

LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN HOMEWORK PRACTICES: AN ACTION
RESEARCH IN AN 8TH GRADE EFL CLASSROOM

ESLEM AYIK ŞORA

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LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN HOMEWORK PRACTICES: AN ACTION
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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Cennet Engin Demir
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Cennet Engin Demir
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

| | |
|---|-------|
| Assist. Prof. Dr. Nur Akkuş Çakır (METU, EDS) | _____ |
| Prof. Dr. Cennet Engin Demir (METU, EDS) | _____ |
| Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülçin Tan Şişman (Hacettepe Uni., EBB) | _____ |

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name: Eslem Ayık Şora

Signature :

ABSTRACT

LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN HOMEWORK PRACTICES: AN ACTION RESEARCH IN AN 8TH GRADE EFL CLASSROOM

Ayık Şora, Eslem

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Homework has always been in dispute among the authorities of foreign language education as there are numerous opinions about the characteristics of homework practices in language classes. According to the most studies, homework is helpful for learning in foreign language classes, however; there are only a few studies in Turkey about homework models and their effects on students' performance. This study is an action research that aimed to enhance the homework performance in 8th grade English classes by generating the understanding of Learning Communities in a middle school setting. The study took place a semester and twenty-four 8th graders from the same class in the 2018-2019 education year and three English teachers participated in the study. As it is an action research, the teacher took part in the research both as a teacher and researcher. Data were acquired through teacher observations and teacher diary, student reflection reports, interviews with teachers and students, and student focus-group interviews. Written documents from the first and second semester were also utilized as data. The data were analysed through content analysis based on emerging themes and codes and shaped with respect to research questions. The improvement of students in terms

of homework performance and academic success were assessed through presentatios, exam results and homework checklists. All data were triangulated and the results revealed that Learning Communities based homework contributed to students' homework performance and English development. Based on the findings, it is believed that the study will demonstrate the importance of improving homework model and promote building communities in education.

Keywords: Homework Practice, Learning Communities, Foreign Language Development, Action Research, English Class

ÖZ

ÖDEV UYGULAMALARINDA ÖĞRENME TOPLULUKLARI: 8. SINIF İNGİLİZCE DERSİNE YÖNELİK BİR EYLEM ARAŞTIRMASI

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Ödev kavramı, tercih edilen yöntem açısından birçok farklı görüş olması sebebiyle eğitim otoriteleri arasında her zaman tartışmalı bir konu olmuştur. Eğitimde ödev ve akademik başarıyla ilgili birçok çalışma vardır ve bu çalışmaların çoğu ödevin yabancı dil derslerinde faydalı bir öğrenme aracı olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Fakat, Türkiye’ de özellikle ödev modeli ve bunun öğrenci performansına etkisiyle ilgili çalışmalar yok denilecek kadar azdır. Bu çalışma; bir ortaokulda, 8. sınıf İngilizce derslerinde ödev performansını öğrenme topluluklarından yararlanarak arttırmayı amaçlayan bir eylem araştırmasıdır. Uygulama 2018-2019 Eğitim öğretim yılında bir dönem boyunca sürmüştür ve aynı kurumda çalışan üç (N=3)İngilizce öğretmeni ile aynı sınıfta eğitim gören yirmi dört (N=24) 8. sınıf öğrencisi katılımcı olarak yer almıştır. Söz konusu çalışma bir eylem araştırması olduğundan, araştırmacı süreçte hem eğitmen hem de araştırmacı rolündedir. Araştırmanın verileri öğretmen sınıf gözlem raporları ve günlükleri, öğrenci yansıtma raporları, yarı yapılandırılmış öğretmen ve öğrenci görüşmeleri ve yarı yapılandırılmış odak grup görüşmeleri yolu ile toplanmıştır. Birinci ve ikinci döneme ait sınav sonuçları ve ödev kontrol listeleri de veri kaynağı olarak

incelenmiştir. Veriler içerik analizi yöntemiyle, araştırma soruları kapsamında ortaya çıkan temalar ve yapılandırılan kodlar esas alınarak analiz edilmiştir. Öğrencilerin İngilizce gelişimi ve ödev performans durumu, gerçekleştirilen sunumlar, sınav sonuçları ve ödev kontrol listeleri kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu belgeler, çalışmada aynı zamanda veri olarak da kullanılmıştır ve üçgenleme yöntemiyle analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen verilerin analiz sonuçlarına göre, öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödev modelinin öğrencilerin ödev performansına ve yabancı dil gelişimine katkı sağladığı görülmüştür. Sonuçlar ve öneriler son bölümde tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ödev Uygulaması, Öğrenme Toplulukları, Yabancı Dil Gelişimi, Eylem Araştırması, İngilizce Dersi

