avoid going into details when asked questions assuming that what they are saying is already known, and thus redundant or they might respond in a way that they think the researcher expect them to respond. In order to overcome these potential drawbacks, I utilized data triangulation, devoted sufficient time to explore the phenomenon under study and tried to bracket my values following Greenbank (2003). In addition, I encouraged the participants to reflect on their perspectives through clarification questions as much as I could and tried to avoid asking leading questions during interviews. In order to minimize the halo effect (Thorndike, 1920), I told the participants that I was not looking for any particular answer as I was only interested in their genuine opinions.

My role in this study was also that of a participant-as-observer. During my observations, I felt that the participating teachers were comfortable with my presence as I believe they viewed me as a colleague who was interested in their experiences as novice teachers in a professional teaching culture rather than an authority. On the other hand, since I was also the teacher of one of the observed classes, students especially in this class seemed to be aware of my presence. They tried to talk to me, ask me questions or look at my notes. Yet, by sitting away from them and not responding to what they said, I was able to become less obtrusive to the class, and as time passed, they seemed to forget my presence as an observer in the class. I also believe that my professional relationship with one of the participating teachers as my partner served a facilitative role during data collection process since I was advantaged in having a good grasp of the syllabus followed as a whole and adapting the data collection schedule when the need arose. Yet, to be able to obtain as reliable data as possible, I tried to keep a balance between being over-involved with the participants and distancing myself from them during the study.
3.5. Research Methods

Researching teacher cognition might be challenging as beliefs are tacit (Kagan, 1992) and that it might be difficult for teachers to articulate them. Therefore, appropriate data collection methods need to be adopted to help teachers make their beliefs more explicit. In order to uncover novice teachers’ cognition about instructional policies in an intensive language program in an EFL setting, the present research focused on specific components of the programme. A variety of data sources including audio-recorded observational data, audio-recorded and transcribed interviews and think-aloud protocols as well as other documents (e.g., institutional materials, syllabi, extra materials prepared by the teachers and students’ paragraphs with teachers’ feedback) were used to ensure triangulation. The table below summarizes the methods used for each component along with their focus as well as the time when they were adopted. It is followed by details for the data collection instruments and procedures adopted in the study.

Table 3.2 Stages and foci of data collection methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Components Investigated</th>
<th>Data Collection Method Used</th>
<th>Time Period Data Collected</th>
<th>Teaching Practices and Instruments Focused in Each Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading &amp; The course book &amp; Grammar Hand-outs</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>March-May 2014</td>
<td>Lesson plans, experiences while preparing the lessons, beliefs about teaching and learning, sources of these beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>March-May 2014</td>
<td>Teacher and students, teachers’ classroom practices and use of the institutional materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulated-recall interviews</td>
<td>March-May 2014</td>
<td>Achieving the lesson objectives, strengths and weaknesses of teaching, divergence from lesson plans, teacher reflections on the use of the institutional material(s) as well as additional ones.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final reflective interviews</td>
<td>End of June-first two weeks of July 2014</td>
<td>Teacher reflections on each component and their practices in general.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Written Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think-aloud protocol</th>
<th>March-May 2014</th>
<th>Teachers’ written feedback practices, their use of the code-set.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final reflective interviews</td>
<td>End of June</td>
<td>Teacher reflections on their feedback practices as well as the code-set.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.5.1. Interview

Interviews are increasingly used as a data collection method especially in qualitative research studies (Talmy, 2010). They are utilized to “gather descriptive data in the subject’s own words so that researchers can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 95). Given that “we cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions” (Patton, 1990, p. 278), interviews serve as an ideal means of investigating participants’ identities, experiences, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes by enabling researchers to gain “access to what is inside a person’s head” (Tuckman, 1972, as cited in Cohen et. al, 2007, p. 351). The present study employed interviews for two main reasons. Firstly, they provided the researcher with generated data to get insight into the participants’ cognitions about the instructional policies they are expected to pursue in reading, grammar and main course lessons as well as for their written feedback practices. In addition, they enabled the researcher to investigate the interplay between the participants’ beliefs and their instructional practices as to whether they perceived the policies as help or hindrance. To this end, interviews were also used to elicit rationales behind observed teaching practices.

This study employed 44 interviews with two participants in total. The types of interviews carried out were semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews. The length of these interviews varied from 15 to 75 minutes. They were all audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. In order to minimize the risk of language blockage, all the interviews were held in the participants native language, i.e., Turkish.

Both semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews were scheduled before the data collection process began, and the schedules were shared with the participants to get their consent. Most of the interviews were carried out at the school where the participants worked. However, some of them had to be conducted outside after the school days ended for such reasons as extra duties (e.g., invigilation) and clashes with...
the ICELT course. Before each interview, the participants were informed that the interviews were being recorded and that they could take a break any time they wanted to. The following two sections outline the types of interviews carried out and the procedures followed.

### 3.5.1.1 Semi-Structured Interview

Borg (2006) indicates that among the techniques for eliciting verbal commentaries, semi-structured interviews are extensively used in teacher cognition research. The present study employed semi-structured interviews because, thanks to their open-ended format, these interviews enabled the researcher to establish rapport with the participants, explore the issues in depth from the participants’ perspectives and further probe for clarifications and elaborations (Dörnyei, 2007).

In this study, the semi-structured interview data was collected in two phases. The first group of semi-structured interviews was carried out before classroom observations (to be discussed in detail in section 3.5.2.). Each participant was interviewed three times (nine in total) before the lessons where they are supposed to use certain institutional materials (i.e., the reading book, the course book and grammar hand-outs). The purpose of these interviews was to see how the participants integrate these materials into their lessons and what motivates them for their instructional decisions. To achieve these aims, in addition to questions that explicitly asked teachers about their lesson plans (e.g., “How did you plan to exploit the reading book in your lesson?”), the interviews also included questions that encourage the participants to reflect on how they felt while preparing the lessons (e.g., “Can you tell me about the positive and negative experiences you have had while preparing the lesson?”) as well as questions aiming to elicit their narratives or stories about their experiences (e.g., “Tell me about a good reading lesson that you have (been) taught?”) and their beliefs (e.g., “How should reading be taught?”). These questions helped the researcher see whether there is congruence between what the participants have planned to do and what they think they should do (be doing), and thus understand whether they regard the instructional policies that they are expected to follow as help or hindrance. The duration of these interviews ranged from 15 to 35 minutes. The first interviews were conducted as background interviews while the rest were
progressively focused, each stage informing the next. This enabled the researcher to identify particular categories and investigate them within and across cases.

The last group of semi-structured interviews was carried out after the completion of the observational data, follow-up interviews and think-aloud protocols (to be discussed in the following sections). The participants were interviewed once (four in total) for each component of the program (i.e., the reading book, the course book, grammar hand-outs and their written feedback practices). These final interviews were held in order to get the participants to reflect on the school policies for these components, their instructional practices for each in general, their roles as teachers in fulfilling the objectives in the syllabi and the challenges (if any) they experience during the process. To help them understand what is meant by instructional policies, during the interviews, the participants were shown the second semester syllabi which included objectives for both receptive (focusing on the reading skill only) and productive skills that are realized by the reading book, the course book and the grammar hand-outs. As for the written feedback practices, they were interviewed once after three think-aloud protocols (to be discussed in detail in section 3.5.3.). During these interviews, the code-set that they are encouraged to use while giving written feedback was available so that the participants could refer to it if/when they felt the need.

The final interviews were held after the second semester classes ended at times convenient to the participants. The questions prepared for these final interviews were the same for both participants except for those regarding the written feedback practices which had some individual peculiarities due to the participants’ different feedback styles. Each interview lasted between 60 to 75 minutes.

3.5.1.2. Stimulated recall interview

Another technique used for eliciting verbal commentaries is stimulated recall interview, which involves the use of stimulus to help participants recall and report thoughts they had while performing a task (Gass & Mackey, 2005). In teacher cognition research, however, instead of focusing on “eliciting precise thoughts teachers had at particular points in a lesson”, stimulated recall interviews have also been used to
“facilitate the discussion and analysis of teachers’ actions and rationales” (Borg, 2006, p. 211). In these interviews, teachers are provided with some sort of stimulus such as audio or video recordings of their lessons or written transcript of such recordings (Dörnyei, 2007) so that they can comment on what they were doing at a particular stage of a lesson, explain reasons for these instructional decisions and make interpretations of events represented in the stimuli (Borg, 2006).

The present study employed stimulated recall interviews after classroom observations. The participants each were interviewed three times (nine in total) after they were observed in reading, grammar and main course lessons. During the follow-up interviews, they were provided with stimulus in the form of written transcripts of particular instructional episodes from audio-recorded lessons. These transcripts were read to them to elicit their commentaries on these classroom events. The questions for these interviews were determined by the participants’ instructional practices, so they were different for each participant. The duration of the interviews ranged from 15 to 50 minutes, and they were held within two to five days after classroom observations to help participants recall the events vividly. These interviews enabled the researcher to explore the participants’ cognitions about the instructional policies that are realized by the institutional materials in their lessons through the discussions triggered by the stimulus provided.

3.5.2. Observation

Classroom observation is a “nonjudgmental description of classroom events which can be analyzed and given interpretation” (Gebhard, 1999, p. 35). It provides researchers with direct information. That is, during classroom observations, researchers can capture “live data from naturally occurring social situations” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 396).

The present study employed classroom observations for three main reasons. Firstly, given that “it is not unusual for persons to say they are doing one thing, but in reality they are doing something else” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 29), observations provided the researcher with concrete data regarding what was happening in the context
of teaching and learning. Moreover, they enabled the researcher to develop in-depth understanding of the participants’ actions and behaviors in their natural settings. Finally, complemented by follow-up interviews, observations was a form of data triangulation and provided the researcher with the opportunity to uncover the reasons for possible differences between the participants’ self-reported beliefs and their actual classroom practices.

The study employed 18 50-minute observations in total. The participants were observed three times in reading, grammar and main course lessons each. The observations were conducted periodically from March 2014 to July 2014 in order to reduce the risk of observer effect. The date and time of the observations were scheduled before the data collection process began, and they were shared with the participants for their approval. Moreover, the participants were told that they did not have to make any special preparation for the observations and that they should teach the way they normally do.

During the observations, my role was that of non-participant observer. I only watched and audio-recorded what was happening in the lesson and avoided interacting with the teacher and the students. My observations were unstructured; that is, I didn’t prepare any observation sheet to record the classroom events in pre-determined categories. Instead, I took field notes to supplement the audio-recording during the observations. My field notes were descriptive in nature. I jotted down detailed factual information about what was happening in the classroom to be able to record as many objective observational data as possible. My field notes consisted of six main categories. The list of categories for each observation is indicated in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 Classroom observation categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Description of the physical setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Content of the instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The use of instructional materials in the lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Additional materials (if any) used in the lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Type(s) of activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5.3. Think-aloud Protocol

Think-aloud protocol is a research method that requires participants to verbalize their thoughts as they are solving a problem or focusing on a task (Mackey & Gass, 2005). This technique provides “the concurrent vocalization of one’s inner speech” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 148), and thus makes it possible to tap into one’s thinking processes regarding the activity or task being studied.

The present study employed three think-aloud protocols with each participant for their written feedback practices. The think-aloud procedures did not affect their natural flow of work. The participants were asked to provide written feedback on their students’ second drafts as they normally would and think-aloud while giving feedback to five randomly chosen papers from each writing hand-out they covered in the lessons. The purpose of incorporating think-aloud protocol into this study was to explore the interaction between the participants’ cognition and other possible factors that influence their instructional decisions while giving written feedback. Moreover, data collected from the think-aloud sessions enabled the researcher to see whether the participants complied with the code-set developed and suggested by the institution they worked for while giving written feedback. As such, the sessions constituted the basis for discussions generated in the semi-structured follow-up interviews.

Prior to the data collection process, the writing hand-outs to be covered by the participants were identified and three of them were chosen for the think-aloud protocols together with the participants. The sessions were conducted at times convenient to them. Before the first think-aloud session, I informed the participants about the procedure to be followed. Moreover, I demonstrated how a think-aloud works on a similar task and reminded them of the importance of focusing on their task (giving feedback) not the think aloud as Dörnyei (2007) suggests. During the sessions, I was a non-participant observer and kept silent for most of the time except when encouraging the participants to keep thinking-aloud. The sessions lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Each think-aloud
session was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. I did not keep any field notes so as not to distract the participants during the process.

3.5.4. Supplementary Data Sources

Yin (2011) suggests that collected objects such as documents and artifacts enable researchers to capture invaluable data about things that are not directly observable such as an organization’s policies and procedures. The data collected from these sources are used to enhance the credibility of the research findings and interpretations. Therefore, in addition to observational data and verbal commentaries, the present study also used various forms of document data to provide detailed information about the context of the study as well as teachers’ actual instructional practices regarding certain language skills in this particular context. These comprise the syllabi and the programmes being followed, the institutional materials being used, additional materials and power point slides prepared by the participating teachers as well as photocopies of some of the students’ paragraphs with the teachers’ written feedback. In addition, since the school under study was attached to its main campus in all academic and administrative affairs, I had an e-mail interview with a member of the administration from the SFL main. The focus of the interview was the syllabus objectives as well as the instructional materials used in both institutions. I believe that the interview enabled me to validate my knowledge of the policies applied in the institution I also work for and to provide more reliable information.

3.5.5. Summary: Data Collection Procedure

As described previously, for reading, main course and GHO components of the programme, before each classroom observation, pre-observation interviews were conducted with each participant. The goal of these interviews was to get the participants to reflect upon their lesson plans (their intentions of how to conduct their lessons) and to identify the factors mediating their instructional decisions. These interviews were transcribed verbatim immediately after they were carried out. Then, the participants were observed in the classroom. The observations were analyzed, and the recurrent instances in the class regarding the participants’ teaching practices as well as their use of
both institutional and additional materials were noted down. These written episodes together with the data collected from the pre-observation interviews were used as stimuli for the stimulated recall interviews. These interviews were also transcribed verbatim, and the data collected from these interviews provided stimuli for the following pre-observation interviews.

To get an in-depth understanding regarding the written-feedback practices of the participants, think-aloud protocols were conducted. The primary goal of these think-aloud protocols was to see the way the participants used the code-set provided by the institution they worked for. The think-aloud protocols were transcribed verbatim, and the collected data provided a base for the interview regarding the written-feedback policies of the institution.

As for the last phase of the data collection process, the final interviews were conducted for reading, main course and GHO components of the programme. During these interviews, the participants were provided with the syllabus objectives for each component, and they were encouraged to reflect upon their practices considering these objectives. Given that the objectives were in fact the institutional expectations to be realized by the materials used for each investigated teaching component, these interviews were thought to be necessary for the purposes of this study. The interviews were also transcribed verbatim, and all the data gathered from the participants were compiled and filed separately under each participant’s name.

3.6. Data Analysis

This study utilized qualitative data analysis. The principles of “grounded theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) were adopted in the analysis of the data collected. Once the data collection process ended, I started reading through the interview transcripts in order to familiarize myself to the data and gain some sense of the main ideas expressed by the participants. Then, I started coding the data manually. That is, I completed initial open coding by hand on the printed versions of the transcribed interview data. During this process, codes such as learning techniques, previous teacher and influence of teacher emerged. After I completed this phase, through iterative
reading, I tried to make connections between the codes by making annotations on the
textual data to identify recurring themes and discover emerging categories. For example,
the codes provided above led to the emergence of the category background education.
Then, I extracted the data forming the emerging categories for each investigated
teaching component and moved them to another document placing them in charts.
Through constant comparative analysis of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I tried to
identify commonalities and differences both among the investigated components and
between the participants. This process was performed iteratively by checking, merging
and refining the categories where necessary. Finally, the categories were further
analyzed, and the data were organized into overarching themes. Observational data and
think-aloud protocols, on the other hand, were re-visited and re-examined for recurring
themes, and thereby key instructional episodes related to the emerging themes were
noted down.

Once the coding process was completed, the emerging themes and categories
were organized according to their relevance to the research questions. The most relevant
and salient categories were listed under each theme, and these were also confirmed by a
second rater. It is important to note that this study did not utilize a predefined code
scheme. That is, an inductive approach was adopted, and the themes were identified as
they emerged from the data. As such, guided by the investigation of the novice teachers’
cognition about the instructional policies implemented in their teaching context, this
study, in line with the data collected, attempted to answer three research questions.
These included exploration of (1) the influences of the instructional policies on the
novice teachers’ beliefs and practices, (2) the factors interacting with the instructional
policies in the shaping of the novice teachers’ beliefs and practices and (3) the novice
teachers’ responses to the instructional policies in language classrooms. In order to
enhance the reliability of the data, I selected the participants’ direct quotes and included
them in the results section to support my interpretations. Since the interviews were
conducted in the participants’ mother tongue, I translated the direct quotes myself. Then,
I had them verified by two colleagues to ensure that they were reflecting the meanings
and feelings of the participants. Finally, the selected quotes were sent to the participants
for confirmation. After their confirmation was obtained, the results were reported. The
The table below summarizes the data collection instruments and data analysis procedures used for the present study.

**Table 3.4 Summary of Data Collection and Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Primary Sources of Data</th>
<th>Data Analysis Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ #1</td>
<td>Pre-observation interviews, classroom observations, post-observation interviews in the form of stimulated recall, reflective final interviews</td>
<td>Grounded Theory (Glaser &amp; Strauss, 1967; Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1990) pre-coding/coding/ theorizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ #2</td>
<td>Pre-observation and post observation interviews, classroom observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ #3</td>
<td>Classroom observations, think-aloud protocols, post-observation interviews, final reflective interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.0. Introduction

This study attempted to contribute to deepen our understanding of how novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices are influenced by the instructional policies implemented at a preparatory school of an English-medium university and the factors that interact with these policies as well as how novice teachers respond to these policies in class. The preceding chapter has described the methodology employed for the purposes of this study. This chapter aims to present the research results derived from data collected over a period of 15 weeks following the order of research questions. The figure 4.1 illustrates how research questions interrelate. As the figure below shows, the instructional policies implemented in the research context had influences on the beliefs and practices of the novice teachers depending on the factors that interacted with them. These influences along with the factors, in turn, led the teachers to respond to the instructional policies in certain ways in class and on the margins of students’ papers. As such, the first research question examined the influences of the instructional policies on the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. The second research question focused on the factors interacting with the instructional policies. Finally, the last research question investigated the teachers’ responses to the instructional policies in language classrooms.
Figure 4.1 Relationship between the research questions

4.1. Research Question #1: How do institution-specific instructional policies influence Turkish novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices?

The aim of the first research question was to investigate how instructional policies at METU NCC SFL influenced novice teachers’ beliefs and practices. The study did not aim to define and describe predefined policies regarding the teaching of English in the given context. Instead, it aimed to encourage the participants to reflect upon their experiences when planning and conducting their lessons as well as teaching practices to explore what the participants perceived as instructional policies in their workplace and how these affected their teaching beliefs and practices. In this regard, this exploratory study aimed to investigate novice teachers’ perceptions regarding instructional policies in a university context. To do this, the study focused on the syllabus principles of specific components of the programme (i.e., reading, grammar and main course lessons as well as teachers’ written feedback practices) and teachers’ use of teaching
materials/tools to apply those principles using multiple data sources including interviews, classroom observations and think-aloud protocols. The investigated teaching components served as means to explore how the novice teachers’ beliefs and practices were mediated by the instructional policies they considered themselves to have been held responsible to enact while they were achieving the curriculum objectives. Therefore, the results are presented referring to the teachers’ use of teaching materials/tools and practices for the aforementioned components. The table below presents a summary of the emerging themes and categories for the first research question.

Table 4.1 Summary of the themes and categories for the first research question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td>a) Skill-specific Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Teaching Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) Material Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>a) Required Course Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Principles of CLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• teacher role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• production stage activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) Use of L1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assistance</td>
<td>a) Convenience of Ready-made Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Teacher Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.1. Confusion

The first theme that emerged from the collected data was named confusion. Skill-specific expectations, teaching methodology and material management were the underlying categories that led to the emergence of this theme. It was in these areas that the participants were found to have been going through a phase of turmoil, stress and lack of confidence, which eventually led to an overarching theme - confusion - as it was titled by the researcher. The following sections aim to present related data for each category referring to the investigated teaching components.
4.1.1.1. Skill-specific Expectations

As explained in the previous chapter, METU NCC SFL provides teachers with syllabus aims for both receptive and productive skills at the beginning of each span that inform teachers of the content of the instruction. As for the writing component of the programme, teachers are given a code-set at the beginning of semesters, and they are encouraged to employ it while providing feedback to student papers. These institution-specific instruments are incorporated into the program to help teachers understand the skill-specific requirements and design their lessons as well as establish teaching practices accordingly. However, data gathered from the interviews revealed that both participants had experienced confusion about the skill-specific expectations to be achieved through the investigated syllabus components.

For reading lessons, the confusion resulted from the fact that the teachers were not given adequate guidance as to how they should exploit the reading book in their lessons. In fact, in the interviews, they stated that they did not recall being informed of the inclusion of the MTR book in the syllabus during the induction period. Being a METU NCC graduate, NT2 was relatively familiar with the book as her friends were using it at SFL. NT1, on the other hand, seemed to have felt puzzled when she saw the book for the first time: “Everybody was talking about OLR, but I had never heard of MTR. When I saw the book for the first time, I thought like ‘What am I supposed to do now? Why are we doing these texts every week?’ Well, it was one of our reading books apparently.” (NT1, R PI2). Both participants, however, complained about the lack of guidance regarding what to focus on while they were covering the texts in the lessons. When I asked them to reflect upon their experiences while preparing MTR lessons, they stated that they had a lot of difficulties because of the fact that they did not know what to prioritize in their instruction:

OK I am supposed to teach this [MTR], but which parts of it? Is it vocabulary or the content? Or sometimes we work on main ideas. You know we teach it as a skill, so should I focus on that? I do not know what exactly I should focus on when covering the book and this makes me feel anxious. (NT2, R PI2)
There is no teachers’ manual to guide us or telling us what to focus on while covering the texts. If I have the students do the texts without adapting them, they finish them in half an hour. They do them very quickly. So I don’t know what I am supposed to do in the second lesson. (NT1, R PI2)

As the above excerpts show, the confusion related to the institution-specific expectations as to the teaching of reading led the teachers to experience turmoil, and due to their limited teaching repertoire, the novices had challenges regarding how to adapt the reading texts and exploit them in the allotted time. The excerpts also reveal that the novice teachers were not referring to the reading aims given in the syllabus while preparing their lessons. When I asked them about the reasons, they said that the reading aims were actually correlated with the skills sections covered in the OLR book (see chapter 3 section 3.2.1.1. for more information) and that they did not see any aims specifically written for MTR lessons.

Similar to reading lessons, the teachers also experienced confusion about their written feedback practices stemming from lack of guidance. They stated that even though they were provided with information regarding the stages of process writing and presented with a code-set in a session on writing portfolios during the induction period, they were not guided in the use of the code-set. This led the teachers to consider the use of the codes as they were given in the code-set as a concrete rule, and they avoided deviating from it while giving feedback. However, the teachers reported that when they realized the way they were providing feedback was not working, and thus felt doubts about their practices, they asked for a meeting with some experienced teachers towards the end of the first semester. It was during this meeting that the teachers became aware of their misinterpretation of the institution-specific expectations regarding the use of the code-set:

During the meeting, I learned that there are teachers who have expanded the code-set and created their own codes like gerund/infinitive or word form/verb form. To me, all these errors were “grammar”, and I did not use to specify the code “grammar.” This was because it was how it was given in the code-set. It was during this meeting that I realized, “Can we adapt this?” The code-set suddenly became something that was recommended. (NT1, WF FI)

It appears that miscommunication between the teachers and related stakeholders was the major cause of the confusion regarding the use of the code-set. The teachers, however,
seemed to have been influenced by the feedback session in different ways. While reflecting on how she felt after the meeting, NT1 said that she still felt uneasy and complained about ambiguous writing feedback procedures. The lack of clarity in the use of the code-set, as she reported, made her feel as if she was missing something out while giving feedback. She also viewed it as a problem resulting from teachers’ not having standardized practices in the institution. NT2, on the other hand, said that she had overcome her initial confusion as to how she was expected to respond to student papers after getting help from her more experienced colleagues. When I asked her how she felt after the meeting, she said that she “felt relieved” as she had a lot of concerns about how students could revise their writing with only the codes given in the code-set on them and added that “it was quite beneficial to see other teachers’ practices.” (NT2, WF FI). However, this feeling of relief seemed to be only temporary as it was revealed that the teacher had doubts about her feedback practices, which will be discussed in the following section.

The speaking component of the programme was the last area that the participants were confused about. The teachers were found to have been experiencing confusion due to the mismatch, as they argued, between the syllabus aims and the prescribed methods and approaches which manifested themselves in the form of classroom materials provided by the institution. As explained in the previous chapter, speaking skill objectives at SFL are realized by the course book (LL) and the GHOs prepared by the main campus. The teachers stated that the tasks that they were required to cover for these components prevented them from achieving the speaking objectives. The following excerpts are illustrative of the teachers’ reflections on speaking aims to be achieved by the GHOs and LL respectively:

The grammar-handouts include fill-in the gaps, rewrite or find the mistakes exercises… [the teacher providing examples for task types] I do not see how students can express their opinions if they cannot do exercises where they talk about their ideas. There are not any tasks to enable this in grammar hand-outs. (NT2, GHO FI)

When I look at the aims, I assume that we are expected to focus on production. But somehow this is not achieved. This is because the parts in the book [LL]
where students can produce language are either omitted or optional. How will the students realize the production phase if we keep omitting them? (NT1, LL FI)

Another source of confusion about the handling of the speaking skill according to the teachers was the disparity between the speaking objectives and assessment. This was a result of two facts. The first was the presentation of speaking skills in a Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) format, which required students to make use of certain language structures at the end of each lesson. (e.g., the aim is to express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using the relative pronoun “which” to refer to a clause). However, the language structures that were used in speaking objectives, as the teachers claimed, were actually tested in the grammar component of the exams using such question types as rewrites and fill in the blanks, and they did not require the students to make any oral production. Secondly, the teachers argued that speaking assessment itself did not directly test the students’ ability to use the language structures that were originally used in the speaking objectives. The combination of these two facts seemed to have made both teachers feel that these speaking objectives were unattainable and inherently flawed. The following quotation is illustrative:

This is not [referring to the syllabus aims for speaking skills] what we do. Our students cannot do these. They cannot even write relative clause sentences. I cannot imagine hearing them in class. Too far-fetched. I mean overambitious. We do not give much importance to speaking in fact but here it says “talk about.” (NT2, LL FI)

Similar to NT2, NT1 also said that the aims given for teaching speaking skills were “not realistic”, and they were “not achieved.” (NT1, GHO FI). She, therefore, tended to view them as a list of language items to be introduced rather than those students should produce in the lessons.

To sum up, it was revealed that the teachers both were experiencing considerable confusion about what they were expected to do for the investigated teaching components. Their confusion was the result of lack of guidance and the disparity, as they claimed, between the syllabus aims and the task types to be covered in the lessons as well as the disparity between the aims and assessment. It turned out that the teachers’
uncertainty about skill-specific expectations also had impacts on their teaching practices, which will be discussed in the following category.

4.1.1.2. Teaching Methodology

Another area that the participants seemed confused was the teaching methodology they adopted. This category was closely intertwined with the previous one. That is, the teachers’ confusion about skill-specific expectations played a significant role in the emergence of this category. The participants’ concerns about their teaching methodology were more salient for their reading and written feedback practices. Therefore, data for this category came primarily from the teachers’ reflections on these syllabus components.

During my classroom observations of reading lessons, I realized that the teachers were using a lot of extra materials prepared for various pre-reading and while-reading activities. In fact, I was not able to observe their use of the MTR book in some of the lessons as these activities took up one class-hour. Therefore, during the follow-up interviews, I asked the teachers to reflect upon these practices and explain how they decided which activities/materials to incorporate into their lessons. NT1 said that she did not have any specific criteria for the inclusion of additional tasks. Since she did not know why the MTR book was incorporated into the programme, the teacher did not seem to have a rationale for why she was supplementing the reading lessons with particular materials/activities: “In OLR lessons, I know at least what to teach. I mean there is a specific aim or skill. But there is no guideline for MTR, so I do not have a specific methodology for extra materials. I wish someone would guide us.” (NT1, R PO1). Similarly, NT2 complained about lack of guidance as to what she was expected to focus on in her reading instructions. She stated that she was not informed of how the texts were ordered throughout the book and how they should be handled and introduced in class accordingly. Therefore, she appeared to have taken an impressionistic view while preparing MTR lessons: “We are not given any guidelines about how to deal with these texts, so I have a look at what I have done or not done recently and try to come up with a plan accordingly. To be honest, this is how I prepare my lessons.” (NT2, R POI3).
The teachers’ responses show that they did not have structured methodology while exploiting the reading texts resulting from lack of guidance as to the execution of the reading lessons. The confusion about teaching methodology also had negative effects on the teachers’ perceptions of their instructional practices. For example, NT2 stated that she was having a lot of stress before the reading lessons since she believed that there could be a better way of teaching that she did not know of. This led the teacher to feel concerned about the effectiveness of the instructional decisions she had made before the lessons, which revealed themselves in her description of some of her teaching practices (extra materials/activities) as “not that to the point and beneficial.” (NT2, R PI2).

NT2 also had concerns about her written feedback practices. While reflecting upon her use of the code-set, she reported that it was difficult for her to diagnose language errors and assign error codes accordingly. This seemed to have led the teacher to feel confused especially when marking weak students’ papers. She believed that it was more important to help low achievers improve their writing because good students would better their drafts in some way. However, given that weak students mostly submitted poorly-written papers with many language errors, NT2, as she reported, was having additional difficulties in using error codes when marking these students’ papers. The following quotation represents her concerns and challenges about the issue:

I think about what I should do to help them [weak students] more. To be honest, I cannot find any other way than asking them to drop by my office and explaining my feedback in Turkish. I do not know how to indicate errors that are difficult to detect to begin with. I really do not know what I should do. (NT2, WF FI)

Although she did not explicitly attribute these problems to lack of guidance, it would not be wrong to assume that had there been clearer guidance as to what the teachers were expected to do while giving feedback (e.g., comprehensive/selective marking), NT2 probably would not be experiencing such confusion about her written feedback practices. The teacher also stated that her written feedback practices were not consistent. That is, the way she provided feedback, as she explained, varied across paragraphs. Her way of giving feedback was not based on a systematic approach since, in her words, “I do not know yet how I could effectively communicate with students on paper.” (NT2,
WF FI). As such, it seems that, when making pedagogical decisions regarding the teaching of writing, she was confused about how to interpret and/or make use of the existing policies.

NT1, similarly, was found to have been experiencing difficulties in responding to weak students’ papers. She stated that it was quite challenging to indicate these students’ language mistakes using codes as their writings had many grammar mistakes. She was also concerned about these students’ limited ability to decipher the codes. This might be the reason why she wanted the school to have provided the newly-recruited teachers with more explicit guidance regarding the use of the code-set:

I wish the school had told me what they expected me to do. Like this is our code-set. We encourage you to use it. You can give such and such feedback. We suggest you to do these, but you do not have to. I would appreciate if we were provided with such guidance. (NT1, WF FI)

NT1 also expressed her confusion regarding giving feedback on content and organization of student paragraphs. The source of the confusion, according to the teacher, was that she was not clearly informed of the fact that she could provide feedback on these aspects of writing. This, as she reported, did not cause much trouble in the beginning of the first semester since, at that time, beginner students (she was teaching beginner level students) were practicing writing on a sentence level. However, as the students progressed and started writing actual paragraphs, she realized that this was an issue she, as a teacher, needed to deal with. It was only after she saw an experienced teacher teaching an elementary level class providing feedback on the content and organization of students’ paragraphs that she started doing it as well. However, NT1 described her feedback practices on content and organization as “eclectic” and “unstructured.” (NT1, WF FI). This was because, as she reported, she did not know whether it was a required practice or not. The teacher also complained that she was not informed clearly regarding these dimensions of written feedback practices.

In sum, it seemed that both teachers were uncertain about their instructional practices for reading and writing components of the programme. The teachers tended to relate their confusion to insufficient guidance provided for these areas. It was also
observed that because they were confused about their teaching methodology, the teachers had doubts about the effectiveness of some of their teaching practices.

4.1.1.3. Material Management

The last area about which the participants were observed to have been experiencing confusion was material management. At SFL, teachers are required to employ certain teaching materials while conducting their lessons and cover each and every task in these materials if not indicated in the programme. However, data from the observations showed that although the participants were teaching the target items using the same tasks as in the books, they were not actually using the books (i.e., MTR and LL) in some of the lessons. In addition to the problem of second-hand books with previously marked answers, the teachers cited a couple of reasons why they did not incorporate the books into their lessons.

For the reading component of the programme, for NT2, the main reason was that she felt there was a “communication breakdown” between her and the students in the lessons where she had the students follow the reading book (NT2, R POI2). The teacher stated that the students seemed not to have been following her instructions in these lessons, which resulted in her using photocopies of the texts. She believed that these “sheets of paper” were making her lessons “more manageable.” (NT2, R POI2). Similarly, NT1 seemed to have concerns about task achievement in reading lessons. In one of these lessons, the teacher used the photocopy of the text with the related questions below the paragraphs. When I asked her why she felt the need to adapt the material, she explained that she wanted to make the text “more manageable” and “less intimidating” as the reasons (NT1, R POI2).

The participants were also observed to have avoided using the LL book at different stages of the lessons even though they were covering the same tasks in it. Rather than having the students follow the book, they projected the content of the book on the board in some of these lessons. The teachers had a couple of rationales for this practice. They believed that when they used powerpoint slides, they could attract student
attention more and make their lessons more interactive. They also mentioned that it was time-saving to direct and organize their lessons via powerpoint.

These aforementioned management concerns coupled with teachers’ not wanting to use the books were also indicators of confusion on the part of the teachers as to how to exploit the books effectively. In other words, they showed that the participants had doubts about effective and efficient use of the books as illustrated in the following excerpts:

I have a problem with how to use LL. I know it is possible, but I have not been able do a very controlled and efficient lesson by using the book yet. I still have this concern about whether every student is on task, and I think this is because I am inexperienced. (NT2, LL POI2)

Because the book [LL] is not my material, I cannot really get in the zone using it – I cannot feel a part of the lesson. So I cannot act enthusiastic and draw my students’ attention. I find this really difficult. (NT1, LL PI3)

Above quotations suggest that the novice teachers needed additional guidance on the use of the institutional materials in the classrooms. In fact, such a need had been voiced by NT2 while she was reflecting on her use of the LL book. The teacher said that she wondered whether a teacher could teach a lesson using the book only. That is, she wanted to know if a lesson could be effectively taught without adapting the book. To find an answer to her question, NT2 expressed her desire to observe a lesson taught by an experienced teacher in which LL was effectively exploited since she believed that she could have a concrete idea about efficient use of the book then.

To sum up, it was evident that the teachers’ not wanting to use the school books at certain stages of the lessons stemmed from classroom management concerns as well as their confusion about managing the books effectively. This suggests that the novice teachers needed more guidance about how they could successfully incorporate the teaching materials into their lessons and exploit them effectively.

4.1.1.4. Summary

The data presented in this section showed that the novice teachers were confused about certain aspects of language instruction they provided in their first-year of teaching
at SFL. Their confusion surfaced when the teachers reflected upon the syllabus aims indicated for the investigated teaching components and their instructional practices to fulfill these aims as well as their use of the institution-specific teaching materials/tools. As such, the theme, confusion, was examined referring to these three emerging categories: confusion about skill-specific expectations, teaching methodology and material management.

4.1.2. Tension

The second theme that emerged from the collected data was called tension. Required course content, principles of CLT and use of mother tongue (L1) were the categories that surfaced to build up this theme. As a result of the divergences between what the teachers believed and what they felt they needed to do in the classroom as well as the divergences between what they believed and what they were required to do, the participants were observed to have faced complications regarding the aforementioned categories. Data related to each category are described in the following sections.

4.1.2.1. Required Course Content

The first complication the teachers faced was related to required course content. It was revealed that the teachers were experiencing difficulties especially in the teaching of reading and grammar due to conflicts between what they wanted to teach and what they were required to teach. As such, this category includes the teachers’ reflections on these teaching components referring to their beliefs about student needs and the school’s rigid syllabus.

The major complication regarding the reading lessons concerned text types. Both participants complained about the fact that they were covering academic texts only. That is, in NT1’s words, “the texts are all informative, descriptive and sometimes argumentative, but they mostly include scientific facts.” (NT1, R FI). The teachers both viewed this restricting and expressed the need for introducing students to different text types and genres. For example, while commenting on the changes she would like to make in her reading instruction, NT2 stated that she believed students should be made aware of the fact that there were other text types and tones in writing. Therefore, she
expressed her wish to be able to bring authentic materials and texts from different genres to class such as a poem or a part of a well-known story. In a similar vein, NT1 voiced her concerns about the effects of her reading instruction on students’ perception of reading skill in general. She said that because her students were exposed to academic texts only, they tended to think that when they read non-academic texts they were interested in, they were not actually practicing reading. Such “twisted perception” (NT1, R FI), as NT1 called it, prevented students from improving their reading skills. The following represents her concerns and frustration regarding the issue: “The students would not understand the headlines or could not read editorials. They would not even recognize what these are. I do not know. I feel like there are such good reading materials that could open up their minds, but we do not use them.” (NT1, R FI).

The teachers also complained about the weight of vocabulary teaching in their reading lessons. They said that because the syllabus did not include class hours specifically allotted for vocabulary practices and because the texts included many target vocabulary items to be taught, they had to focus more on vocabulary teaching rather than teaching reading. For example, when I asked her to reflect upon her priorities in her reading instruction, NT2 said she felt the need to cover, in her own words, “…of course vocabulary, our biggest problem, and skimming/scanning considering we have taught them and of course the given tasks” (NT2, R PI3) first. Although she believed that a good reading lesson should promote critical thinking skills and improve text comprehension, she did not seem to have been putting these beliefs into practice. In her words, “Do we really focus on content? No. We focus more on guiding them [students] to reach the information they need as quickly as possible.” (NT2, R PI3). NT1, on the other hand, touched upon another side of the problem. In addition to having to teach many vocabulary items, she also complained about their level as she thought that they were too advanced for PIN level students. She stated that because she was required to teach such “academic words” as “publicity” and “as regards”, she felt “frustrated” and could not exploit the texts effectively in the lessons (NT1, R PI3). The teacher also explained why focusing only on academic words might be problematic for students’ language development by giving the following example:
The students know the meaning of obsolete, but they do not know, like, eggplant is “patlıcan” [Turkish equivalent for eggplant]. They will easily write academic articles but they will not be able to buy eggplant. They will look for something long, thin and purple. Do you see what I mean? It is so frustrating that we focus only on academic English. (NT1, R FI)

Because of the aforementioned conflicts between what she believed and what she were required to do, NT1 was found to have been experiencing professional concerns. She said that she kept reminding herself, “this is not the only English people learn” and she “might work at a different context where reading materials are used not to introduce grammar or vocabulary but to promote critical thinking and measure text comprehension.” (NT2, R FI). The reason behind this was that she wanted to remind herself that the aforementioned required practices were not norms in the teaching of reading skills.