To my parents Mehmet-Aliye AYIK
My best sis-friend Ferda AYIK
and to my one and only hope for love, hope and life
Sercan Şahin ŞORA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| CoL | Community of Learners |
| EFL | English as Foreign Language |
| FLE | Foreign Language Education |
| LC | Learning Communities |
| MoNE | Ministry of National Education |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this study is to analyse homework practices in 8th grade English classes and investigate whether learning communities based assignments provide any change in students' performance and accordingly, to ensure redesigning of homework practices in EFL classrooms. This chapter includes the background to the study, purpose of the study, significance of the study and definition of terms.

1.1. Background to the Study

Nowadays, the place and importance of English education both in our country and in the world cannot be denied. English, in most of the world, is defined as the primary key for acquiring common language and knowledge of humanity and is considered a crucial way of attaining the source of knowledge. Researchers also agree that English is an intercultural communication mechanism across the globe. In one of his studies, Kachru (1992) states that while English language was a language spoken as a single dialect by a definite society, it has become an international language adopted by at least one billion people. English is not only a necessary component of education, but also it has a vital significance in tourism, business life, academic life and even media. Administrations of countries also attach importance on innovation and developments in foreign language education by considering the development of English language acquisition in the world.

As a result, it is a clear fact that government authorities and decision makers in education are aware of English language in the world and they seek the ways how

language education can attain global world standards. For this reason, English education and competency has also gained more importance in our country.

Turkish education authorities have pursued a variety of policies to attain the same standards with the other countries. According to König (1990), English language education has for the first time become one of the vital topics in Turkish education system in 1980s. English education started to be lectured in colleges and universities and then, it was incorporated into high school and secondary education programs. Eight years of English education became compulsory in 1997-1998 academic years (MoNE, 2006). Finally, the development relating to language learning in our country was experienced in 2012-2013 academic years. The Ministry of Education has introduced the revised language education program regarding providing English education as from 2nd grade of primary school (MoNE, 2012).

It has been observed that learning English has become an indispensable part of education in terms of the foregoing developments. Language learning has started to gain a seat in basic education in parallel with English learning requirements of individuals. For this reason, foreign language academic programs and education policies initiate to be prepared for development of target language. In many studies in regard to foreign language learning, key phases of language acquisition are mentioned (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). These are observation, analysis and action. Educators employ various educational methods for effectively integrating these phases into learning environment in education process. Homework is one of the most frequently used methods in education for directing the student to observe, analyse and put into action.

Demirel (2012) states that curriculum followed in teaching process does not only cover the school itself, regarded as a single learning environment, but also, they are planned learning experience setups outside the school. Many planned activities performed outside the school support teaching process. Homework practice is one of them. In several studies dealing with academic success, homework has been defined as activities encouraging students on research and analysis-based study

depending on their learning needs and directing effective study outside the school, too (Gün, 1995).

Tan and Erdoğan (2004) consider homework as an effective tool for interpreting previous knowledge and acquiring new information as Arends (1991) defines it as one of the ways to increase learning process and states that homework practices ensure getting prepared to the coming class. Consequently, this allows the educator to spend more for teaching at school. Education leaders argue that students spending their time outside the school with academic studies and researches can better enhance their school performances (Rengma, Saikia & Sunny, 2015).

All the teachers in Turkey take similar training in the departments of education and homework is regarded as one of the most effective learning tools not only for outside the school but also in the classroom (Toprak and Akboy, 1999). As a result, several homework models should be analysed related to the adopted approach. Educators frequently use homework method to observe whether or not subject has been acquired, student review the lesson and to have an idea about what can be contributed on learned knowledge (Bryan & Burnstein, 2004). It is crucial for an educator to get information about the attainment of pre-determined objective. Having an idea about the situation, the teacher can reshape the way that is followed. Homework is preferred as an assessment and evaluation instrument in foreign language classes, either. In most of the universities and the departments of foreign language education, homework and assignment methods are covered and the most effective way of student- tasking is discussed. Based on these points, homework is defined as a useful way of teaching but the choice on following it depends on the teacher (Farrow, Tymms, and Henderson, 1999).