The complications stemming from the required course content was also evident in the grammar lessons where the teachers used department-produced GHOs. The major complaint voiced by the teachers was the order of the grammar topics to be covered in the hand-outs. They stated that they were having great difficulties in understanding why they had to teach such advanced grammar points as reduction of time and reason clauses before relatively easier ones like wish clauses and conditionals. In fact, the teachers both expressed that they did not want to teach participle clauses at all. They stated that the students did not need to learn such a difficult structure when they were still struggling with many of the previously-learnt grammar points. For example, while commenting on the required grammar topics, NT1 expressed her frustration as follows:

Students do not acquire [the language]. They are spoon-fed [and] force-fed. But their minds and understanding are so rigid- as if we are trying to break into their minds through heavy doors- like we are trying to push for something that is not going to happen. (NT1, GHO FI)

The teachers both believed that students could acquire such advanced grammar points as participle clauses as they got acquainted with the language. That is, in NT2’s words, “there needs to be room for incidental learning given that the students will continue learning English in their departments.” (NT2, GHO PI3).
The teachers also complained about having to cover overloaded hand-outs. They said that since they were required to cover these hand-outs within the allotted time in the syllabus, they felt quite nervous about whether the students would understand what they taught. For example, NT1 stated that she sometimes thought, in her words, “Are we really going to teach this? In terms of content I mean” when she saw the hand-outs for the first time (NT1, GHO PI2). NT2, similarly, was concerned about having to teach so many grammar items at the same time. Empathizing with the students, she said, “We are bombarding them with modals. I would most probably get confused if I were a student. I am worried about this really” before the lesson where she was going to cover modals hand-out (NT2, GHO PI1). The same hand-out also caused problems for NT1. While covering the modals hand-out in class, she had great difficulty in explaining the difference between “didn’t have to” and “needn’t have done.” Although she provided extra examples and even translated the sentences into Turkish to help the students understand the difference, her efforts did not seem to have worked. Therefore, in the follow-up interview, I asked her what she thought might be the cause of the confusion on the part of the students. She commented on this issue as follows:

I do not know why we had do teach “needn’t have done” and “didn’t have to” at the same time. When you teach “don’t have to” you can say the past form is “didn’t have to” and it is over. We could have taught “needn’t have done” separately. But because they are introduced together in the hand-out, this caused confusion among the students. (NT1, GHO POI2)

It seems that the teacher related her challenges to the content of the hand-out, i.e., the way the target item was presented in it. Although she had a pre-conceived notion of how to present this grammar topic, which she thought could have worked better, she felt forced to cover the hand-out as it was given, referring to the conceptual difference between the two modal verbs. This resulted in her feeling “distressed and tense” (NT1, GHO POI2) in the observed lesson since she felt she could not teach effectively.

Overall, it was evident that the teachers faced some complications resulting from the conflicts between what they wanted to teach and what they were required to teach particularly in reading and grammar lessons. As such, the required course content had considerable influence on the participant teachers’ execution of these lessons. The
participant novice teachers’ reactions to these complications will be discussed in more detail under the third research question.

4.1.2.2. Principles of CLT

Another kind of complication that emerged from the data concerned communicative teaching methodology, which the school strongly encouraged the teachers to adopt via the in-service teacher education sessions and programs like ICELT. Both participants stated that they viewed ICELT principles as the norms and expectations of the institution they worked for. They believed the course “strongly encourages you to use a certain way of teaching” (NT1, GHO PI2) that involved “a monolingual class, communicative tasks, variety, pair-work/group-work activities… vocabulary teaching in context and discovery learning” (NT2, LL POI3). Although the teachers tended to comply with the principles of the institution, they found it difficult to make certain aspects of their teaching communicative. This, as the teachers stated, was a result of a discrepancy between the methodology they were advised to follow and the materials they were provided to this end. For example, the teachers argued that the grammar hand-outs they were provided with to teach certain language structures were not even remotely communicative in nature. This resulted in an inevitable change in their original aims to be the facilitator of learning in the classroom, which the communicative approach proposes as a role for teachers. Instead, they just became the source of information, and their teaching became teacher-centered. NT2 explained her role as a teacher as follows:

Ideally, I would like to consider my role as a facilitator rather than as a person who forces students to do things, but this is not happening. I am generally prescriptive- like I always say “this is how it is”. I am not the teacher that guides students or facilitates discovery learning. (NT2, GHO FI)

Similarly, NT1 described her role as “a little bit of a facilitator but not that much since there is also a lot of instruction giving.” (NT1, GHO FI). The teacher said that ideally she would like to keep the instruction part short and extend the period when the students were trying to make sense of the target items themselves. However, she found this difficult to achieve and, as she reported, her instructions inevitably took a lot of time.
Although the teachers tended to have similar complaints in this respect, their protests varied in strength. For example, although NT2 found it problematic, she did not find it realistic to follow a totally communicative approach in these circumstances (the circumstances will further be discussed under the second research question.). When I asked her to reflect upon her feelings about her role as a teacher, she said “in this system it is impossible to think otherwise [being a facilitator].” (NT2, GHO FI). NT1, on the other hand, was relatively more resistant to the system. She seemed to have been trying to keep the balance between the circumstances, institutional policies and her own beliefs. She said, “I have to stretch between the school and the student” (NT1, GHO FI) to help students catch up with the syllabus while trying to meet the school’s expectations as much as possible.

Another area of tension closely related to the requirements of CLT was production stage activities. As explained before, guided by the ICELT course, the participants were expected to incorporate certain principles of CLT into their lessons. Getting students to use the language was one of those principles. However, data from the classroom observations showed that the teachers were not allocating enough time to encourage students to produce the language. Therefore, I decided to probe for the issue to learn more about the teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding the production stage of their lessons. In various interviews focusing on the investigated teaching components, the participants both highlighted the importance of students’ hands-on practice of the language structures. For example, NT2 said “Personally, I find them highly beneficial. Their [students’] producing something together with my minimum help is highly beneficial.” (NT, LL POI3). Likewise, NT1 underlined the importance of students’ practicing their newly-acquired knowledge while saying “if a student wants to learn English, s/he has to use the language.” (NT1, LL POI3). However, the teachers both admitted that they were not able to include the activities requiring production and student interaction much in their classes for a number of reasons. These included not having sufficient time, the prescribed syllabus and exam-oriented instruction as well as student profile. These factors will further be discussed under the second research question.
In sum, data from the interviews and classroom observations revealed that the participants were experiencing difficulties in implementing certain principles of CLT resulting from the tensions between what they believed and what they felt they needed to do in the classroom. In other words, although the participants expressed their belief in communicative teaching methodology, they did not seem to have been putting their beliefs into practice due to certain constraints.

4.1.2.3. Use of L1

The last area of tension concerned the teachers’ use of L1 in their classrooms. At SFL, although it is not forbidden to use Turkish in the lessons, teachers are encouraged to expose students to as much English as possible in administrative meetings and professional development sessions as well as in the ICELT course. Therefore, both NT1 and NT2 seemed to have perceived this as an institutional policy. That is, the teachers tended to believe that they were expected to refrain from using Turkish in the lessons. Their beliefs about the use of L1 in EFL classrooms, on the other hand, differed. Retaining her reservations about excessive use of L1, NT2 seemed to favor the idea that there should be some room for the learners’ mother tongue in language classrooms. She said that she viewed “Turkish as a tool available to resort to” when she felt the need (NT2, GHO POI1). The teacher also highlighted the importance of providing students with opportunities to make connections between their mother tongue and the target language. As such, she believed that the use of L1 helped students “develop language sensitivity.” (NT2, GHO POI1). NT1, on the other hand, was less lenient with the use of L1. She said she did not want her students to depend on Turkish explanations in the lessons. The teacher was also concerned about classroom management. She believed that, in her words, “When I use Turkish in class, students become too friendly.” (NT1, GHO POI2). Therefore, she considered English “a buffer zone” (NT1, GHO POI2) preventing inappropriate student behavior.

Although the teachers had different attitudes towards the use of L1, they both resorted to Turkish particularly in the lessons where they covered GHOs. For NT1, the major reason was students’ having difficulties in understanding the target language item. She said she felt the need to employ Turkish when she saw her students’ “staring
blankly” at her (NT1, GHO POI2). NT2 also cited a number of reasons. She reported
that she used Turkish in the lessons to aid in grammar explanations, save time and
decrease language learning anxiety as well as to help students have a firmer grasp of the
subject.

During the lessons, I also observed both teachers’ conscious efforts to balance
their use of L1 and L2. They seemed to have been trying hard to avoid using more
Turkish than English in these lessons. Therefore, wanting to tap into their cognitions
about the issue, I asked them how they felt when they used Turkish in the lessons. The
teachers both said they felt bad about it. For example, NT1 explained her switching back
and forth between Turkish and English while covering the aforementioned modals hand-
out as follows: “If I had used Turkish only, I would have taught the whole lesson in
Turkish and I have this pressure in my mind when I think of the school policy. I feel
guilty because I feel responsible before the school.” (NT1, GHO POI2). Similarly, NT2
reported that she frequently found herself thinking like “Oh God! I am using Turkish
again!”(NT2, GHO POI1). Although the teacher believed in the benefit of using L1 in
facilitating L2 teaching and learning, she appeared to be uncomfortable with resorting to
her mother tongue in the lessons. Later in the semester, I had another chance to probe for
the issue when NT2 resorted to Turkish while covering another GHO. The teacher
explained the reasons for and her beliefs about the use of L1 as follows:

If this was something to do with exposure, they [students] should have been
speaking fluently by now. If they understand the lessons in Turkish, Turkish it is.
This is what my teaching has come to. If I can teach something in Turkish in a
more clear way and in a short time, then why not. (NT2, GHO POI3)

On the other hand, her use of L1 had profound impacts on her views about her teaching
practices. She said that after the lessons where she resorted to Turkish, she could not
help considering whether there had been a better way of explaining the target language
item to make it clearer for the students. This seemed to lead her to question her teaching
practices given that she was asking questions to herself like “Am I cutting corners using
Turkish - Am I taking the easy way out?” after these lessons (NT2, GHO POI3).
Although NT2 did not explicitly relate her feelings to the institutional policy regarding
the use of L1, her doubts about her teaching practices suggest that the teacher’s beliefs
about effective teaching might have been influenced by the professional development and ICELT sessions as well as administrative meetings where use of L2 was promoted.

To sum up, the teachers both were found to have been facing complications regarding the use of L1, which is an important component of the policies, as they viewed, imposed on them. For NT1, the cause of the tension was the difference between her belief and teaching practice. NT2, on the other hand, was experiencing conflicts resulting from the difference between her belief and institutional expectations.

4.1.2.4. Summary

The data presented in this section revealed that the novice teachers were having difficulties in putting their beliefs into practice in their first year of teaching at SFL. Their challenges resulted from the discrepancies between their beliefs and institutional requirements as well as the discrepancies between their beliefs and the school reality. The tensions emerged in three major areas. These were required course content, and principles of CLT as well as use of L1. This section aimed to give voice to the novice teachers’ perspectives about these areas and report their professional challenges in their own words.

4.1.3. Assistance

The last theme that was identified from the collected data was assistance. Convenience of ready-made materials and teacher learning were the categories that contributed to the formation of this theme. The participants expressed that they felt safer and became more reflective thanks to some of the principles and norms followed in their teaching context. They also mentioned benefitting from certain aspects of teaching materials. These positive influences voiced by the teachers led me to name the last theme assistance. The following sections aim to present related data for the aforementioned categories.
4.1.3.1. Convenience of Ready-made Materials

The first area that the participants mentioned they had benefitted from was convenience of ready-made materials. Although the teachers had expressed complaints regarding the task-types and content of the teaching materials as explained in section 4.1.2., they acknowledged that they found it quite helpful to have the materials in hand.

For the reading component of the programme, after I listened to their complaints about having to cover the same text and task types, I asked the teachers whether they would have preferred to design their own reading lessons rather than follow the set syllabus. Both teachers stated that it would have been extremely difficult for them to plan and prepare their lessons had they been given such flexibility. NT2 was concerned about her relatively limited teaching repertoire. She said that for a novice teacher, having the book was of great help since it was the answer of many tricky questions like how to find a text, where to look at and which text to introduce. The teacher added that she felt “quite safe” as she was provided with a syllabus telling her what to do in the given time (NT2, R FI). Likewise, NT1 said although it could have been “a rewarding experience”, she could not imagine what she would have done if she had been told to cover certain reading skills and vocabulary items without being given a book and a syllabus. As such, she also viewed having the teaching material as “a big help.” (NT1, R FI).

The teachers also reported that they had benefitted from certain aspects of GHOs. The first aspect was related to mechanical exercises. Although both of them had complaints about the weight of mechanical exercises in the hand-outs, the teachers seemed to be pleased about having these exercises in the materials. For example, NT2 found it “time-saving” since she did not have to prepare such exercises. She also mentioned that it was difficult to find “METU style exercises” in other resources (NT2, GHO PI2). NT1 also highlighted the convenience of having mechanical exercises in the hand-outs. The teacher said that she was not sure of the efficiency of the mechanical exercises she prepared for the target language items. Therefore, the mechanical exercises
provided in the GHOs, as she put it, made her feel “confident” about her teaching practices geared to prepare students for the exams (NT1, GHO PI1).

Another aspect of the hand-outs that the teachers considered beneficial was their inclusion of exam type questions. For NT1, since the hand-outs were providing “context for the exams”, they aided her in preparing the lessons. She said, in her words, “I would probably freak out” if she had been told to teach certain language items without any institutional materials or exercises (NT1, GHO POI3). Similarly, NT2 found it helpful to be handed in exercises similar to the questions in language sections of the exams. The teacher said because of the “you-are-tested-on-what-you-learned situation” in grammar lessons, she did not have to prepare exam type exercises as GHOs were doing this for her (NT2, GHO FI).

Overall, the teachers both expressed that they were enjoying convenience of ready-made materials both in reading and language lessons. Since they had limited hands-on teaching and material development experience, it was not unexpected that they felt safer while following the institution-specific teaching materials.

4.1.3.2. Teacher Learning

Another area that the participants reported to have been assisted was teacher learning. They both indicated that certain aspects of the teaching materials employed for the investigated teaching components helped them improve themselves professionally in their first year of their teaching experiences in this institution. The category, teacher learning, surfaced while the teachers were reflecting upon their grammar teaching as well as written-feedback practices guided by the institution-specific teaching materials/tools. Therefore, data to be presented in this section was on these teaching components.

Regarding the GHOs, the teachers expressed different learning opportunities. That is, they seemed to have been benefitting from the materials in different ways. NT2 cited minute details of grammar as the major contributing factor to her teaching. She said that GHOs enabled her to find out about “subtle grammatical nuances” that made her surprised while preparing the lessons (NT2, GHO FI). For example, she reported that
she discovered the tense shift for unreal situations in *as if/as though sentences* and different ways of reducing *when* meaning *after* and *whenever* thanks to the GHOs. The teacher believed such “recognition”, as she put it, was good for her teaching skills (NT2, GHO FI).

Another area of teacher learning NT2 mentioned regarding the GHOs concerned becoming self-reflective. The teacher stated that GHOs included many tricky questions. Although she knew what the correct answers were, she was experiencing difficulties in explaining these in class, which made her “feel challenged.” (NT2, GHO FI). The teacher complained about resorting to Turkish in these situations. She was also unhappy about her Turkish explanations’ taking a lot of time for these questions. As such, she believed she could recognize her own “limitations as a teacher” while learning “how to deal with a difficult material.” (NT2, GHO FI).

NT1, on the other hand, touched upon the flexibility she enjoyed regarding the presentation stage of grammar lessons. The teacher stated that since GHOs did not include contexts designed for the target language structures, she had to create her own materials to introduce them. This, as she reported, enabled her to have full control over the lesson. That is, she could easily identify the difficulties her students were experiencing and cater for their needs as the students were learning the language item from the materials she had prepared. The teacher also found it “quite exciting” to see if her materials were effective or not. She said “as a novice, this helps me test myself, like how much I know about my students, their needs and levels.” (NT1, GHO FI).

The teachers also acknowledged that they had benefitted from the code-set for their written-feedback practices. Although they had complaints regarding the lack of guidance as to how to effectively apply the code-set as explained in section 4.1.1.1., they both stated that it still guided them in responding to students’ papers. NT1 referred to her lack of knowledge about giving written feedback while explaining how she benefitted from the code-set. She said at the beginning of the semester, she had rough ideas about how to teach reading and grammar based on her previous education. However, she did not feel competent particularly in teaching writing. The teacher believed she had learnt how to give feedback following the code-set provided by the
institution as well as observing experienced teachers’ practices. Likewise, NT2 found it helpful to be handed in a code-set for her written feedback practices. She said that she had learned the concept of process writing and its components during her pre-service education. However, she believed “a novice teacher still needs this [the code-set].” (NT2, WF FI). Since she lacked fixed routines for written feedback, the teacher reported that she benefitted from the code-set and felt safer since she knew that other teachers were using the same tool.

Overall, the teachers’ reflections on their grammar teaching and written feedback practices revealed that they believed certain aspects of the institutional materials employed for the investigated teaching components enabled them to better their professional skills and guided them through becoming more effective teachers.

4.1.3.3. Summary

The data presented in this section indicated that the novice teachers were aided in their instructional practices and professional development thanks to the teaching materials/tools they were provided with in their first years of teaching. They reported to have been enjoying convenience of ready-made materials and teacher learning opportunities given that they had limited repertoire of pedagogical routines for especially certain areas of teaching. Therefore, the theme, assistance, was examined referring to these two categories.

4.2. Research Question #2: What are the underlying factors that interact with instructional policies in the shaping of Turkish novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices?

The aim of the second question was to describe the underlying factors interrelating with the instructional policies implemented at METU NCC in the shaping of novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. While the participants were reflecting upon the instructional policies, they referred to certain factors that played a decisive role in how they interpreted their own experiences of teaching as first-year teachers at this institution. This showed that instructional policies did not solely explain their teaching beliefs and practices. Therefore, in this section, factors interacting with the instructional
policies in the determining of the aforementioned influences (i.e., confusion, tension and assistance) will be presented in detail. It must be noted that not all the components constituting the influences will be described. This section includes only the most recurrent factors as generated by the data collected. The table below presents a summary of the emerging themes and categories to this end.

Table 4.2 Summary of the themes and categories for the second research question

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contextual Factors</td>
<td>a) Exam Pressure</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Student Profile</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>c) Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal Factors</td>
<td>a) Background Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) In-service Teacher Training Course</td>
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4.2.1. Contextual Factors

The novice teachers’ depictions on their first year of teaching revealed that contextual factors played a strong mediating role in their perceptions of the instructional policies followed in their teaching context. That is, while reflecting upon the instructional policies, they frequently referred to certain context-specific factors interrelating with the policies that shaped their teaching beliefs and practices. In the following sections, the most recurrent factors - exam pressure, student profile and syllabus - are described, and the teachers’ views on each factor are presented.

4.2.1.1. Exam Pressure

The first contextual factor that interrelated with the instructional policies was exam pressure. As discussed in the previous section, the participant teachers both believed that the institution they worked for expected them to teach English communicatively. They tended to base their beliefs on the ICELT course the administration encouraged them to take in their first years of teaching at SFL, which, as they reported, promoted student-centered instruction through interaction in the target language. The teachers also expressed that their beliefs about teaching were in line with the communicative methodology and learner-centeredness. However, they seemed to
have been experiencing difficulties in putting their beliefs into practice. NT1 said she felt disappointed due to not being able to teach the way she wanted. This was because she believed “in an ideal dream world, people learn English like it is a big fun game. And they learn it to communicate not to use it for a specific purpose.” (NT1, R FI). This statement suggests that there was a mismatch between her ideal dream world and the real one. NT2, similarly, mentioned how her beliefs clashed with the reality of school life. Reflecting upon her pre-service education years, she said she was hoping to “avoid acting as an authority” in the classroom and “relinquish control” by giving students space so that they could be actively involved in the learning process and learn from their mistakes (NT2, LL FI). However, after she started teaching in an actual classroom, she saw that things were not the same as she had thought. In her words, “I saw that there is not that much room for discovery learning and tolerance for student mistakes in this system.” (NT2, LL FI). The major component of “this system”, according to the teacher, was exam-orientedness, which, in fact, had profound influences on both teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices (NT2, LL FI).

First of all, the teachers indicated that due to exams, they were not able to fully implement communicative methodology in their main course and grammar lessons. That is, in some cases, they expressed that they experienced some discrepancies between their preferences for teaching grammar using descriptive approach and the prescriptive approach imposed by the teaching materials on the teaching of grammar in their institution. Because students were expected to know minute details of grammar structures and answer questions in exams with full accuracy, the teachers, as they reported, felt the need to underline the rules and subtle nuances and even terminology in their instruction. For example, NT2 explained why she explicitly warned her students about the use of would rather in negative sentences in the first observed lesson as follows:

I did this so that they could be as accurate as possible. To me, it is not a problem if they say “would not rather”. They are just making generalizations. But in this system, this is completely wrong. That is a mistake. So they will be penalized. So if there is something peculiar to that grammar item, I always underline them. This is because the institution I work for is very strict about grammar. (NT2, GHO POI1)
Another example for the effects of exam pressure on the teachers came from NT1’s grammar lesson on reduction of adjective clauses. During this last observed lesson, she attracted the students’ attention to grammar terminology and told them that the name, *reduce*, was important for the exams. When I asked her what she was thinking while doing this in the follow-up interview, she said that she remembered the previous mid-term, in which there was a question asking students to reduce adverbial clause sentences. Because some students did not know what *reduce* meant, they used nominalization and could not get any points. Therefore, the teacher thought she should underline the terminology. Overall, these examples may suggest that the teachers’ concerns about the exams and evaluation criteria led them to be prescriptive. Since “the students’ mistakes are not considered to be a part of their language development but a setback to their ultimate goal” (NT2, LL FI) in this context, they inevitably prioritized accuracy in their instruction.

Another problem caused by the exam-oriented system, as the teachers argued, was that the teachers could not incorporate communicative tasks into their grammar lessons as much as they wanted. NT1 said because grammar-handouts included exam-type questions prepared by the institution itself, she did not want to skip them and do something else. She seemed to have been concerned that not doing the mechanical exercises in the hand-outs might put her students in disadvantaged positions before others in the exams. NT2, on the other hand, stated that although she tried to engage her students as much as possible during the introduction stage of the lessons, she found herself lecturing in the class since the students were tested on “subtle nuances” in the exams (NT2, GHO PI3). The teacher said she could not employ communicative activities using games, songs or videos while preparing her students for the exams in grammar lessons.

Exam pressure also influenced the teachers’ beliefs about the benefit of communicative tasks for their students. For NT1, the biggest problem was the huge gap between what the exams requires students to do and what they could do in real communication settings. She said since students had limited opportunities to communicate, they could not master the language and recognize the benefit of using it.
That is, they could not become as accurate as the system expected them to be by communicating. This, in turn, led the teacher to think “When I have them [students] do a communicative activity in class, it feels like it has neither any use for the students nor does it help them in terms of communicative skills.” (NT1, LL POI3). In other words, because “testing” was “such a big problem”, the teacher seemed to have been questioning the value of communicative activities for her students (NT1, LL POI3). However, it is important to note that this was not because the teacher believed such activities were irrelevant to the students or her students do not need them but because she believed the students should be doing more of them to improve their language skills and thus perform better in the exams.

NT2’s beliefs about activities requiring student production also seemed to have been mediated by the exam pressure. When I asked her how she felt when she could not cover the activities requiring student production in an observed main course lesson, the teacher said “Considering the system, it is not a problem.” (NT2, LL POI3). Although she personally believed that students’ producing together was “quite beneficial”, she said, in her words “for the students preparing for the EPE, they [production stage activities] are not that necessary” given that the students were not tested on them (NT2, LL POI3). This statement suggests that NT2’s beliefs about production stage activities were overridden by the exam pressure she felt, which had further implications for her classroom practices to be discussed under the third research question.

Finally, exam pressure seemed to have been hindering teacher autonomy in reading lessons. The teachers both complained that they could not adapt and manipulate the reading texts due to the testing syllabus. For example, while talking about her lesson plan, NT1 said she had wanted to omit the word “literally” from the text to adapt it according to her students’ level and needs (NT1, R PI2). However, when she saw the word on the target vocabulary list in the Vocabulary Journal, she felt she had to keep it due to exam pressure. NT2 had similar complaints. She said she refrained from changing the tasks or manipulating the vocabulary items in the texts for the fear that students might be tested on them. The following illustrates her concerns about the issue:
I mean, I don't just skip teaching a word saying ‘this is useless’. That is because I always have this anxiety – like what if they test it and the students cannot do it? What if they tell me “Hocam, we have not seen this in class, but the other classes have?” Or, not just this, there is also the possibility of being told that you have not covered such and such words supposed to be taught in class. (NT2, R POI3)

To sum up, data from the interviews and classroom observations revealed that the exam-oriented system, as the teachers argued, had considerable impact on the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. It prevented the teachers from adopting the principles of CLT in their lessons and thus created tensions between their beliefs and practices. In addition, it posed an obstacle to teacher autonomy and led the teachers to tailor their teaching practices to the requirements of the exams rather than to the needs of their students.

4.2.1.2. Student Profile

The second contextual factor that interrelated with the instructional policies was student profile. Data from the interviews revealed that students played an important role in the teachers’ designing and conducting their lessons. That is, while reflecting upon their lesson plans and taught lessons, the teachers cited certain features of students that inevitably shaped their instructional decisions before and during the lessons. In this section, these salient characteristics are presented, and their impacts on the teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices are discussed.

First of all, the teachers both complained about the washback effect of the exams on their students. They stated that because the students were focused more on passing their exams, they tended to underestimate the value of activities requiring interaction and active participation. In fact, they did not believe such activities would help them achieve their goals. As NT2 explained, “they [students] do not see the point of doing communicative activities. They want to see more challenging mechanical exercises, mid-term type questions [and] proficiency-type questions in the lessons.” (NT2, GHO FI). Similarly, NT1 complained about the students’ disinterest towards communicative activities. She said because they do not see the benefit of such activities for their language development, the activities, in fact, did not fulfill their original purpose. The following illustrates her frustrations about the issue:
As if I have them play games in class just to entertain them, while in fact they are doing a communicative practice. But sometimes they do it so randomly, just to pass time. Then what they do has no meaning. I mean students see these activities as a tool for relaxation, not for English language practice. (NT1, GHO FI).

The teachers also complained about the students’ negative attitude towards the communicative activities they prepared to make their lessons more interactive and effective. It was evident in their remarks that when the students did not respond to such activities the way they expected, the teachers felt disappointed. NT2 commented on her previous experiences in the following way: “You really understand it when you become a teacher. All this planning, preparation and time and effort spent on it and all that behavior in return with lack of motivation and dismissal of it all is just so annoying.” (NT2, GHO FI). Similarly, NT1 expressed her resentment over the way the students treated her while she was trying to engage them in communicative activities. In one of the pre-observation interviews, she commented on her frustration in the following way: “I give a task to students, feeling all so excited, saying come on, we will learn this and that, but they stare at me with their sulky faces. I get demoralized as well! My motivation has its limits, too!” (NT1, R PI3). As the quotations suggest, the teachers seemed to have been discouraged by their unmet expectations. This had further impacts on their classroom practices, which will be discussed under the third research question.

The teachers also cited students’ culture of learning as an important factor in designing and conducting their lessons. They both reported that after many years of schooling in traditional settings, their students were not used to taking an active role in their learning processes. For NT2, this was one of the reasons why her students were not able take part in activities that required negotiation and exchange of ideas especially in the main course lessons. She said “Culturally we do not have it in us; things like discussing, problem-solving or generating our own ideas. I mean, we do not come from an educational system in which such things are taught.” (NT2, LL PI3). As such, the teacher argued that since her students were not intellectually equipped with critical thinking and problem solving skills, they were having difficulties in doing tasks requiring these skills. Likewise, NT1 said she was experiencing problems while trying to adopt discovery learning in grammar lessons because, in her words, “Students are not
used to things, you know, like thinking over something, doing research, and comparing and discovering things. They are used to getting ready-made things.” (NT1, GHO PI2). Therefore, she stated that especially for some grammar points, the students could not make sense of what was going on in the classroom without explicit instructions and lecturing, which led the teacher to feel the need to adjust her instruction accordingly.

Finally, students’ level of proficiency emerged as a key factor in shaping especially NT1’s beliefs and practices about the use of L1. The teacher said she felt the administration expected her to teach English in line with the ICELT principles. However, she found this issue contradictory to the classroom reality in that she could not teach her lessons without resorting to L1. This was because the students’ low level of proficiency according to their levels (i.e., PIN) was not sufficient to understand the language structures covered in English. She commented on this issue as follows: “How am I supposed to teach reduction in English to the student who does not know the difference between after and afterwards?” (NT1, GHO FI). The teacher was not satisfied with her use of L1 though. She said “I do not have to give the Turkish meaning of everything. I believe they [students] have to form a meaning, I mean a concept in their minds.” (NT1, GHO FI). However, the teacher reported that since the students lacked confidence in their ability to make such connections as well as the necessary language skills, she ended up using L1 especially in grammar lessons.

The students’ level of proficiency also caused NT1 to experience difficulties while giving written feedback. The teacher believed that “the codes and the students are not matched.” (NT1, WF FI). Since the students had limited knowledge of the basics of the language, the teacher had concerns about their ability to decipher the codes. This led the teacher to adjust her feedback practices according to the students’ needs, which will be discussed in more detail under the third research question.

In sum, the statements above suggest that student profile was a significant factor that explained the teachers’ not being able put some of their beliefs into practice. It also had impacts on their instructional decisions and motivations both before and during the lessons. This section included only the most recurring features of students mentioned by the teachers that built up this overarching category, student profile.
4.2.1.3. Syllabus

The last contextual factor that emerged from the interview data interrelating with the instructional policies was syllabus. During the interviews, the teachers both indicated that the prescribed syllabus had significant impacts on their lesson designs and teaching practices. Therefore, this section aims to describe how the participants’ teaching beliefs and practices were mediated by the syllabus they were expected to implement in their own words.

First of all, the teachers both complained about the pace of the syllabus. They stated that since they had to cover the syllabus in the given time, they were not able to cater for their students’ needs. In NT1’s words, “We are tightly bound by the syllabus, and we will cover it in class even if it makes the students cry. So, the students do not understand present perfect tense, no worries, we will still study past perfect next week. Just like that!” (NT1, GHO PI2). This, in turn, created further concerns among the teachers about their students’ understanding of the taught lessons. For example, NT2 said it was “not healthy” (NT2, R FI) to assume that the students had learnt something just because the teachers introduced it to them in a two-hour class. The teacher believed the students needed more practice to fully utilize the skills they learnt in their lessons. Similarly, NT1 voiced her discontent about “forcing the students to learn.” (NT1, LL POI3). Looking back on her own experiences as a student, the teacher said “The students will certainly not learn the English I have learned in ten years in just one year” (NT1, LL POI3) because they were not provided with adequate opportunities to “recycle the language.” (NT1, LL POI3). That is, the teacher complained about not having enough time to go over and repeat the language items due to the overloaded syllabus to be covered in a short time.

The teachers also claimed that they were not able to adopt communicative methodology and employ communicative activities in their lessons due to the prescribed syllabus. For NT1, the problem was again lack of time. In her words, “I use the extra time in reading lessons for vocabulary revision. For LL, I can only cover the required
tasks [in the given time]. And in GHO lessons, you know, we cover like three different tenses in six class-hours and move on.” (NT1, GHO FI). As such, the teacher reported that although she wanted to get her students to engage in meaningful communication in the lessons, she could not find the time to be able to do this. NT2, on the other hand, complained about the mismatch between the teaching methodology the school expected the teachers to adopt and the classroom reality. The teacher said that she was, like every other teacher in the institution, trying to design her lessons in line with CLT principles as much as possible to make learning more meaningful to the students. However, while following such an “overambitious syllabus”, as she put it, it was very difficult to adopt communicative methodology efficiently (NT2, LL POI3). In fact, she believed that it was “not fair” to expect the teachers to fully implement it since they would need considerable amount of time to adapt the whole syllabus to make it appropriate for ideal teaching methods (NT2, LL POI3). This, according to NT2, was in fact, especially for some lessons, “simply impossible.” (NT, LL POI3).

The teachers’ reflections above on the prescribed syllabus revealed that although they had similar complaints about not being able to teach the language the way they desired, they differed in the way they responded to the challenges they faced in translating their beliefs into practice. NT1 seemed to be more questioning of the values and norms underlying her practices in the school she worked for. In her words, “Meanwhile, we are led to believe we teach English to them [students]. Yes, we teach, but all we teach is at recognition level. Well, I mean, we manufacture more robots to use this sentence: I can understand, but I cannot speak.” (NT1, LL FI). On the other hand, NT2 appeared to have taken a more compliant attitude and tended to conform to the school practices. She said “We are trying to teach one big language to a group of students with neither any background on language, nor any ideas about or interests in many topics. That is why we may of course not do it in in the ideal way in mind.” (NT1, LL POI3).

As these quotations suggest, contextual factors might not be the only source interrelating with the policies to fully explain the teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. That is, there should be additional factors leading them to interpret their
experiences in different ways. As such, the following section aims to describe the role of these factors, namely personal factors, in shaping the teachers’ beliefs and practices.

4.2.1.4. Summary

Data gathered from the interviews and classroom observations revealed that the novice teachers’ cognitions about the instructional policies implemented in their teaching setting were mediated by some contextual factors. In fact, these factors played a decisive role in the way the teachers interpreted the policies, and they inevitably shaped the teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. This section included only the most salient factors voiced by the participants that created conflicts between their beliefs and the way they behave professionally. As such, the theme, contextual factors, were explained referring to the following reiterated categories: exam pressure, student profile and syllabus.

4.2.2. Personal Factors

In addition to the contextual factors, some personal factors also surfaced in the interview data that seemed to be influential in the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and the way they reconstructed those beliefs and responded to the instructional policies followed in their teaching context. These personal factors included the teachers’ background education and the in-service teacher training course they attended during their first year of teaching at SFL. This section provides an overview of these factors and describes their role in the development of each participant as teachers.

4.2.2.1. Background Education

The novice teachers’ reflections upon the instructional policies during the interviews revealed that their personal histories as language learners influenced the way they justified, explained and made sense of their teaching experiences, beliefs and practices in their first year of teaching. As such, this section aims to describe the relationship among the teachers’ prior experiences as learners, their teaching beliefs and practices as well as their responses to the instructional policies referring to each teacher’s accounts.
For NT1, her previous experiences as a language learner seemed to have played a major role in the way the teacher approached teaching. That is, her strong belief in communicative teaching methodology lied in the fact that the teacher had learnt the language this way. While reflecting upon her school-days, the teacher said that she had found her English learning process quite enjoyable. In her words, “We used to paint, play games and sing songs in primary school. It was really fun and communicative.” (NT1, GHO PI1). When I asked her to elaborate on her “communicative” way of learning the language, she said there was a lot of discussion and pair-work in the class and that her teachers put a great emphasis on both oral and written production. As such, NT1 believed that she “internalized the language” as a learner “by actively using it for many years.” (NT1, GHO PI1). The teacher also mentioned that since her teachers used to speak English in class most of the time, she was constantly exposed to the target language. The teacher’s personal history of learning English was, in fact, closely linked to the different ways in which the instructional policies followed at her teaching context influenced her as a teacher. As discussed previously, NT1 was having difficulties in putting her beliefs into practice. That is, she had complaints about not being able to teach English communicatively. She was also uncomfortable with resorting to L1 in lessons. This, in turn, caused her to question the norms and values embedded deeply in the institution and thereby experience conflicts between her teaching beliefs and practices.

Another area of difficulty that NT1 went through was related to the pace of the program as discussed before. The teacher described the syllabus as “too fast, compact and overloaded” believing that it did not enable the students to have a firmer grasp of the subjects. In fact, she said the syllabus only caused “stress” and “a sense of inadequacy” among the students (NT1, LL POI3). Her strong protest was resulting from the huge gap between the way she learnt English and the way she felt she was forced to teach it. In her words “You know what, we would cover a unit in two or three weeks… We can do this here as well like in two weeks. This way, students can better understand and learn English and perform well in exams. But this is a big no.” (NT1, LL FI). As her statements suggest, the teacher felt disempowered by the required syllabus to teach the language the way she was taught.
NT1 also had complaints about the required content of the reading lessons. She believed that the students were deprived of the opportunity to enjoy reading different text types, and thus they stayed “dumbfounded” when they saw something literary (NT1, R FI). In her words, “They are exposed to one type of texts only, so they only improve towards that. English is not something that boring.” (NT1, R FI). The reason why the teacher attached importance to reading different genres was that in the institution she got educated, the use of short stories and other literary works was quite common. Therefore, she was exposed to different genres as a learner in the reading lessons. However, when faced with the dominance of informative academic texts in the lesson she was to teach, the teacher, as she reported, felt “restricted” and “professionally dissatisfied.” (NT1, R FI). This explains her dissatisfaction with the required course content discussed under the first research question.

Finally, NT1’s beliefs about testing seemed to have been mediated by her experiences as a learner. While reflecting upon how she learned English, the teacher said that she had never studied for exams or learned English for exams. This was because, as she believed, “You acquire the language. It is a part of you. It is like do you practice driving before long distance travels? No, because you know driving. It is a part of you. I think testing is like that.” (NT1, R POI3). As such, the teacher tended to view exams as a means to check “what you acquired and what you needed to work on as you continued learning.” (NT1, R POI3). However, in her teaching context, she was faced with students, as she described, who were learning English for exams. For her, due to “the exam-oriented system” (NT1, R POI3), the students were not aware of the fact that they were learning English in this school as they would need it to communicate when they started their undergraduate studies. This had further impacts on her teaching practices to be discussed under the third research question.

The teacher’s beliefs about testing and the school reality also had impacts on her teaching practices and the way she interpreted those practices. During the last observed reading lesson, I realized that the teacher had the students do a reading text as an exam practice without adapting it. Since this was not a typical practice of her, I asked NT1 to reflect upon her instructional decision in the follow-up interview. The teacher
complained about having to change her regular practices as the exams got closer. She said that normally, she scaffolded the reading texts and adapted them incorporating skill practices and communicative activities into the lessons to better address the students’ needs. However, just before the exams, she felt forced to expose the students to the texts as a whole without help. This inevitably made her think, in her words, “This goes to show that there is a discrepancy between what we teach and what we test. So we end up changing our teaching technique before the exams.” (NT1, R POI3). As such, the teacher reported that she had difficulties in making sense of why the students had “accuracy focused” and “definitive” exams telling them, in her words, “If you do not know this, you do not know English” if the goal of the institution was to get the students to acquire the language (NT1, R POI3). It appears that the teacher’s beliefs about testing were greatly shaped by her previous experiences as a language learner, and this in turn had impacts on the way she interpreted the institutional realities.

NT2, on the other hand, tended to refer to her experiences both as a language learner and a student-teacher while reflecting upon her experiences of teaching in her first year at SFL. The teacher reported that her negative experiences as a pupil were influential in her view of teaching and being a teacher. Looking back on her high school years, she said that she had unmotivated teachers who were not equipped with the necessary skills to cater for their students’ needs. The language instruction there, as she described, was “traditional” and “exam-oriented.” (NT2, LL FI). She, as a student, was also disturbed by the hierarchy in the relationships between the teachers and students. Because the teacher, as she reported, “come from a poor-quality high school of the Turkish education system”, in her pre-service education years, she believed that, as a teacher, she should “respect student autonomy” and “avoid acting as an authority” in the classroom (NT2, LL FI). As such, it was evident that prior to entering teaching, the teacher already had a set of beliefs about being a teacher, which was mediated by her negative experiences as a language learner. However, as discussed previously, NT2’s beliefs were challenged by the contextual factors in her teaching setting, which in turn created tensions between her beliefs and teaching practices.
The teacher’s previous experiences as a language learner also seemed to have enabled her to empathize with students. While reflecting on production stage activities, NT2 looked back on her school days and said “Until university, I had never participated in a group discussion. In fact, I had never been asked to share my ideas about anything.” (NT2, LL PI3). As such, she reported that she could understand why her students were having difficulties in doing activities that required discussions, deliberations, exchange of information and problem solving. This, in turn, might suggest that the teacher might be less insistent on covering such activities in class.

Pre-service teacher education also had a key role in shaping NT2’s beliefs as generated by the interview data. First of all, it had impacts on her beliefs about ideal reading instruction. As discussed before, the teacher had complaints about the required content of the reading lessons. She believed that the students should be introduced to other text types and tones in writing than academic texts and that they should be guided to develop critical thinking skills. This was because, as she reported, in her first year at university, when she read an article by Chomsky, the teacher felt as if she had not known English since she had great difficulties in understanding the article. The teacher said this experience made her realize that English was “just a tool” while reading and that the students should be taught to make “meaning connections” in reading lessons so that they could understand different text types and tones (NT2, R FI). However, due to the contextual factors explained before, the teacher said she was experiencing a dilemma between “focusing on critical reading” and “preparing the students for the exams” (NT2, R FI). The implications of this dilemma will further be discussed under the third research question.