Homework assignments are also regarded as effective tools used outside of school borders in order for student to train. Coulter (1979) is one of the researchers expressing homework as an effective tool. As emphasized in a study conducted by him, Coulter states that homework practices allow students to educate and improve themselves, give an opportunity to have a look on covered subject and encourage them to use the acquired knowledge. Homework as a method in education has

become an effective part of teaching process in terms of several aspects and many opinions regarding homework in several studies and effect of homework on academic performance have been put forward (Demirbaş, 2011; Hong, 1999; Üstünel, 2016). As the idea supporting that education is not provided just with an educator in a school environment becomes widespread, homework practice issue has become more and more important in education programs and policies. Given the fact that learning English is a matter of national education cared gradually in the studies and policies as indicated earlier, it is expected that homework practice has a prominent place in English teaching program. However, homework models used in foreign language education and effects of these practices on language acquisition have been slightly mentioned in the studies. In particular, a comprehensive study has not been encountered in the literature indicating homework models appropriate for modern teaching approaches and the results revealed by use of these models in the field of foreign language education, types of homework to be preferred in English course and how homework assignments can be integrated into learning process as a learning method.

Wallinger (2008) argues that assignments are seen as a crucial tool by foreign language educators to acquire teaching and besides; revisions of covered subjects are made possible by completing homework. Considering the result revealed in this study, Şahin (2014) has conducted a study relating to English teachers and homework practices and as a result of the study, it has been observed that English teachers do not have sufficient knowledge on types and goals of homework that they hold students responsible for. However, he has stated that preferred homework model is of high importance for revealing desired results. Based on the studies, it can be concluded that homework as a method of teaching and learning should be given more importance in our country, as we are not sufficient enough in foreign language learning, and teachers should have knowledge on homework strategies and the model of homework that is the most effective. With that way, homework practices may provide a better understanding and support acquisition of target language.

Nowadays, research-oriented individuals internalizing the acquired knowledge and intending to use it in daily life, enabling permanent learning and studying more on it are raised instead of passive individuals in learning process and students acquiring literal knowledge without questioning. In addition to this, students become more willing to learn in environments where reciprocal interaction is present instead of processes in a certain line. In environments where interaction is supported, individual forms auto-control and self-confidence concept and importance of these attainment for student achievement is emphasized in many studies (Bempechat et al., 2011). The practices adopted for learning processes in education environment where individual is present should be established by considering the foregoing principles. In our time, education is attempted to be removed from traditional methods and education authorities develop learning activities accordingly. Preferred methods should allow individuals to know and discover themselves. Açıkgöz (2003) has stated that what is important in learning process is individual himself and when individuals undertake its own learning responsibility and identify their own methods and they actively engage with the other members in learning processes, efficient learning is acquired. To achieve the foregoing, individual should be allowed to build interaction in learning process which is inherent to human.

Changes in sense of education have brought learning through experience into the forefront in the field of education and the activities with collaboration have started to gain more importance instead of traditional ways where teacher is a leader. These practices promote very active participation and reciprocally interacted learning rather than individual competition. According to Johnson and Johnson (1999), when students undertake the responsibilities assigned to them in groups, they believe that they will reach targeted learning within group by realizing their individual goals.

Types of homework and the manner of practice show different results in various courses. For example, the purpose of foreign language courses is language acquisition and the assignments encouraging use of language will be more effective for acquiring a language rather than traditional homework practices. As

language is a tool emerging as a result of interaction and used for this purpose, directing individual to communicate and focusing on use of language in the assignments are of great importance. Principles of cooperative learning and community based activities also support thinking and acting in a multiple way as distinct from traditional teaching methods.

By way of assigning homework, students are expected to reinforce and internalize what they have learned in English classes and even put them into practice whenever needed. Thus, both the targeted language, a living concept, will not remain as a theory and will be put into practice and learning will step up. Homework tasks to be given in accordance with certain principles will encourage use of language and will also provide communication among students. Hence, homework practices should enhance the sense of community. As stated by Saban (2005), individuals in the learning communities become aware of common life and concept of unity and gain social skills. The term solidarity and being active emerging with the modern education understanding during learning process are also supported in the environments where learning communities exist.