Finally, the teacher reported that her beliefs about teaching English communicatively were mainly shaped by her pre-service education. In her words, “In high school, I knew something was wrong but I could not put a finger on it. We had no context to make connections. So of course it [the source] is university, the courses and the teachers who favored CLT.” (NT2, LL FI). On the other hand, the teacher seemed to have been questioning the applicability of CLT to her teaching context. She said that although people talked about the importance of student motivation, meaningful learning
and communicative activities in teacher development as well as in the ICELT sessions, in reality, they were trying to prepare a group of students who lacked motivation and proper study habits for an exam. As such, the aforementioned principles, according to her, lost their significance in her teaching context. In her words, “In reality, there is this horde of students and half of them fail. This is our reality and if doing more mechanical exercises help them pass, then, that is what I will do.” (NT2, GHO FI). As such, it seems that, when faced with the contextual factors explained before, the teacher tended to become more lenient to compromise her ideals. However, it must be noted that this does not mean that she completely abandoned her beliefs about teaching English communicatively. In fact, due to her negative experiences as a language learner, the teacher still seemed to favor CLT. In her words, “In theory, I agree that learning English should be experimental you know by taking risks and in a relaxed environment where there is meaningful communication.” (NT2, LL POI3). However, when she had difficulties in putting what she acquired in theory into practice, the teacher showed tendency to practice what she experienced rather than what she studied.

To sum up, data presented in this section revealed that the teachers’ educational background played a significant role in the formation of their teaching beliefs and the way they interpreted the institutional realities they had to deal with. For NT1, her experiences as a language learner emerged as a major source of her strong belief in communicative methodology. Since she was not able to translate her belief into practice, the teacher in turn tended to acquire a more questioning attitude towards the norms and practices prevailing in her teaching context. For NT2, on the other hand, her experiences both as a language learner and as a student-teacher were decisive in the way she approached teaching. The emphasis on CLT in her pre-service teacher education coupled with her negative language learning experiences seemed to have led her to favor communicative teaching principles. On the other hand, as revealed by the interview data, when she was faced with the contextual challenges, the teacher tended to conform to the school realities rather than holding on to her beliefs. This might have also resulted from the fact that the teacher empathized with the students due to the similarities between her way of learning English and theirs.
4.2.2.2. In-service Teacher Training Program

The novice teachers’ reflections on their first school teaching experience also revealed that the in-service teacher education program, namely ICELT, they were attending in their first year of teaching was influential in their teaching beliefs and practices. In fact, the teachers tended to view the program both as a key factor in defining the institutional policies implemented in their teaching context and as a contributor to their becoming better language teachers. As such, in this section, the teachers’ depictions on the ICELT course are presented, and their views on its applicability to their teaching context are discussed.

NT1 believed that the ICELT course enabled her to become a “more effective” teacher (NT1, GHO PI3). While reflecting upon her practices before the course, the teacher said she was having great difficulties in conveying what she knew to the students. As such, with the course, as she reported, she became more aware of what she was doing in the lessons and could better cater for her students’ needs. She explained this issue in the following way: “I have a better sense of what I am doing or what I am supposed to do. I know better what my students need and will react to as well as what benefits them more.” (NT1, GHO PI3). Her statement suggests that thanks to the course, the teacher became more confident about the effectiveness of her teaching practices.

Another reason why the teacher seemed to embrace the course was that her existing beliefs about teaching were in harmony with those promoted on the course. The teacher said that because of the ICELT course, she felt strongly encouraged to adopt a more interactive and communicative way of teaching in her institution. Since this was how she was taught English, NT1, as she stated, viewed ICELT principles as an ideal way of teaching a language. This shows that the course enabled the teacher to confirm her existing beliefs about teaching and presumably made her more adhere to them.

Similarly, NT2 expressed that she benefitted from the ICELT course in her first year of teaching. The teacher reported that although they had learned different methods and techniques to be used in different stages of a communicative lesson during her pre-
service teacher training, the “transition from context to elicitation”, as she put it, was still “vague” for her when she started teaching (NT2, GHO PI1). As such, the teacher believed that the course helped her gain a better understanding of how to get students to discover and make sense of the language items without emphasizing the rules. NT2 also reported that she enjoyed the hands-on practice provided in the course, which enabled her to apply her theoretically gained knowledge into practice.

Similar to NT1, NT2 also stated that her beliefs about teaching were well-aligned with the ICELT course. The teacher tended to take her assessed lessons as a reference point in articulating her beliefs. In her words, “I felt there was effective learning environment in those [assessed] lessons. They were really effective. The students were more involved and everybody was trying to do something.” (NT2, LL FI). Thus, it seems that, the imposed in-service teacher training programme may influence novice teachers’ beliefs about teaching.

The teachers both, on the other hand, expressed their reservations about the applicability of the course to their teaching context. Although they believed in the principles and practices promoted in the ICELT course and made efforts to design their lessons in line with them, the teachers, as they reported, found it difficult to apply what they had learnt from the course in their lessons due to the contextual factors explained before. NT1 described her teaching practices as “the middle way between ICELT and METU realities.” (NT1, GHO P12). The teacher said that she sometimes felt “ashamed of” her teaching practices when, for example, she underlined grammar rules, used too much Turkish and focused more on mechanical exercises in her lessons (NT1, LL FI). NT2, on the other hand, complained about the mismatch between the ideal ways of teaching promoted both in her pre-service training and on the ICELT course and the classroom realities. In her words, “When we consider the ICELT principles as institutional expectations or think of the general attitude during the meetings, these are not different from what I learnt in the department. But the discrepancy between those and the reality is making me uncomfortable.” (NT2, LL POI3). It was because of this discrepancy that the teacher felt forced to comply with the real world of teaching.
To sum up, data presented in this section revealed that the teachers had positive views about the ICELT course. They both reported that it had positive impacts on their teaching practices and helped them feel more efficient in the classroom. The teachers also expressed their belief in the principles promoted in the course. However, they thought that it was not possible to fully implement the principles promoted on the course in their teaching setting due to the realities of their classrooms. As such, it seems that ICELT was another factor that revealed the tensions between the novice teachers’ beliefs and teaching practices.

4.2.2.3. Summary

Data presented in this section revealed that personal factors were primarily influential in the formation of the novice teachers’ earlier beliefs before they started teaching in the real classroom. These beliefs, interacting with the contextual factors discussed previously, had impacts on the way the novice teachers interpreted the instructional policies implemented in their teaching context and adjusted their teaching practices accordingly. The teachers’ background education and the in-service teacher education program they attended in their first year at SFL emerged as major categories for the overarching theme personal factors described in this section.

4.3. Research Question #3: How do Turkish novice EFL teachers respond to institution-specific instructional policies in the classroom?

The aim of the last research question was to identify how the novice teachers responded to the instructional policies in the classroom. As discussed before, the data collected for the first and second questions revealed that the participants’ teaching beliefs and practices were influenced by the instructional policies implemented in their teaching context in certain ways depending on both contextual and personal factors. Closely linked to the findings of these questions, the last question sought to explore the extent to which the participants were able to translate their beliefs into practice. As such, the data presented in this section were primarily obtained from the classroom observations and think-aloud protocols as well as the teachers’ elaborations on their
teaching practices during the follow-up and final interviews. The table below presents a summary of the emerging theme and categories for the last research question.

### Table 4.3 Summary of the theme and categories for the third research question

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<tr>
<th>No</th>
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| 1  | Practice-based Responses to Instructional Policies | a) Compliance  
|    |                                           | b) Mediation  
|    |                                           | c) Deviation |

**4.3.1. Practice-based Responses to Instructional Policies**

While reflecting on the instructional policies they were expected to implement with the help of the institutional materials, the novice teachers frequently referred to their classroom practices as to how they, to a certain extent, adapted and adjusted them according to the institutional requirements. They also reflected on how they diverged from the instructional expectations and their own beliefs. These comments corroborated by the data obtained from the observations and think-alouds led to the emergence of three major categories subsumed by an overarching theme - *practice-based responses to the instructional policies* - as titled by the researcher. The emerging categories included compliance, mediation and deviation. The following sections aim to present related data for each category referring to each investigated teaching component.

**4.3.1.1. Compliance**

The first category regarding the teachers’ responses to the instructional policies was named *compliance*. This was because in some cases, the teachers were found to have been adapting their ideals and instructional practices to the institutional requirements rather than keeping with their own beliefs and teaching accordingly. As such, this section aims to describe certain teaching practices adopted by the teachers that illustrated such compliance referring to the investigated teaching components.

For the reading component of the programme, as discussed previously, both teachers had complaints regarding having to teach academic texts only. They thought it was important that the students be introduced to other text types and encouraged to think
critically so that they could better improve their reading skills. However, data from the classroom observations revealed that the teachers did not incorporate any text types other than those in the book into their lessons. NT2’s comments about the issue might explain the underlying reason behind the teachers’ decisions in this respect: “There is no room for these [other text types/critical thinking] in the syllabus. Students are not responsible for them, so it is like why would they bother?” (NT2, R POI3). As the statement suggests, the teachers seemed to compromise their beliefs about ideal reading instruction and adopt practices that were dictated by the institutional material employed in their teaching contexts.

Another aspect regarding the teachers’ reading practices concerned post-reading activities. While reflecting upon their ideal reading lesson, the teachers both cited post-reading activities as part of these lessons. During my observations, however, I did not see the inclusion of such activities in their lessons. Thinking that the teachers might have used them in the second hours, I probed for the issue in the final interviews. The teachers both stated that they did not use post-reading activities in these hours either. They seemed to have different reasons for this preference. For NT2, this was because, in her words, “It is so unnecessary, and it is so not tested. Instead, we play games or do grammar revision.” (NT2, R FI). NT1, on the other hand, attributed her not using post-reading activities to the texts covered in the lessons. She said that she was having difficulties in preparing such activities as the texts were too advanced, and the topics were highly informative. As such, similar to NT2, NT1, as she reported, made use of the extra time for vocabulary or grammar revision. The teachers’ statements along with the lack of post reading exercises in the material they had to cover in class suggest that due to the institutional constraints (e.g., informative and advanced text types, exams) on reading instruction, the teachers were not able to put their beliefs into practice. Although the teachers did not mention it, the material’s not having post-reading activities might have also impacted on their teaching practices.

Finally, the teachers’ concerns regarding the weight of the vocabulary teaching in the reading lessons were confirmed by the observational data. In all the observed lessons, they both used materials specifically prepared for the target vocabulary items
before they had the students read the texts, and these activities took up considerable time in the lessons. While reflecting upon these practices, the teachers explained how their instructional decisions changed in time. NT1 said she used to choose vocabulary items from the text herself for pre-teaching. However, when she realized that certain words given the vocabulary journal of the book were tested in the mid-term, the teacher said, in her words, “The journal became my best friend.” (POI1, R FI). This shows that the teacher felt forced to give up on her autonomy thinking that the words she chose were not serving the students’ needs in the exams. Similarly, NT2 reported that compared to the first semester, she found herself focusing more on vocabulary teaching rather than the teaching of reading skills in the second semester lessons although she believed the opposite should have been the case. As such, it seems that due to the exam pressure in their minds, the teachers both tended to cover the reading lessons in line with the institutional requirements regarding vocabulary teaching.

Similar to the reading component, the teachers were also observed to have been complying with institutional requirements for the speaking component of the programme realized by the course book in certain ways. This was because of their strict adherence to the prescribed syllabus. For example, in one of the main course lessons, I observed that NT1 was having difficulty in getting the students to do some exercises. However, the teacher seemed to be insistent on their completion and gave instructions accordingly. In the follow-up interview, when I asked her to reflect upon her instructional decisions, she said that although she believed the exercises (i.e., pair-work discussions about business) were neither relevant to her students nor preparing them for the following tasks, she still wanted to cover them due to her “syllabus obsession.” (NT1, LL PO1). That is, the teacher, as she reported, felt forced to cover each and every exercise in the book if not stated in the programme. This was because, in her words:

There is the syllabus and there is the application of the syllabus in practice. And those are two different things. And I think because I am a novice, I do not know how the teachers here apply the syllabus into their practice. So I try to stick with the syllabus as much as possible.” (NT1, LL PO1)
It seems that due to her lack of experience, NT1 tended to view it safer to follow the syllabus rather than her own pedagogical judgments and adapted her teaching practices accordingly.

Another area of compliance concerned the inclusion of production stage activities in main course lessons. As discussed previously, the teachers both had expressed their belief in the benefit of such activities for their students’ language development. However, data collected from the observations showed that except for one lesson in which NT1 turned a speaking activity into dialogue writing, the teachers did not make use of these activities in the main course lessons. When I probed for the issue in the follow-up interviews, they both stated that if such tasks were omitted in the given syllabus, they just did so. On the other hand, if they were optional, the teachers had different reasons for not incorporating them into their lessons. For NT1, the main reason was her students’ negative attitude towards these activities. Since she believed the students would not do the activities requiring interaction and collaboration, the teacher sometimes tended to omit the optional tasks as well. NT2, on the other hand, was concerned about the exams. She said that given that the production stage activities did not have immediate effects on her students’ performance in the exams, she replaced them with grammar or vocabulary revision practices. This suggests that the school realities (i.e., negative student attitude and exams) as well as the institutional requirements regarding the omission of production stage activities had a major role in the teachers’ instructional decisions.

To sum up, data collected from the observations revealed that the novice teachers were not able to translate their beliefs into practice especially in reading and main course lessons. Rather, they seemed to conform to the institutional requirements (e.g., following the prescribed syllabus and teaching materials) for certain teaching practices in their first year of teaching. Finally, they seemed to need extra support to interpret the instructional policies and make use of them in their teaching practices.
4.3.1.2. Mediation

The second category regarding the teachers’ responses to the instructional policies was titled mediation. For certain aspects of their language instruction, the teachers were observed to have been trying to resolve the tensions between their beliefs and the instructional policies that manifested themselves in teaching materials/tools followed in their teaching context in certain ways. In other words, they seemed to have developed some teaching strategies to reconcile their beliefs with the school requirements. This section aims to describe these teaching practices and the teachers’ reflections on them as tied to the investigated syllabus components.

Regarding written feedback practices, as explained before, the teachers were expected to indicate students’ mistakes using the code-set provided by the institution. However, data collected from think-aloud protocols showed that in addition to the codes specified for certain language mistakes, the teachers seemed to have developed their own ways of making students realize their mistakes. Providing extra clues next to the codes was one of these strategies. For example, on one of the student papers, in addition to pointing out the mistake, NT1 added an extra clue, i.e., purpose or result? (NT1, written feedback), to show that there was a linker mistake. Similarly, NT2 wrote “This job is tiring. I am very tired” (NT2, written feedback) in brackets next to the code for wrong word form (WF) to indicate the misuse of the word “boring”. When I reminded the teachers of such instances (there were a lot more than those indicated above) and asked them to reflect upon these in the final interview, they both said that they frequently adopted this strategy since they believed the codes on their own might not be sufficient for most of their students to correct their mistakes. Given that they were not allowed to explicitly indicate student errors, the teachers, as they reported, developed this strategy to cater for their students’ needs.

Another strategy regarding the teachers’ feedback practices was writing questions on students’ papers rather than using codes to help them do self-correction. The teachers seemed to have different motivations for this practice. For NT1, this
“tactic” was especially for “weaker students” since she had concerns about their ability to decipher the codes (NT1, WF FI). In addition, she believed such students might feel overwhelmed by the number of codes on their papers. Therefore, rather than using the codes, the teacher, as she reported, sometimes opted for directing questions to these students (e.g., a or the?, these or your?) while giving feedback. On the other hand, NT2, as she reported, found use of codes rather “mechanical” and “impersonal.” (NT2, WF FI). As such, she believed that her feedback practices became “more interactive” as she used questions (NT2, WF FI). That is, the teacher stated that she felt as if there had been a “written dialogue” between her and the students when she wrote questions on student papers. (e.g., subject?, Is this an obligation?, What is the adj. form?) (NT2, WF FI).

Overall, the teachers’ written feedback practices showed that they were keeping with their beliefs about their students’ needs while at the same time fulfilling the institutional requirements about not providing direct correction on student papers. It is important to note that they both gave their colleagues and partners credit for improving their feedback practices and finding “the middle way.” (NT1, WF FI).

The teachers were also observed to have been trying to reconcile their beliefs and the institutional constraints caused by the teaching materials in grammar lessons. As discussed before, they both had complained about the task types given in the GHOs, stating that the exercises were mostly mechanical. They had also indicated that the handouts did not include contexts for the target language structures. The input parts, as they reported, consisted of sentence-level examples and rules. However, the teachers seemed to have turned this handicap into an opportunity to translate their beliefs into practice. That is, data collected from the observations revealed that in line with their beliefs, the teachers tried to teach grammar through meaningful contexts to help students understand the target language items. Even though they had to provide more sentence-level examples to ensure that their students had a good grasp of the structures, the teachers did not give up their belief in the importance of presenting grammar in context. In fact, while reflecting upon their priorities in grammar instruction in the final interviews, they both stated that before the lessons, they were concerned about how to make the target item more meaningful to their students in the first place. As such, the teachers, as they
reported, spent considerable time and energy to prepare materials for the presentation stage to this end. This shows that even though they felt restricted due to the task types they covered in class, the teachers were still keeping with their beliefs about how to introduce grammar to a certain extent.

In sum, data collected from the think-aloud protocols and observations revealed that the teachers seemed to have been handling some complications they faced in their first year of teaching by reconciling their beliefs with institutional requirements. This section included only the most salient teaching practices illustrating such mediation.

4.3.1.3. Deviation

The last category of the teachers’ responses to the instructional policies was called deviation. Data collected from the observations revealed that the teachers tended to overlook some of the institutional requirements and behaved in a way that contradicted what they were expected to do in class. In this section, such deviations from the instructional policies are briefly described since similar instances have been discussed before.

First of all, the teachers both resorted to Turkish especially in the grammar lessons. For example, while covering the modals hand-out (since the hand-out was long, I had a chance to observe the teachers covering different modals), they provided Turkish translations of the target language structures (i.e., need not have done/ did not have to – be supposed to/would rather), and their explanations took up a huge part of the lessons. For NT1, this was because she had run out of ways to paraphrase the modals in English to make them clearer to the students. NT2, on the other hand, believed it was “practical” to use L1 to help students understand the function of the modals she taught in the lesson (NT2, GHO POI1). As discussed before, the teacher was more lenient with the use of Turkish in class and thought it enabled students to have a firmer grasp of the language items. The teachers’ statements suggest that since they had limited time allotted for the language structures in the given syllabus, they felt the need to ensure their students’ understanding of the grammar points, which eventually made them use L1. It is important to note that the use of L1 was a more salient feature of NT2’s lessons. This
shows that the teachers were keeping with their beliefs about the issue. That is, NT1 seemed to have been deviating from the policy only because she felt forced to do so due to the contextual factors explained before. NT2, on the other hand, was doing the same because she believed in the benefit of judicious amount of mother tongue in the lessons.

Another form of deviation from the institutional policies was related to the teachers’ explicit emphasis on form while teaching grammar. The teachers both were observed to have written grammar rules on the boards in a formulaic way while covering the modals hand-out (e.g., should have+V3, needn’t have+V3, be supposed to+V1). In the follow-up interviews, they provided similar reasons for their instructional decisions. NT1 said that even though she knew her teacher-trainer would criticize her for teaching that way, she felt forced to be prescriptive to avoid misunderstandings in class. NT2, in a similar vein, explained her reason in the following way: “I always feel that when students see the rule, they feel more comfortable.” (NT2, GHO POI1). The teacher added that since the students’ use of wrong form of the verbs after the modals was “unforgivable mistake in the METU system”, she felt the need to underline the rules in class (NT2, GHO POI1). The teachers’ responses suggest that they could not disregard the demand to prepare their students for the exams. In fact, exam pressure seemed to have influenced the way NT2 covered the mechanical exercises given in the hand-outs. During the observations, I realized that the teacher tried to guide the students by asking them questions to elicit the correct answers for the first few questions of each exercise. When I asked her to reflect upon her practices in the follow-up interviews, she said that her motivation was to guide the students so that they would know how to approach questions in exams. As such, it seems that NT2’s teaching practices were strongly shaped by the exam pressure on her.

Finally, the teachers’ compliance to the prescribed syllabus discussed before seemed to have made them deviate from the institutional expectations as to the teaching of English in a communicative way. During the observations, I saw that the teachers were trying to complete the mechanical exercises given in the GHOs within the class-hours allotted for them in the syllabus. Since these took up a huge part of their classroom teaching, the teachers did not employ tasks enabling the students to use the language in
meaningful way. On the other hand, the teachers seemed to differ in the way they covered the exercises in some of the observed lessons. As far as her observed practices were concerned, NT2 had the students do the exercises as they were given in the handouts individually. NT1, however, were observed to have adapted some of the tasks in the hand-outs (e.g., turning them into matching halves, projecting some on the board) and she had the students do them in pairs in some of the lessons. This was because the teacher wanted “to vary student interaction with the material as much as possible.” (NT1, GHO POI1). As such, within her teaching context, NT1’s efforts could also be interpreted as conscious attempts to mediate between her beliefs and the school requirements.

To sum up, data presented in this section showed that, the teachers tended to follow certain ways of teaching not because they believed in them (except for NT’s use of L1 in class) but because they felt these were what was needed to be done in their teaching context. That is, the teachers seemed to have adopted some practices contradicting both their beliefs and institutional expectations. These included the use of L1 in the classroom, form-focused instruction and not being able to include communicative activities in their lessons.

4.3.1.4. Summary

The influences of the instructional policies along with the factors interacting with them in the shaping of the novice teachers’ beliefs and teaching practices manifested themselves in the classroom in three ways. Firstly, the teachers were observed to have complied with some of the teaching principles and norms followed in their institution compromising their beliefs. Secondly, for some aspects of their instruction, they tried to mediate between what they believed and what they were required to do. Finally, the teachers deviated from certain instructional policies believing that these deviations were optimal practices for their teaching context even if they did not overlap with their ideal teaching setting.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0. Introduction

This study investigated the role of the institutional policies implemented at a preparatory school of an English-medium university in the shaping of novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. More specifically, it explored the influences of the institutional policies on novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices and factors interrelating with the policies as well as novice teachers’ practice-based responses to the policies in their classrooms. The preceding chapter has reported the findings of the study. This final chapter presents discussion of the findings, pedagogical implications and limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research. The chapter ends with conclusion.

5.1. Discussion

The first significant finding of this study was that the novice teachers experienced confusion regarding skill-specific expectations of their institution in their first year of teaching. Their confusion about reading and writing instruction resulted from lack of guidance as to how the teachers were expected to exploit the institutional materials/tools employed for these skills. This finding was in agreement with that of Hayes (2008), who also reported difficulties on the part of the beginning teachers of his study in utilizing instructional materials in their teaching context. However, different
from those in Hayes’ (2008) study, the teachers of the present study had experienced formal process of induction at the beginning of the first semester. This may suggest that they were not sufficiently informed about the materials/tools to be used in the second semester during this process. As such, this highlights the need on the part of novice teachers to be guided during the induction program so as to make them competent in terms of the expected implementation of the teaching materials/tools in the long term.

As for the speaking component of the programme, the teachers’ confusion seemed to have resulted from the disparity, as they argued, between the syllabus aims and the task types they were expected to cover in the lessons as well as the disparity between the aims and the assessment. That is, they believed they were not able to teach the language the way the school wanted them to (i.e., in line with the CLT principles) due to the institutional constraints. This may suggest that the school does not provide novice teachers with supportive environment to realize the instructional policies it sets forth. However, in order for this argument to be conclusive, it is important that veteran teachers be asked to reflect upon their experiences of implementing the syllabus followed in the institution. What could be understood from the teacher participants’ experience, however, is that the school should provide novice teachers with more explicit guidance on the institutional expectations in the teaching of the language skills. In addition, it should be sensitive to these teachers’ concerns and challenges and help them find ways to fulfill the curriculum requirements.

The novice teachers’ confusion regarding the skill-specific expectations had further impacts on their teaching practices. As revealed by the collected data, the teachers were concerned about the effectiveness of their teaching practices and tended to attribute the problem to lack of guidance. That is, they were not sure of the methodology they adopted in the teaching of certain skills and seemed to have been experiencing difficulties in interpreting the existing policies. Unlike the novice teacher in Farrell’s (2003) study, the participants of this study took personal responsibility and found their informal mentors to overcome their confusion. However, this did not seem to have helped them much in the long term as the support they got from experienced teachers was limited to one-off gathering and informal chats. This may suggest that the novice teachers need more structured guidance as to the shared practices followed in their
teaching context to be able to make sound pedagogical decisions. In this regard, formal mentoring programs might facilitate the adjustment of novice teachers to their teaching environment and support them to increase the quality of their teaching experience in their first years. The teachers’ confusion about material management also seems to corroborate such a need. The novice teachers’ difficulties in the effective use of certain teaching materials in class could be averted by mentors and mentees’ observing each other in class. As such, the teachers can gain practical knowledge regarding the application of the teaching tools in the context of a real classroom. It must be noted that the teachers of this study were already observing their colleagues as part of the ICELT course they were taking at the time of the study. This may further suggest that in-service teacher education programs should consider the context-specific needs of the teachers while following their own global schemes.

Another important finding of this study was that the novice teachers felt restricted to keep with their beliefs and teach accordingly. That is, they reported that they were not always able to put their beliefs into practice, which, in turn, caused tensions between the two. This finding was in line with several previous studies on teacher cognition carried out with the participation of both novice and experienced teachers (e.g., Akbulut; 2007; Erkmen, 2010; Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Flores & Day, 2006; Lee, 2008; Phipps & Borg, 2009, Richards & Pennington, 1998; Urmston & Pennington; 2008). The first complication the novice teachers faced was regarding the required course content. The teachers believed that what they had to teach in class posed obstacles to how they wanted to conduct their lessons. This finding was also reported in Farrell’s (2006) study on the experiences of a first-year teacher. However, different from this teacher, the novice teachers of the present study seemed to have compromised their beliefs and tended to comply with the syllabus requirements. That is, although they had complaints about the content of the instruction provided in reading and grammar lessons, the teachers, as also confirmed by the observational data, did not deviate from the required content due to the exam pressure. This, in turn, seemed to have led the teachers to question the effectiveness of their teaching styles believing that they were not responding to their students’ needs. As such, it appears that in terms of the content of their instruction, the novice teachers in this study were experiencing a dilemma between
tailoring their teaching to their students’ needs in line with their beliefs and to the demands of the exams. This may suggest the need on the part of the educational institutions following tight schedules as the context of the present study to make room for teacher autonomy when planning and designing their curriculum. In addition, the teachers’ lack of experience regarding how to adapt the syllabus to the contextual realities of their teaching context might have played a role in such confusion.

Another area of tension was related to use of L1. The teachers both believed that students should be exposed to English as much as possible. However, they both resorted to their mother tongue especially when teaching grammar. In line with the previous research (Akbulut, 2007; Richards & Pennington, 1998), the teachers cited students’ proficiency levels and keeping up with the syllabus as well as their concerns for student understanding as the reasons for such a choice. On the other hand, it was revealed that the teachers felt guilty when they used their mother tongue in class thinking that they might be violating the school policy. This might be resulting from the fact that the policy regarding the use of L1 in the classroom may not be clearly defined by policy makers. The policy makers in this case are both the in-service teacher education unit, which advocates the use of English in the classroom as much as possible aligned with the principles of the ICELT course and the occasional warnings coming from the administrators against resorting to the frequent use of L1 in the classroom. However, this strong promotion of L2 use in the classroom may not establish a clear guideline for the teachers on the appropriate and timely use of L1 in the classroom. The underlying factor behind this could be that the certification program, the ICELT course, which is de facto obligatory for first year teachers, is designed for global use and does not have a lot of consideration for local needs and the facilitating use of the mother tongue. This highlights the significance of presenting solid rationales for especially novice teachers when introducing policies regarding classroom practices. In this very case, a proper explanation of when, how and for what purposes the use L1 is appropriate as well as why it should not be overdone could have been to the better interest of novice teachers as it would help in alleviating the level of turmoil they experience concerning the use of L1 in the classroom. This tension between the teacher belief and institution policies was specifically evident in NT2.
The tensions between the novice teachers’ beliefs and practices also concerned the methodology they wanted to adopt while conducting their lessons. Although they both expressed their belief in the principles and practices of CLT in line with the expectations of the institution they worked for, the teachers were not able to fully translate their beliefs into practice. Consistent with the findings of the previous studies (Akbulut, 2007; Erkmen, 2010; Farrell, 2006; Richards & Pennington, 1998; Urmston & Pennington, 2008), the teachers of this study reported that they had to adopt more teacher-centered approach in class and allocate insufficient time for communicative activities in their lessons. The teachers, on the other hand, seemed to differ in the way they reacted to this complication. Similar to the teacher of Farrell’s (2006) study, NT1 tended to look for ways to teach the way in line with her beliefs. That is, she was insistent on making use of CLT principles in her lessons as much as possible. While doing this, the teacher seemed to have been experiencing great frustrations. NT2, however, displayed tendency to question the applicability of her beliefs into her teaching context and seemed to conform to the teaching context. The fact that the teachers teaching in the same context varied in the way they responded to the tensions they experienced suggest that there are certain factors that shape and reshape these teachers’ beliefs and practices. This underlines the need for exploring these factors so as to better make sense of novice teachers’ experiences in their first year of teaching. In this very case, the teachers’ language learning experiences might have played a significant role in the way they responded to tensions between their beliefs and practices, which will be further described in the following paragraphs.

Unlike the points of tension and confusion that have been discussed previously in this section, it might also be argued that the teachers find a safe zone outlined by instructional policies. It seems that the tools, textbooks and hand-outs that the teachers are required to use in their teaching are both a source of conflict and challenge as well as a source of convenience and confidence for them. The teachers both indicated that it would have been extremely difficult for them to plan and prepare lessons without the guidance of the teaching materials. Therefore, it could be proposed that although the teachers demand a certain level of autonomy inside and outside the classroom as to their practices, they also find comfort in being provided with a general frame by means of
certain materials/tools. This brings us to the contention that since novice teachers have relatively limited repertoire of pedagogical routines to help them develop confidence, it is important that institutions ensure these teachers have the necessary teaching resources in their initial years of teaching.

In line with L2 teacher belief studies on nation-wide policies (Assalahi, 2013; Cahn & Barnard, 2009; Carless, 2003; Chen, 2008; Kirkgöz, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Sakui, 2004), this study also revealed that the teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices were inextricably interwoven with various contextual factors interacting with the institutional policies implemented in their teaching context. One of the most reiterated factors was exam pressure. Consistent with the previous research on novice teacher experiences (Akbulut, 2007; Erkmen, 2010; Farrell, 2006; Richards & Pennington, 1998; Urmston & Pennigton, 2008), the participant teachers of this study reported that they felt forced to adopt more prescriptive approach in the teaching of English due to exam pressure. Student profile was another recurrent factor that profoundly influenced the way the teachers designed and conducted their lessons. The teachers indicated that despite their preference of inductive teaching, their students expected them to teach deductively (a result also reported by Phipps & Borg, 2009 and Urmston & Pennigton, 2008). They also complained about students’ lack of motivation in participating in communicative activities. This finding was also reported by Erkmen (2010) and Richards and Pennington (1998). The teachers tended to attribute their students’ preference to their culture of learning. That is, they stated that since the students were not used to taking an active role in their learning process, they were experiencing difficulties in incorporating innovative practices into their teaching. Finally, consistent with previous studies (Akbulut, 2007; Richards & Pennington, 1998; Urmston & Pennigton, 2008), this study found that students’ low level of proficiency was decisive in the teachers’ inability to conduct their lessons in L2. The prescribed syllabus was the last factor that seemed to have impinged on the way the teachers designed their lessons. The teachers’ concerns about keeping up with the syllabus seemed to have caused them to employ product-oriented approach, which was also among the findings reported by Akbulut (2007), Erkmen (2010), Farrell (2006), Richards and Pennington (1998) and Urmston and Pennigton (2008).
The findings of the study also revealed that previous language learning experiences had a decisive role in the formation of the participant teachers’ beliefs and how they approached teaching. This finding is consistent with previous studies conducted with the participation of both pre-service and in-service teachers with varying teaching experience (Erkmen, 2010; Farrell, 1999; M. Borg, 2005; Numrich, 1996; Pahissa & Tragant, 2009; Richards and Pennington, 1998; Yigitoglu & Belcher; 2014). The teachers in this study frequently made reference to their schooling years to justify, explain and make sense of their beliefs, practices and teaching experiences. However, the teachers differed in the way they drew from their language learning experiences. Her positive experiences as a learner seemed to have made NT1 favor student-centered teaching approach. The teacher expressed her strong belief in engaging students in communicative language use as she had learnt English this way. The fairly positive impressions of NT1 and the success she had in her language education made her positively acquainted with the CLT even before being introduced to it during a formal in-service teacher education program (i.e., ICELT). However, she felt frustrated when she could not apply these principles into her teaching. In fact, her reflections on her teaching experiences suggest that it was mentally tiring for NT1 to learn teaching in line with her beliefs while adapting it to the contextual realities of the institution. This might be because she was not exposed to another approach during her own language learning education process nor was she introduced to them in the aforementioned training program (ICELT). On the other hand, while NT2 was talking about her own language learning process, she reported that she was not encouraged to adopt a critical perspective nor was she asked to participate in pair and group work activities, and she described the whole system as “traditional” and “exam-oriented.” (NT2, LL FI). These negative experiences, however, might have also been stored in her knowledge base. That she did not see any harm in using mechanical and traditional exercises if she felt the students would benefit from them may suggest that she thought this methodology might have worked for her, and this might have made her more lenient to compromise her beliefs. However, it is important to note that she had by no means given up her positive beliefs concerning CLT, which she acquired during her formal teacher education program. She only seemed to have developed a skill of resourcefulness, which helped her traverse
across different methodologies and approaches as she saw fit guided by student needs. Therefore, she was less criticizing towards the mismatch between the theory and the actual teaching context than NT1.

Formal teacher education program was another factor that played a role in the formation of NT2’s beliefs. This finding confirms previous studies which reported the influence of teacher education programs in the development of pre-service teachers’ beliefs (Cabaroğlu & Roberts, 2000; Debreli, 2012; Mattheoudakis, 2007; Özmen, 2012). As previously mentioned, NT2 indicated that although the teacher had felt that there was something wrong with the traditional methods via which she was taught English, she had not been able to precisely pinpoint the source of the problem. It was only during her pre-service education that she saw the value in CLT. However, when she actually started teaching, she realized that it could be quite difficult at times to put what she acquired in theory into practice because of contextual factors such as student profile, classroom dynamics and the content and approach presented in certain materials provided by the institution. Although the teacher felt she was able to handle such inconsistencies between her beliefs and realities of the actual classroom practice by compromising her ideals and resorting to more teacher-centered approach at times, she did not necessarily feel comfortable in doing so. In fact, the teacher reported that she tended to question her ability to teach when she felt the gap between the ideal ways of teaching English she was taught and the way she taught English in the classroom. This emphasizes the need on the part of teacher education programs to highlight potential mismatches between theory and context-specific realities to better prepare student-teachers for the actual teaching settings.

In line with the previous research (Borg, 2011; Kurihira & Samimy, 2007; Lamie, 2001), in-service teacher education program was also among the factors that were influential in the participant teachers’ teaching beliefs. For NT1, the course enabled the teacher to become more aware of her pre-existing beliefs about teaching (a result also reported by Borg, 2011) and to respond to her students’ needs in a more effective way. This may suggest that for a teacher who has no formal teacher training, as in the case of NT1, in-service teacher training courses might provide an opportunity to
develop into a pedagogically more competent teacher. NT2 provided a similar perspective, describing how the ICELT course made it possible for her to put her theoretical knowledge into practice. However, it would be an overstatement to suggest that the teachers were able to operationalize all the principles promoted by the ICELT course in their teaching (a result also reported by Kurihira & Samimy, 2007). As discussed before, this may be a result of the teachers’ stated disparity between the principles advocated by the ICELT course and institution-specific contextual factors. However, further research is required to detect whether this is caused by the lack of consideration for local needs on the part of the ICELT course or factors brought in the equation by the teachers themselves such as inexperience.

The last finding of the study was that the novice teachers responded to the instructional policies in the classroom in different ways. That is, the teachers seemed to have developed certain pedagogical strategies that enabled them to survive in their first year of teaching at a professional culture with standards of conduct. First, they were observed to have tended to comply with the instructional requirements which manifested themselves in the given teaching materials and syllabus. That is, they adopted certain ways of doing things even if these did not coincide with their beliefs. This finding confirms previous studies which reported compliance on the part of teachers with established practices of school cultures (Flores & Day, 2006 and Lee, 2008). Second, the teachers were observed to have been trying to reconcile their beliefs with the institutional requirements and constraints which were caused by certain teaching materials/tools. Rather than embracing certain ways of teaching suggested by the use of these materials, the teachers tried to make use of them in line with their beliefs. Such an effort on the part of a novice teacher was also reported in Farrell’s (2006) study. Finally, the teachers were observed to have been deviating from certain institutional policies while conducting their lessons. However, these deviations were not for the sake of putting their beliefs into practice. In fact, it seems that although the institutional expectations and the teachers’ beliefs were in harmony in most cases (e.g., teaching English in line with the CLT principles), due to the contextual constraints, the teachers ended up diverging from both the institution-specific policies and their own beliefs.
In the very context of the present study, the provision of the ICELT course, wording of the syllabi (see Appendix C), criteria considered in selecting the course book (see chapter 3 section 3.2.1.2.1.) and implicit encouragement on the part of the administration during staff meetings as well as my informal chats with some administrative members suggest that the institution expects their teachers to adopt communicative methodology in the teaching of English as also reported by the participants of the study. The goal of the institution is to help students whose level of English is below the proficiency required for the departments at METU NCC acquire the necessary language skills and prepare them for their English-medium academic studies. Whether these students can start their undergraduate studies is determined by an exit proficiency exam at the end of each academic year. The existence of the proficiency exam seems to have reflections on the instructional policies implemented in the institution. In fact, Deniz’s (a member of the administration from the main campus) statement regarding the goal of the syllabus being a basis for testing and evaluation might be a proof for this. The exam reality coupled with the lack of experience and practical knowledge on the part of the participant teachers seem to have led the aforementioned practice-based responses (i.e., compliance, mediation and deviation) to the instructional policies implemented in the context. That the novice teachers were not able to teach in line with their beliefs by complying with the policies as well as by deviating from them may suggest that the instructional policies, as interpreted by these teachers, are a hindrance for them more than help. This may further suggest that the novice teachers need guidance as to how to balance various partially competing demands such as the institutional policy for communicative English education, teaching practices dictated by the institutional materials, students’ expectations about preparation for exams, the principles of the ICELT course and the prescribed syllabus as well as teaching in line with their own beliefs. Finally, on the part of the institution, the results of this study may suggest the need to incorporate a more communicative speaking assessment into the programme that should provide a comprehensive assessment of students’ communicative competence. This may help novice teachers persist in their beliefs and thus realize the instructional policies. In addition, such a speaking
assessment might result in students’ taking a more positive attitude towards communicative activities in class.

5.2. Implications of the Study

The present study has provided significant insights into how novice EFL teachers navigated their first year of teaching in a professional culture with standards of conduct. As such, the findings of the present study have important implications for both pre-service and in-service teacher education. Two of the sources of the participating teachers’ pedagogical beliefs were their foreign language learning experiences and formal teacher education (for NT2). Given that teachers’ pedagogical beliefs have a key role in shaping their instructional practices, teacher education programs should provide opportunities for L2 teacher candidates to recognize their own tacit beliefs. To do this, student-teachers should be encouraged to reflect on their own language learning experiences. One way of doing this might be engaging them in reflective activities during their teacher preparation courses so that teacher candidates can realize how they relate their past experiences to the education they receive. This would also add to the effectiveness of the instruction provided in teacher education programs in that teacher educators could see the potential challenges (if any) student-teachers might experience in the course of their education and help them overcome these.

Student-teachers’ language learning experiences and the realities of classroom life might also influence how they navigate their initial years of teaching as in the case of the present study. Therefore, teacher education programs should take student-teachers’ culture of learning as well as contextual realities of EFL teaching settings into account to bridge possible gaps between theory and practice. In addition, to be able to help teacher candidates understand school culture and how to operate in a professional environment, during their practicum experiences, they could be encouraged to reflect on the norms and principles followed in their practice teaching setting. This would enable them to better their knowledge of teaching contexts and prepare them for the realities they will face when they start teaching in an actual classroom.
The findings of this study also suggest that novice teachers need support in their initial years of teaching. These teachers might experience difficulties in interpreting instructional policies implemented in their teaching settings. Therefore, it is important that institutions with structured guidelines regarding the manner and content of the instruction as the context of this study provide novice teachers with effective induction programs. These programs should be not only informative but also responsive to these teachers’ needs. It is also important that the programs familiarize beginning teachers with institution-specific materials/tools to be employed in their first year of teaching as well as guide them on how to read the implemented syllabus to prevent possible confusions in the long term.