As many studies on the attitude against homework and homework practices have revealed, several problems are observed in individual homework performance. It has been stated that the motivation of the individual in homework practices prepared by traditional understanding is low. In the learning processes where individual practice is adopted, the student develops positive attitude to the task when s/he receives help from different people (Van Voorhis, 2011; Patall et al., 2008). Interaction is a situation likely to arise as community and cooperation exist (Crystal, 1996). As interaction and communication has become importance in the information age, the belief that individual exists for only himself in learning process has decreased. The language acquisition reinforced with interaction remains stilted if homework assignments are created individual- based and with traditional methods. However, creating an environment close to daily life for the target language is of great importance. Homework as one of the learning methods should also be shaped based on those aspects (Rengma, Saikia & Sunny, 2015).

Considering the conditions mentioned, it has been observed that some changes and innovations are required to be put into action for homework practices as part of English language teaching. When going through the previous studies carried out; types of homework, attitudes towards homework and effects of homework on academic achievement have been analysed thoroughly. While various studies on homework assignments and types of homework adopted in the field of language learning and English teaching have been found in literature, homework practices based on learning communities in English classes or modern understandings of homework practices or models have not been discussed broadly yet. Besides, as the characteristics of learning communities understanding seems coherent with modern approaches in FLE for meeting the interests and needs of new generation, it is believed that CoL might contribute to the improvement of homework model for English classes.

Language is a living phenomenon that cannot be stereotyped and the practices based on traditional approach do not allow the active use of target language. As language is an abstract system acquired by individual for establishing interaction with individuals and communities, not for himself, interaction and interpersonal communication cannot be ignored in foreign language learning process. Considering the studies in the field of learning communities and collaborative learning, the factors required for an effective language acquisition correspond to the concepts adopted by these fields. Even though learning communities have been discussed in many researches, the studies especially on how homework practices are to be adapted considering learning communities and how they result in terms of English language teaching have not been conducted so far. Based on these, according to modern education, the examples concerning how new homework practices can be developed have been discussed and in this context, various opinions with respect to learning communities have been expressed. Numerous studies claim that homework is an effective method for achieving goals in foreign language acquisition but new models of homework practices should be adapted to learning environment (Doyle & Barber, 1990; Gündüz, 2005; Laconte, 1981) as traditional approaches and related models of homework in language education are

not matching with the breakthrough in national education and foreign language learning (Ellsasser, 2007).

1.2. Purpose of the Study

Based on the importance of homework assignments in language learning process, the purpose of the study are to figure out the problems experienced by 8th grade students in English homework practices and get knowledge about their ideal homework, develop a new model of homework in order to change the situation about students' performance and identify the impacts of redesigned homework model for English class.

On the basis of the purpose, the following questions guided the data collection and data analysis of the study:

RQ. 1. What are the perceptions of teachers and students on homework practices in English classes?

RQ. 2. How do students define ideal homework for English classes?

2.1. How can homework practices be arranged based on learning communities in an 8th grade English class?

RQ. 3. What are the impacts of learning communities based homework on English language learning process?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Today, English language teaching has become a critical issue for MoNE as its importance is increasing each passing day in universal education area. With the impact of modern understanding in language education, new teaching approaches have been needed and FLE programs have been rearranged by authorities. Various studies deal with methods used in language teaching and preferred learning styles (Brown, 1972; Cooper & McIntyre, 1998; Harmer, 1991). In many studies

conducted on learning process, homework practices are considered as mostly preferred method by educators, facilitating learning and allowing the reinforcement of the information obtained. Besides, it is known that homework practice maintains the learning process outside the school (Walberg, Paschal & Weinstein, 1985). Examining the previous studies, the importance of homework assignments in many areas of learning process has been mentioned, the attitude of individuals against homework has been evaluated and its effect on various subjects (i.e., maths, science and physical education) has been investigated in general terms. Besides, the attitudes towards homework practice and types of homework have also been discussed in order to reveal the relation with homework performance.

As homework is a part of educational process, studies regarding homework practice should be connected to educational theories in order to discover underlying relations in the homework process (Trautwein & Koller, 2003). Although some studies relate to the effect of English assignments on success in the elementary level, the studies related to community based tasks are few. Besides, being one of the new understandings in the field of education, there aren't any studies combining learning communities with homework performances to design a new model of homework. Considering the effects of homework in learning process, the problems experienced by students about English assignments should be taken into consideration in studies. Considering the improvements in information age and technology, it can be supposed that there should be changes in homework styles related to the new understanding of teaching approaches. However, the role of homework in latest adopted FLE approach has not been mentioned thoroughly in the studies conducted in our country, as well as in curriculum.

Although numerous studies on homework in English classes exist worldwide, the number is insufficient to make a comment about homework practices and preferred models in our country. Various researches have been conducted on the effects of homework on academic performance and language learning. Despite homework is a subject that is known for a long time in education, only a few studies are focused

on the role of teachers in homework practice (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). It is claimed that teachers are not only responsible for assigning homework but also deciding and designing the most effective homework model for the class. Teachers should guide the students to design learning environments to be more creative and successful not only at school but also outside (Reisimer, 1999). Considering that language education can exist with interaction, it can be foreseen that learning communities may be an effective understanding to improve homework practices in language education process. Apart from that, it is also believed that learning communities will promote building the sense of community which lacks in the classroom among the students. Consequently, it will provide an interactive and collaborative learning environment that is promoted in FLE. The present action research aims to observe the effects of redesigned homework model on the homework performance in 8th grade English classes especially by creating learning communities and ensure collaboration during homework practices and form an opinion on the rearrangement of homework practices and the implementation of CoL oriented homework in language classes. Furthermore, the placement of new homework model in language education program might also be discussed. Consequently the findings of the study might contribute English language teachers in improving their homework strategies and practices. Besides, it might give idea for decision makers to identify the preferred homework model in curriculum and also provide an example in the field about learning communities in EFL classes.

1.4. Definition of Terms

The terms that are defined in this chapter correspond to the following meanings in the study:

Communities of Learning: The terms learning communities and communities of learning is used interchangeably during the research.

Homework: A task or a practice that includes practice, preparation, extension and creativity (Lee & Pruitt, 1979) which is assigned to students by school teachers (Cooper, 1989).

Learning communities: It is a group of students who have common academic goals, shared interests, or common backgrounds. Once placed in a community, students often take common courses to help establish academic support amongst the group (Klamma et al., 2005; Laverick, 2018).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, the conceptual framework and relevant studies regarding foreign language education, the role of homework in language education and learning communities are discussed.

2.1. Foreign Language Education

Human has always been defined as a living being that is open to innovation and development since ancient times. Human trying to keep up with firstly his surroundings and then the entire universe is in need of educating himself and learning new things as he develops which is possible with interaction (Bochner & Jones, 2003). The current century is called “information age” due to fact that information has become easily accessible and extendable. With the fast changes and developments in science, technology and especially communication that has a global impact; every society realized the need of education to become knowledgable (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Ekin (1997) states that the features required to be obtained by individual living in the information age are being active and effective, showing success in human relations and being open to learning, which are provided with a common language. Language needs communication and interaction to maintain and develop its formation. Communication considered as the key to reach information, and language, a tool used, are necessary in order for people to understand one another. Since this key opening the door of communication slightly is a part of society, it is directly related to cultural formation. Therefore, authorities attach importance to language and look for ways to communicate with other communities to catch the time. As a result, the need of a common language of the world has become inevitable (Rohde, 1996).

The improvements in the world and the interactions among societies revealed the need of a common language which is defined with the following:

The trend towards globalization and internationalization has increased the importance of being competent in communicating with people of different cultural backgrounds (Fritz, Möllenberg & Chen, 2002, p. 1).

Interaction is an activity in the nature of language, occurring with the language phenomenon (Bee & Boyd, 2009). Interaction is a means of communication formed in a healthier way when gathering around a common language happening reciprocally. That the nations are in interaction with one another has a critical importance in terms of today's policy and development. To adopt a common language to establish intersocietal communication has now become a necessity in the world globalizing increasingly. Hence, English is defined as the target language preferred to ensure communication among different cultures (Crystal, 1996; Graddol, 2007) as being the most widespread language (Coleman, 2010). As an example, according to the latest study conducted by United Nations, about 1.7 billion people are non- native speakers of English language which is defined as a common tool of interaction with different societies (Candel- Mora, 2015). Council of Europe (2001) has stated that foreign language acquisition is a tool in communication and plays a significant role on attaining success in each field by following the national education policies in language education, eliminating the prejudices by developing cooperation among people, and facilitating the activities and communication among individuals with different languages. Similarly, in the study conducted by Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (2014), it has been stated that English is the most common language used for establishing communication among those with a different mother language.

Kachru (1996) defines English language as 'Lingua Franca', that is to say, a bridge language and considers it as a means of communication covering a very large area. Nowadays, English language does not exist only as mother language of a specific society but also a target language of knowledge acquisition and transfer and as a result, particular importance is given to language education. English as foreign language having an effect on each area from academic to intellectual life, from

business life to social environment is considered as a social tool required for all nations. While Crystal (1996) points out that almost all of the scientific articles are written in English, Truchot (2002) emphasizes that English has also become widespread in business as international companies prefer English to communicate. According to Selinker and Lakshamanan, (1992), the second language skill depends on the common development of mother language and target language. At this point, if new language being acquired is not supported by mother language, it causes fossilization and poses great challenge to educators. Therefore, "the most accurate and permanent" way in language education should be decided based on the expectations, formations and requirements of the societies in order to prevent drawbacks.

As English as a foreign language gained importance in various fields of human life, people felt the need to acquire it. Thus, English has become a part of education policies of various countries and took a place in education programs (Truchot, 2002). This situation paved the way for different methods and approach in foreign language teaching in order to promote effective learning. As previously stated, the societies trying to catch the era and follow the developments should meet in a common language when it is necessary, which should be ensured with education policies. Language development and interaction directly concerns with the aspect of communication. Communication requires the participation of both sides in today's leading education system (Altıntaş, 2000). On the contrary, in a system adopting unilateral communication, active use of language is eliminated, which prevents interaction. The studies conducted on language learning show that instead of individual-based traditional approaches, the language education taking care of the needs of individuals, catching the era and going beyond the theoretical information gained importance and revealed some requirements to occur. For this reason, the states give particular importance to make new regulations and shape their education programs in order to increase quality in language education. In recent years, the most prominent situation in the field of foreign language education is the communicative competence of language. Saraswathi (2004, p. 69) explains the principles of the communicative competence in foreign language education in the following way:

- The communicative competence of language learners should be developed in foreign language education.
- Teachers are there to facilitate learning and to guide their classroom activities.
- Learners in the learning process are the founders of communication using the language. They ensure active participation and undertake roles.

Coleman (2010) emphasized the contribution of learning English on individual and social development and stated that language ensures communicative competence and accessibility to society. Similar to that, existence of communication in language learning process is mentioned by the authorities as one of the requested achievements in most of the studies about FLE (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Castle, 2004; Güneş, 2012). The requirement to address language in terms of communicative aspect is mentioned nearly in each current study related to foreign language education. This situation is the same in our country. Language acquisition that is one of the matters emphasized by education authorities for years has become a vital case as Turkey gets closer to modern education standards and the desire of keeping step with other societies increases. For this reason, quality is at the forefront in language education and developments are encouraged in FLE as all borders are tend to be removed as a result of globalized world.

2.1.1. Foreign Language Education at Secondary Level in Turkey

Educational policies of our country in the republic period were created mostly on reading and writing and it was not possible to mention foreign language and language education policies in the times when Turkey has almost no interaction with other nations (Oral, 2010). After the developments in relationships with different cultures and countries, a shared language for communication became a must for our country, either. Foreign language education provides information about innovations in educational sciences and various societies (Özoğlu, 1983). With the improvements in much of the world, English education has gained importance relatedly. Therefore, foreign language teaching programs become one of the issues that is often discussed and attempted to be improved in Turkish education system (Çelebi, 2006). As highlighted in various studies, (Jawarskova & Porte, 2007) countries have started to adopt international communication together with changing borders and have implemented various policies for

ensuring the interaction. This situation enhanced improvements also in our country (Doğançay- Aktuna, 1998). As the West and European countries became the voice of the world and Turkey has achieved standards in line with its objectives, communicating with these nations became inevitable. Foreign language education policies have revealed significant breakthroughs and reforms in since those years. One of the examples can be pointed as young learners started to learn English at schools as a foreign language.

With the study on the situation and functions of English education in Turkey, it is revealed that English is not widely used as a tool of communication among people, which actually demonstrates one of the deficiencies in foreign language teaching process (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998). A study was conducted with the teachers to identify the issues experienced in foreign language education in Turkey and it described one of the problems of language education in our country as follows: The questions posed