The results also indicated that novice teachers might experience difficulties in how they should apply syllabus and make use of teaching materials/tools to realize syllabus objectives. This suggests that these teachers need more assistance in their initial years of teaching regarding practical aspects of teaching. One way of doing this could be mentoring of novice teachers. Rather than helping them on an ad hoc basis, institutions could implement mentoring programs so that these teachers can gain practical knowledge and understanding of what is involved in teaching within their own context. In addition, institutions could make use of such learning activities as peer coaching to promote collaboration and cooperation among teachers.

The participant teachers’ reflections on their first school teaching experience revealed that in-service teacher training programs might be influential in novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. However, given that the participant teachers were not able to fully implement what they learnt from the training program offered by their institution in class due to the contextual realities of their teaching setting, it may be highlighting the importance that in-service teacher training programs should adopt more context sensitive approach (Bax, 1997) to bridge possible gaps between the ideal teaching methodologies and teachers’ practical realities.

Finally, the teachers’ practice-based responses to the instructional policies followed in their teaching context showed that novice teachers’ beliefs might not always
be reflected in their practices and the fact that they have changed their practices does not mean that they have changed their beliefs.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

The focus of this study was narrowed to the individual experiences of two novice EFL teachers working at an intensive English program. Therefore, findings obtained from this case study cannot be generalized to other novice EFL teachers as well as the novice teachers working in the same context as the participant teachers.

This study investigated the role of instructional policies implemented at an intensive English program in the shaping of novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. The research site was PIN level classes at a university setting in an EFL context. Therefore, findings may vary if the study is replicated in a different EFL context or in a different educational institution.

The timing of the data collection might also have impacted the findings of the study. This study was conducted in the spring semester, at the end of which eligible UIN, INT and PIN level students took the EPE. This might have been decisive in the inclusion of certain type of teaching materials in the syllabus (e.g., GHOs) as well as the time allotted for them, which in turn might have influenced the novice teachers’ interpretations. The data collection time might have also had a role in the students’ reported lack of motivation to participate in communicative activities.

Finally, I, as a researcher, was also teaching in the research setting during the data collection process. This might raise questions about the research bias. I should acknowledge that my personal biography and professional experiences have had impacts on my beliefs about the instructional policies followed in the context of this study. However, I took the necessary precautions to overcome subjectivity while collecting and analyzing data. I employed multiple data sources. I was also in communication with the participants during data analysis and had them verify my interpretations when such a need arouse. After the completion of data analysis, I had my results confirmed by a second rater. However, due to the nature of the qualitative studies, there is still the
possibility for the findings of this study to be interpreted differently by another researcher.

5.4. Suggestions for Future Research

This study explored two novice teachers’ cognitions about the instructional policies implemented in their teaching context over a single semester. Given that the teachers’ beliefs about the policies and their classroom practices of the syllabus principles while making use of the institutional materials may change as they gain experience, a follow-up study with the same teachers would enable us to gain deeper insights into novice teacher professional development. The study can explore the factors that stimulated possible changes in the teachers’ beliefs and the way these changes influence the teachers’ instructional practices.

Similar studies conducted with the participation of both novice and experienced teachers working in the same teaching setting would contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of novice teacher experiences in their first year of teaching. These studies might explore the challenges each group of teachers experience and their ways of dealing with these challenges as regards the instructional policies followed in their teaching context.

This study aimed to give voice to the perspectives of individual first year teachers. However, as revealed by the data, students are important agents in the teachers’ instructional decisions regarding policy implementation. As such, further studies could be designed that complement teachers reflections on their classroom practices of syllabus principles with students’ views on them.

Finally, this study made use of qualitative research methods to tap into the novice teachers’ cognition about the norms and principles followed in their teaching context. However, given the complex nature of teacher cognition, similar studies with different research methodologies (e.g., surveys, diaries) would help gain a broader picture of novice teacher experiences in their first year of teaching.
5.5. Conclusion

This study aimed to provide insights into novice teacher experiences at a professional school culture with standards of conduct. It specifically explored how instructional policies implemented at an intensive English program influenced Turkish novice EFL teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices as well as factors interacting with the policies that played a decisive role in the shaping of these beliefs and practices. The study also investigated the novice teachers’ practice-based responses to the instructional policies in the classrooms. Two novice teachers with less than two years of teaching experience participated in the study. The teachers had no experience of teaching in an established school culture. That is, the research setting, METU NCC SFL, was the first institution with standards of conduct that the teachers worked for. In order to unearth the novice teachers’ cognition about instructional policies at SFL, the present research focused on specific components of the programme (i.e., speaking, reading and writing) implemented in the context of the study. Data was collected over a 15-week semester. The tools that were used for data collection included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, stimulated recalls and think-aloud protocols as well as document collection and supplementary data collection. The collected data was analyzed qualitatively following the principles of “grounded theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This involved pre-coding (transcription of data; initial development of categories), coding (sorting; organizing categories; data reduction; checking, merging and refining the codes) and theorizing (developing theories; drawing conclusions).

The results showed that the instructional policies implemented in the context of the present study had three major influences on the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. First, the novice teachers had confusions regarding the skill-specific expectations to be achieved through the syllabus components under study. This made them develop further confusions about the methodology they employed in the teaching of certain skills. They also had difficulties in managing some of the teaching materials, which seemed to have hampered their effective use in class.
Second, the novice teachers experienced tensions between their beliefs and practices. That is, there were divergences between what they believed and what they felt they needed to do in the classroom as well as divergences between what they believed and what they were required to do in their teaching context. The areas that the participants faced complications concerned the required course content, principles of CLT and use of L1 in EFL classrooms. The reasons for tensions, as reported by the teachers, included the content of the teaching materials, discrepancies between the syllabus aims and assessment and contextual constraints.

Finally, the novice teachers benefitted from certain aspects of the teaching materials employed for the teaching of the syllabus components under study. They enjoyed the convenience of being handed in ready-made materials. Due to the lack of teaching experience and inexperience in material development on the part of the teachers, the provision of certain teaching materials seemed to have made them feel safer while learning to teach. Another area the participants felt to have been assisted concerned teacher learning. The participants reported that certain aspects of the materials provided them with opportunities to detect their weaknesses as well as improve them professionally.

The study found that in addition to the instructional policies, there were underlying factors that interrelated with the policies implemented in the research setting in the shaping of the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices. The contextual factors included exam pressure, student profile and the required syllabus. These factors played a strong mediating role in the participants’ perceptions of the instructional policies and their instructional decisions while planning and conducting their lessons. Personal factors, on the other hand, were influential in the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and the way they reconstructed those beliefs and responded to the instructional policies followed in their teaching context. These concerned the participants’ language learning experiences and pre-service teacher education (for one of the participants) as well as the in-service teacher training program the teachers were attending in their first year of teaching in the research setting.
Finally, the novice teachers responded to the instructional policies implemented in their teaching context in certain ways in class. That is, they adopted certain teaching practices that enabled them to survive in their first year of teaching in the institution. These included compliance with the institutional requirements, mediation between their beliefs and the school expectations and deviation from the instructional policies expected from them to adopt in the teaching of English. In addition to the influences of the instructional policies on the novice teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices (e.g., confusion, tension), given that the teachers compromised their beliefs by complying with the policies as well as by deviating from them, the study concluded that the instructional policies implemented in the research setting, as the novice teachers interpreted them, were a hindrance for them more than help.
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APPENDIX A: Sample Interview Questions for Teacher Reflection on the Instructional Policies

A) Reading Component
1- I have observed three of your reading lessons. In these lessons, you covered the texts Emperor Penguins, History of Economics and Homeschooling. I want you to reflect upon your reading lessons considering both these observed classes and your reading practices in general. What practices do you consider important in the teaching of reading skills in this institution?
2- Do you feel autonomous while teaching reading skills?
3- What is your role as a teacher in reading lessons?
4- We have talked about your views on an ideal reading lesson. Do you think your actual practices are in line with your beliefs about the teaching of reading?
5- Do you think you have provided with enough guidance as to the expected reading practices in your school?
6- Can you reflect on your practices and the teaching material used for the reading lessons by taking the syllabus objectives set forth the reading skills into consideration?
7- Some teachers might prioritize some reading of the reading objectives more than others while other teachers might think that the aims given in the syllabus are equally important. How do you position yourself between these two groups?
8- Would you like to change/adapt/omit any of the objective provided in the syllabus? Why/why not?
9- Would you like to change/adapt/omit any parts of the material used for the reading skills? Why/why not?
10- Is there anything I did not ask but you would like to add?

B) Speaking Component

a) GHOs

1- I have observed three of your grammar lessons. In these lessons, you covered Modals Hand-out, Relative Clause Hand-out and Verbs of Perception Hand-out. I want you to reflect upon your grammar lessons considering both these observed classes and your grammar teaching practices in general. What practices do you consider important in the lessons where you cover GHOs?
2- Do you feel autonomous in the lessons where you used GHOs?
3- What is your role as a teacher in GHO lessons?
4- We have talked about your views on an ideal grammar lesson. Do you think your actual practices are in line with your beliefs about the teaching of grammar?
5- Do you think you have provided with enough guidance as to the expected grammar practices in your school?
6- Can you reflect on your practices and the teaching material used for the grammar by taking the syllabus objectives set forth the speaking skills into consideration?
7- What are the effects of the GHOs provided by the institution on your teaching practices?
8- Would you like to change/adapt/omit any parts of the material used for the teaching of grammar? Why/why not?
9- Some teachers might prioritize some objectives of the objectives given for the speaking skills more than others while other teachers might think that the aims given in the syllabus are equally important. How do you position yourself between these two groups?
10- Would you like to change/adapt/omit any of the objective provided in the syllabus? Why/why not?
11- Is there anything I did not ask but you would like to add?
# APPENDIX B: METU NCC SFL 2013-2014 Spring Semester PIN Group 2nd Span Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>8:40-10:30</th>
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**Mock Proficiency (Note-taking & Writing)**

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© Suggests that this hour can be allocated to do extra practice on the grammar point of this unit

**NOTES ON THE PROGRAM**

**LANGUAGE LEADER INTERMEDIATE**

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- The students are expected to do the **review sections** of the book in their own time, and no class hours have been allotted in the program for these sections. The answer keys are available on the students’ page.
- Students are responsible for the **Language Reference and Extra Practice** pages at the end of the book. These items are included in the testing syllabus.
- Grammar handouts have been prepared to supplement the language structures in the book. Please cover the handouts in class as indicated in the program and note that the contents of the handouts are included in the testing syllabus.
- Please remember to go over the **passive form** of each tense/modal right after presenting the tense/modal in question since students will be held responsible for having learned the passive forms of all the tenses covered throughout the span.
As students need mechanical exercises, please assign the pages from Oxford Practice Grammar. It is the students’ responsibility to do them on their own. Please use your office hours to answer their questions from these exercises. (Please note that the correlation list for Oxford Practice Grammar will be provided)

WRITING HANDOUTS

- Writing Handouts have been prepared for almost each unit in the course books to help students learn and/or revise the necessary structures and skills for expressing themselves in mainly written production as well as other skills (reading, listening, and speaking).
- Please cover Writing HO 7 after LL – INT 7.2 is finished, or you may combine WHO7 and LL – INT 7.2.
- WHO10 is optional.

The handouts are to be kept in the student’s writing portfolio. At the end of each span, the instructor will select three handouts to determine the student’s “Writing Portfolio Grade” (100 pts.) as indicated below:

|                      | WHO | WHO   | WHO
|----------------------|-----|-------|-----
| Self-checklist       | 5 pt.| 5 pt. | 5 pt.
| First draft          | 5 pt.| 5 pt. | 5 pt.
| Second draft         | 5 pt.| 5 pt. | 5 pt.
| Final draft          | 15 pt.| 15 pt.| 15 pt.
|                      | 30 pt.| 30 pt.| 30 pt.| 10 pts. | 100 pts.

- Please note the contents of the handouts are included in the testing syllabus.

LISTENING-WRITING HANDOUTS

- Listening -Writing handouts have been prepared to help students practice the necessary skills for the EPE exam, which include receptive skills (while-listening and note-taking) and productive skills (writing to answer a question and to express their opinion on a given topic).
- Please note the students are NOT expected to follow process writing procedures for these handouts, and therefore, NOT expected to put them in their writing portfolios.

READING & LISTENING SUPPLEMENTARY FOR WWW.DBE.OFF.LINE.READINGS 1

- R&L is composed of short and long reading passages, vocabulary exercises and listening texts which contain the language and the vocabulary that students have studied in the language course book(s). Please note that the listening sections of the book aim to prepare the students for While Listening and Note-taking type of exercises. The aim is to help students practice the necessary skills for the EPE exam, which include receptive skills (while-listening and note-taking) and productive skills (writing to answer a question and to express their opinion on a given topic).

- Please note that the skills and the vocabulary items are included in the testing syllabus.

WWW.OFFLINE.READINGS 1

- www.offline.readings1 is to be covered in class. Please encourage your students to write full sentences while answering the comprehension questions of the readings.
- Please note that the skills and the vocabulary items are included in the testing syllabus.

MORE TO READ 1 (In class & Outside Reading)

- Please remind your students that they are also responsible for the active vocabulary of the book. These items are included in the testing syllabus.
- Some of the texts have been assigned as outside reading (i.e. homework), please note that in class MTR texts can also be assigned as homework. The students are expected to do these in their own time, and refer to the answer key of the book which is available on the students’ page, or go over the answers in class with you if time permits.

SPARKING

- The speaking activities in Language Leader-Intermediate along with the key language structures, other useful phrases and vocabulary items are included in the testing syllabus and will be assessed to determine 5% of the student’s semester average.
- Please note that the language structures and the vocabulary items may also be tested through listening, reading and writing skills.

VOCABULARY

- Please note that students will be responsible for the vocabulary items listed in the active vocabulary lists of Language Leader-Intermediate (which can be found in the review sections), and the vocabulary journals of www.offline.readings1, and More to Read 1.
- Collocations other than those that appear in reading texts in the vocabulary journal are for students who want to extend their vocabulary repertoire. They are not included in the testing syllabus.
APPENDIX C: 2013-2014 Academic Year Spring Semester PIN Group 2nd Span
Syllabus

METU NCC
SFL

2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR
SPRING SEMESTER
PRE-INTERMEDIATE GROUP
SECOND SPAN SYLLABUS

LISTENING

The aim is to:
• understand and carry out oral instructions,
• follow conversations,
• listen for gist,
• listen for specific information while listening to a recording
• recognize, understand and interpret the target and/or the practised language structures,
to perform a variety of tasks such as answering True/False, multiple choice or gap filling questions,
• practise listening strategies to prepare for the listening part of the EPE.

READING

The aim is to:
• make use of the target structures to better understand a context,
• scan a text to locate specific information,
• make an outline of the text,
• read in detail to complete the paraphrased version of a text,
• skim a text to understand the sequence of events, to understand what the text is about, to identify the source and audience of the text, and to find out the purpose and attitude of the writer,
• find what the reference words refer to in a given text,
• answer comprehension questions with full accuracy,
• guess the meanings of words using clues, antonyms and synonyms,
• find the tone of the author with the help of connotations,
• understand graphic information by analyzing charts and graphs,
• make inferences and draw conclusions from a text,
• distinguish facts and opinions,
• find the main idea in a text,
• find the relationship between the ideas in a text with the help of linkers,
VOCABULARY
The aim is to:
- use the vocabulary items indicated in the *Language Leader-Intermediate* active vocabulary list,
- use the phrasal verbs indicated in the *Language Leader-Intermediate* active vocabulary list for U10,
- use the vocabulary items for the second span in the *Vocabulary Journal* of www.offline1 and *More to Read 1*,
- use words in different parts of speech using *prefixes* and *suffixes*,
- use the skills necessary to use a monolingual dictionary.

PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

SPEAKING
The aim is to:
- talk about and/or discuss everyday issues and the topics in *Language Leader-Intermediate*,
- talked about advertising by:
  - using the appropriate vocabulary in LL Intermediate *Unit 5*,
  - using the second conditional to talk about an unreal situation in the present or future,
  - using *If I was/were you, + I would (not) V* to give advice,
  - using comparative and superlative forms of adjectives,
  - using less and least before adjectives in comparative and superlatives to show a descending relation between the subjects,
  - forming comparative and superlative structures with *irregular adjectives* “good” and “bad”,
  - using modifiers “a lot” or “much” to talk about a large difference in comparison and “a little” and “not much” to talk about a small difference in comparison,
  - using “as + adj + as” to say there is no difference between the subjects,
  - using “not as + adj + as” to make the adjective weaker,
  - the ‘key language’ and ‘other useful phrases’ on p. 142 and p. 55 in LL INT to give a formal presentation,
- express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using:
  - comparative and superlative structures with *intensifiers*,
  - *(not)* as *adj. / adv. as* to make comparisons,
  - *(not)* as many .......... as to compare the number of countable nouns,
  - *(not)* as much .......... as to compare the quantity of uncountable nouns,
- talk about business by using:
  - the appropriate vocabulary in LL Intermediate *Unit 6*,
  - the past continuous to talk about background actions,
  - the past continuous to talk about a longer background action in the past when a shorter action interrupts it or happens during it,
  - the past continuous to talk about repeated actions in the past that take place over a temporary period of time,
  - the past continuous to emphasize the duration or continuity of a past action,
  - the past perfect to emphasize that one action happened before another in the past by using “when”, “before”, “after” and “by”,
- the past perfect to clarify the order of events when the events do not follow one another closely or when the sequence is not apparent,

- the passive form of past perfect tense,

- the “key language” and “other useful phrases” on p. 144 and p. 65 in LL INT to make offers, state a position, bargain, and negotiate a deal,

- express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using reduced time and reason clauses with a time gap,

- the zero article, the indefinite article “a(n)” and the definite article “the” in different ways,

- talked about design by using:
  - the appropriate vocabulary in LL Intermediate Unit 7,
  - can / can’t to express present ability and possibility,
  - could to express future possibility,
  - should / shouldn’t to express advice,
  - must and have to and differences in their meanings to express obligation/necessity,
  - should / shouldn’t instead of must / mustn’t in face-to-face conversation to express obligation,
  - don’t have to to express lack of obligation/necessity,
  - mustn’t to express prohibition,
  - must, could, might and can’t to express present deduction/possibility,
  - must to express that something is certainly true,
  - can’t to express that something is certainly not true,
  - could / might to express that something is possible,
  - the modal verbs with a continuous form to express continuity,
  - the “key language” and “other useful phrases” on p. 146 and p. 77 in LL INT to describe qualities,

- express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using modals to express a variety of language functions (need, criticism of past actions, preference, expectation, permission, request and suggestion),

- talk about education by:
  - using the appropriate vocabulary in LL Intermediate Unit 8,
  - using the relative pronouns and the relative adverbs who, which, that, whose, where and when in defining clauses to identify/define things, ideas, places, time and possessions, and describe people, places and time,
  - using the relative pronouns and the relative adverbs who, which, that, whose, where and when in non-defining relative clauses to give information about something in the main clause, but not to help identify or define it,
  - omitting the preposition when using a relative adverb,
  - omitting the object relative pronouns in relative clauses,
  - the “key language” and “other useful phrases” on p. 148 and p. 87 in LL INT to discuss possibilities and options,

- express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using:
  - the relative pronoun “which” to refer to a clause,
  - relative clauses with the relative pronoun “why” to define nouns as subjects and objects of a sentence,
  - relative clauses with quantity + relative pronoun,
  - present and past participles to reduce relative clauses.
• talk about and/or discuss trends by using:
  - using the appropriate vocabulary in LL Intermediate Unit 10.
  - quantity expressions much, many, (a) few, (a) little, a couple of, a lot of, no, none, some, plenty of; and enough with countable and uncountable nouns or both,
  - “of” with specific nouns as in some of the people vs. some people,
  - using gerunds after certain verbs (prefer, enjoy, practise, recommend, suggest, understand) and after prepositions,
  - using the infinitive form after certain verbs and sometimes with an object (want (+ object + to), allow (+ object + to), decide, hope, manage, promise, teach(+ object + to, would + verb)
  - using infinitives and gerunds after some verbs (advise, begin, continue, like, love, hate) without a change in meaning,
  - the “key language” and “other useful phrases” on p. 152 and p. 109 and in LL-INT to state the purpose of a meeting, show understanding of people’s feelings, encourage people to speak, thank people for their ideas, say you will take action, make a point, state the key points that have been agreed,

• express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using:
  - verb + gerund or infinitive (with different meanings),
  - the passive forms of gerunds and infinitives,
  - causative verbs, verbs of perception, gerunds after certain expressions,
• respond to questions using the appropriate structures and vocabulary provided in Language Leader-Intermediate,
• respond to questions using the phrasal verbs indicated in the Language Leader-Intermediate active vocabulary list for U10,
• use the vocabulary items indicated in the Language Leader-Intermediate active vocabulary list,
• use the vocabulary items for the second span in the Vocabulary Journal of www.offline1 and More to Read I.

WRITING

The aim is to
• paraphrase sentences, paragraphs and texts,
• use the vocabulary items indicated in the Language Leader-Intermediate active vocabulary list with correct spelling and collocations,
• use the phrasal verbs indicated in the Language Leader-Intermediate active vocabulary list for U10,
• use the vocabulary items for the second span in the Vocabulary Journal of www.offline1 and More to Read I with correct spelling and collocations,
• use words in different parts of speech using prefixes and suffixes with correct spelling,
• take notes using symbols and abbreviations in order to answer comprehension questions and summarize main points via reading or listening,
• express opinions and ideas by forming grammatically correct sentences by using the input in the grammar handouts prepared for the second span (see speaking aims),
• use paired conjunctions; both … and, neither … nor, not only … but also, and either … or in sentences,
• revise and use the **linkers, phrases** and **words** expressing **contrast** (*in contrast, but, whereas, while, however, on the other hand, unlike, different from, in contrast to, as opposed to*),
• revise and use the linkers, phrases and words expressing similarity (*similarly, in the same way, likewise, similar to, like*).
• analyze and put in order a paragraph which expresses opinion,
• revise and use linkers *because, while and after*,
• revise and use **linkers** with the **Simple Past, Past Continuous** and **Past Perfect** tenses,
• **write:**
  • a paragraph comparing two designs, explaining the advantages of one over the other,
  • a paragraph offering possible solutions to overcome university students’ financial problems,
  • a paragraph explaining why social networking sites shouldn’t be banned at school,
  • a paragraph explaining whether fashion advertisements should be more realistic or not (optional),
by practising and/or using correctly **the target language** and/or **the linkers** and/or **reference words** in the INPUT section of the writing handouts written for LL Intermediate with correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and maintain unity and cohesion (via parallel structures, repeated key words and linkers) throughout the paragraphs,
• brainstormed for ideas and made an outline,
• edit own work based on the criteria provided,
• recognize strengths and weaknesses based on self-reflection and teacher feedback,
• practise strategies to prepare for “the listening & note-taking and writing part” of the EPE exam by writing:
  • a paragraph expressing their opinion on “Which is better for children? Growing up with a working mom or a stay-at-home mom,”
  • a paragraph explaining the advantages or the disadvantages of face-to-face education at university level,
  • a paragraph explaining how the problem of obesity in young adults be solved, OR a paragraph explaining the causes of obesity,
  • a paragraph expressing their opinion on whether animal experiments should be banned,
by using correctly **the language** and/or **the linkers** and/or **reference words** with correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and maintain unity and cohesion (via parallel structures, repeated key words and linkers) throughout the paragraphs.
APPENDIX D: Samples of Teaching Materials/Tools Used for the Syllabus Components Under Study

A) The Suggested Code-set for the 1st Semester

**SOME FREQUENTLY USED CORRECTION SYMBOLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example error &amp; correction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>spelling error</td>
<td>The answer is easy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WO</td>
<td>mistake in word order</td>
<td>I like very much it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR</td>
<td>grammar mistake</td>
<td>He is a handsome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>wrong verb tense</td>
<td>I see him yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SV</td>
<td>subject and verb agreement</td>
<td>They are angry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>λ</td>
<td>something has been left out</td>
<td>The bank is near the cinema.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>wrong word</td>
<td>My house is on the second floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IR</td>
<td>irrelevant information</td>
<td>.... I have a sister. She lives in Izmir. I love Izmir. She is a doctor....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>The meaning is unclear</td>
<td>She lives in London with her blue eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>punctuation mistake</td>
<td>Do you like London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA/I</td>
<td>too formal or informal</td>
<td>Teachers don't wanna ....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr</td>
<td>fragment</td>
<td>Because he is ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>run-on sentence</td>
<td>He was ill, he didn't go to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep.</td>
<td>preposition mistake</td>
<td>I looked in the blackboard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B) Sample Text from the MTR Book

105 HISTORY OF ECONOMICS

1 It is believed that the subject of economics first appeared in early Greek times. The reason for this belief is that the first writings on this subject were by Plato and Aristotle. Later, such Romans as Cicero and Virgil also wrote about it. However, there is no data showing the economic system during these times. The first known economic system was in medieval times, when the system of feudalism dominated. In feudalism, there was a strict class system consisting of nobles, clergy and the peasants. There was a series of nobles that were the holders of various sized lands. On these lands was a series of manors. These lands were similar to large farming tracts in which the peasants or serfs worked the land in exchange for protection by the nobles.

2 Later, the system of mercantilism predominated. It was an economic system of the major trading nations during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, based on the idea that national wealth and power were best served by increasing exports and collecting precious metals in return. Manufacturing and commerce became more important in this system.

3 In the mid-eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution ushered in an era in which machines instead of tools were used in the factory system. More workers were employed in factories in urban areas rather than on farms. The Industrial Revolution was fueled by great gains in technology and invention. These also made farms more efficient, although fewer people were working there. During this time the idea of "laissez faire", which means that economics work best without lots of rules and regulations from the government, became popular.

4 In the nineteenth century, there was reaction to the "laissez-faire" thinking of the eighteenth century due to the writings of Thomas Malthus. He felt that population would always advance faster than the science and technology needed to support such population growth. David Ricardo stated that wages were at a poor or subsistence level for most workers, rather than at a high or affluent one. John Stuart Mill provided the backdrop for socialism with his theories that supported farm cooperatives, labor unions and less competition. These theories were brought to a high point by Karl Marx who condemned the capitalistic "laissez-faire" theories of competition and instead favored socialism which marked more government control and also favored state rather than private ownership of property. Another important change at this time was in how goods were valued. Formerly, items' prices had remained steady, but at this time the value of an item came to be determined by the number of people wanting the item (demand) and the amount of the item available (supply). In fact, this is still valid in today's economic systems.

5 In the first half of the twentieth century, John Maynard Keynes wrote about business cycles - when the economy is doing well and when it is in a slump. His theories led to governments seeking to put more controls on the economy to prevent wild swings. After World War II, emphasis was placed on the analysis of economic growth and development using more sophisticated technological tools.

6 In recent years, economic theory has been broadly separated into two major fields: macroeconomics, which studies entire economic systems; and microeconomics, which observes the workings of the market from the perspective of an individual company, person or a group within an economic system. In the later twentieth century, ideas such as supply side economics, which states that a healthy economy is necessary for the health of the nation, and Milton Friedman's idea that the money supply is the most important influence on the economy, began to gain popularity. In the twenty-first century, the rapid changes and growth in technology have spawned the term "Information Age" in which knowledge and information have become important commodities.
A. What do the following refer to?
1. it (para. 1) : __________________________
2. this system (para. 2) : __________________________
3. These (para. 3) : __________________________

B. Find words in the text that mean the following. Write only ONE word on each line, and do not change the form of the word.
1. areas (para. 1) (n.) : __________________________
2. just enough to support (para. 4) (adj.) : __________________________
3. opposed / criticized (para. 4) (v.) : __________________________
4. decline / fall (para. 5) (n.) : __________________________

C. Mark the following statements True (T) or False (F).

T  F  1. According to Malthus, population couldn’t grow without science and technology.
T  F  2. At the end of the 20th century, it was believed that a healthier nation meant a healthier economy.

D. Answer the following questions.
1. What did the peasants receive for working the nobles’ lands?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

2. What did the trading nations of the 16th century do to achieve national wealth and power?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. Name the two factors which determine the worth of an item in the present.
   a) __________________________________________
   b) __________________________________________

E. Mark the best choice.
1. Which of the following is NOT an idea supported by the “laissez-faire” thinking?
   a) Low level of wages
   b) High level of competition
   c) Privately owned companies
   d) State ownership of property

2. Which of the following is studied in microeconomics?
   a) Differences between economic systems
   b) The budget planning of a firm
   c) Reasons for global economic growth
   d) The unemployment rate of a country
C) Sample GHO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE</th>
<th>MODAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Let’s start checking the exercise.</td>
<td>suggestion</td>
<td>Shall we start checking the exercise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I’m sure she is a teacher.</td>
<td>present deduction (certainty)</td>
<td>She ___________ be a teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is a good idea to exercise regularly.</td>
<td>advice</td>
<td>You ___________ exercise regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perhaps she is studying.</td>
<td>present deduction (certainty)</td>
<td>She ___________ be studying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students are not allowed to use their mobile phones during exams.</td>
<td>prohibition</td>
<td>Students ___________ use their mobile phones during exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You are expected to write your answers in ink.</td>
<td>obligation/necessity</td>
<td>You ___________ write your answers in ink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you mind if I use your pen?</td>
<td>permission</td>
<td>___________ I use your pen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It is not necessary for you to buy a present.</td>
<td>lack of necessity</td>
<td>You ___________ buy a present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you know how to ice-skate?</td>
<td>ability</td>
<td>___________ you ice-skate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. It was necessary for her to work overtime.</td>
<td>obligation/necessity</td>
<td>She ___________ work overtime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I’m sure she is not serious.</td>
<td>present deduction (certainty)</td>
<td>She ___________ be serious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. It wasn’t necessary for James to get the train because his sister offered to give him a ride.</td>
<td>lack of necessity</td>
<td>James ___________ get the train because his sister offered to give him a ride.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Sorry, I couldn’t come last night.</td>
<td>ability</td>
<td>Sorry, I ___________ last night.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above summarizes the modals that you have already practiced in Language Leader Pre-Int. and Int. and the grammar handouts. In this handout, you are going to learn some more modals.
**EXPECTATION**

“BE (NOT) SUPPOSED TO” is used to say what people have to do or don’t have to do according to the rules or the law, or about what is (not) expected to happen.

* I am supposed to pay the rent at the beginning of the month.
* You are not supposed to park here. It is private parking only.
* Aren’t you supposed to finish this homework before you go to sleep?

⚠️ When we use “be supposed to” in the past, we talk about an unfulfilled expectation. That is, someone was expected to do something, but he or she didn’t do it.

* Jack was supposed to call me last night. I wonder why he didn’t.
* My parents were supposed to be here at 8 o’clock, but they still haven’t come.

**TASK II. Fill in the blanks using the correct forms of “be supposed to” and the verbs given in the box. Use each only once.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>take</th>
<th>keep</th>
<th>attend</th>
<th>do</th>
<th>send out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>meet</td>
<td>make</td>
<td>be</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I ____________ the library books back yesterday, but I forgot and now I’ll have to pay a fine.
2. There’s a conference at the Convention Center tomorrow and you ____________ it.
3. I ____________ some emails to my students today. I hope I don’t forget.
4. Sandy ____________ me here at 12:00. Where is she?
5. What ____________ I ____________ today? I can't remember.
6. A: Mum, what does that sign say?
   B: It says, “Slower Traffic, Keep Right”. It means you ____________ to the right-hand lane if you drive slowly.
7. Who told Jason about the party? It ____________ a surprise.
8. This face cream ____________ you look younger.

**PREFERENCE**

“WOULD RATHER DO SOMETHING” is used to describe preferences; that is, to talk about things or activities we like better than other things or activities.

* A: Would you like to eat out tonight?
  B: I would rather cook dinner at home.
* I’d rather cook than eat out.
* I’d rather cook spaghetti than (cook) pizza.
* I’d rather be lying on a beach than (be) sitting in class right now.

⚠️ The negative form is “would rather not”.

“WOULD RATHER SOMEONE DID SOMETHING” is used when we prefer someone else (not) to do something. In this structure, we use the past tense, but the meaning is present, not past.

* I would rather you cooked something tonight.
* A: Are you going to tell them what happened?
  B: No, I'd rather they didn't know.
TASK III. Respond to the situations using “would rather”.

1. You and your friend are planning to go to Istanbul, but you are afraid of flying. You prefer to go by train. You say:

2. Your daughter wants to borrow your car, but it has just been washed, so you don’t want her to take it. You say to your daughter:

3. Your friend wants to eat in the canteen, but you want to go to an Italian restaurant. You say:

4. Your roommate wants to turn on the television, but you are trying to study. You say:

5. Your friend asks if you would like to go to the cinema with him. You feel tired and prefer to stay home. You say:

**PAST FORMS OF “NEED”**

In the first term you learnt that we use “don’t have to”, “don’t need to” and “needn’t” when something is **not necessary** in the present or future.

* Citizens of EU countries **don’t have to**/**don’t need to**/**needn’t have** a visa to go to England.
* She **doesn’t have to**/**doesn’t need to**/**needn’t wash** those glasses. They are clean.

There are two different past forms of “need”: “didn’t need to” and “needn’t have done”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIDN’T NEED TO</th>
<th>NEEDN’T HAVE DONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We use “didn’t need to” when something was not necessary. <em>(no obligation; no action)</em></td>
<td>We use “needn’t have + past participle” for something we did which we now know was not necessary. <em>(no obligation; action performed unnecessarily)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Jessica didn’t need to hurry. She had lots of time.
* I didn’t need to go to the supermarket because we had plenty of food.

* Jessica **needn’t have hurried**. After driving at top speed, she arrived half an hour early.
* You **needn’t have gone** to the supermarket! I had already done shopping.

TASK IV. Fill in the blanks using didn’t need to / needn’t have done and the verbs in brackets.

1. The previous owners had already decorated the flat, so we __________________ (decorate) it ourselves.

2. We arrived much more quickly than I expected. We __________________ (leave) so early.

3. Service was included in the bill, so you __________________ (tip) the waiter. It was a waste of money.

4. A friend had already given me a free ticket to the concert, so I __________________ (pay) to go in.

5. Arthur had financial problems, so he sold his car. A few days later he won some money in a lottery. He __________________ (sell) his car.

6. You __________________ (book) a table, darling. I have already done that. Why don’t you call the restaurant and cancel your reservation?
7. Sandra ___________ (iron) the clothes because Sue had already done that.
8. She ___________ (cook) last night as they were going to go out for dinner with their friends.

**CRITICISM OF PAST ACTIONS**

“**SHOULD (NOT) HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE**” is used to comment on a mistake that was made. We are not really giving advice because it is impossible to change the past.

* You *shouldn’t have cheated* in the exam. (You made a mistake!)
* Richard *should have bought* his wife something for her birthday, but he forgot to do so.
* Sandra didn’t take the medicine the doctor prescribed her, but she *should have* because now she’s feeling worse.
* I *shouldn’t have shouted* at you. I apologize.
* They towed my car away from the executive parking lot yesterday. I *shouldn’t have parked* there.

**TASK V.** Jack had a party at his house and many things went wrong. Read the following sentences and make comments with “should have”.

1. He invited a lot of people to his party, and there was no room to move.
   
2. He didn’t prepare enough food. Some of the guests didn’t get anything to eat.
   
3. One couple brought their children to the party, and the children were bored.
   
4. The party became noisy, and the neighbors called the police.
   
5. One woman came very late. Most of the guests had already left.
   
6. He didn’t give good directions on how to get to his party. Several people got lost and never found the party.

**MIXED EXERCISES**

**TASK VI.** Respond to the situation provided in ONE statement.

1. Your colleague prepared a report which you had already prepared. You say:

2. Your friend invited some of the people from work but not others. When the others found out, they were upset with him. You say:

3. A woman has just come home from a business trip. She expected her husband to water the plants while she was gone. Now, she sees that he hasn’t. She says:

4. You and your brother are driving to another city, but you got lost on the way. You don’t have a map with you. You criticize yourself by saying:
5. Your friend wants you to buy tickets for the cinema, but you don’t have time and you want him to buy the tickets. You show your preference by saying:

__________________________________________

TASK VII. Complete the sentences using modals or modal like structures.

1. Shall ______________________ tonight? I really want to dance.

2. John ______________________ the laundry, but the dirty clothes are piled up.

3. My friends have just told me that the exam has been postponed. I ______________________ so much last night.

4. Yesterday my friends told me that today’s exam had been postponed, so I ______________________ for the exam.

5. Jane came home late last night, and her parents were worried. She ______________________ them.

6. ______________________ the window? I need some fresh air.

7. There was a terrible fire in the factory last night. Fortunately, the night guards ______________________ escape.

8. We went out for dinner last night, so I ______________________ cook.

9. My friend invited me out to have dinner, but I refused the offer. I ______________________ salad at home.

10. You ______________________ (not/shout) at her. I think you should talk to her and apologize.

TASK VIII. Read the e-mail message from a young tourist to his mother. Fill in the blanks using the CORRECT FORMS of the VERBS in parentheses and the MODALS OR MODAL-LIKE EXPRESSIONS given in the box. You can use the modals MORE THAN ONCE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>SHOULD</th>
<th>BE ABLE TO</th>
<th>HAVE TO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>WOULD</td>
<td>BE SUPPOSED TO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dear Mom,
I know I (1) ______________________ (write) to you earlier, but believe me; I really haven’t had the time even to get some rest until now. I am really sorry if I made you worry about me, and I’m sure you will understand why I (2) ______________________ (call) you or write to you earlier.

My misfortune started at Heathrow Airport. As I was waiting in line to check in for my flight, a middle-aged woman approached me, told me that her luggage exceeded the weight limits and asked me if I could act as if the luggage were mine only until we were done with the check-in procedures. At first, I hesitated a little because I was going to do something illegal, but the lady seemed quite decent, honest and helpless, and since I only had a backpack, I agreed to help her. I wish I hadn’t!

The man at the counter said he (3) ______________________ (check) what was inside the hand luggage as this was a standard safety rule, and asked me to open it. So I did. Both the customs officer and I were shocked by the sight. There were about 150-200 watches! I turned around and looked for the woman, who
(4) ________________ (wait) in the queue, but of course she had already disappeared.

The customs officer sent me to the police department and I was questioned for about an hour and a half. In the meantime, I missed my plane! When I went back to the airport after paying a heavy fine for agreeing to check in someone else’s luggage, I headed straight to the airline company’s counter and asked the people to accept me on the next flight. They said “OK” but, of course, the wait for the next flight was going to be at least seven hours. I spent about nine hours before I finally got in line again for check in. Later, I found out that I ________________ (spend) so much time waiting for that plane as there had been an indirect flight of the same company to Istanbul three hours earlier, but it was too late. When it was my turn at check-in, I explained my situation to the officer. I thought I ________________ (show) my bags because I had already done that, but he said, “I’m sorry Sir, you ________________ (complete) all the necessary procedures before you go on that flight!”

TASK XI. Read the second part of the e-mail message. Fill in the blanks with ONE WORD ONLY.

“... I finally managed to get on (1) ________ plane. I was hoping to have (2) ________ safe and peaceful flight after all that (3) ________ happened at the airport. Well, the flight was safe, (4) ________ it was not as peaceful as I’d expected. My seat was at the window end of a three-seat row and the other two seats were not occupied. About five minutes (5) ________ take-off, a lady and a 4-year-old boy rushed onto the plane. “(6) ________ you mind if my little boy sat next to you? I’d (7) ________ he didn’t sit at the aisle end as he’ll probably disturb people by running up and down the aisle,” the lady said politely. I said “OK”. I soon (8) ________ that I’d made a big mistake.

The little monster started crying immediately (9) ________ the plane took off. He was bored and wanted to run up and down the aisle, and his mother tried to make him understand that he was not (10) ________ to do so during the flight. For the first ten or twenty minutes, I tried to be patient, waiting for his mother to eventually calm him down with candies, but as he ate more candies, his face turned greener. Eventually, all he had eaten came out, on my lap…”
APPENDIX E: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

PROGRAM

SEES

PSIR

ELT

YAŻARIN

Soyadı : Gök

Adı : Gökçen

Bölümü : İngilizce Öğretmenliği

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : The Influences of Instructional Policies in Intensive English Programs on Novice Teacher Cognition: Help or Hindrance?

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

2. Tezimin indeksler 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: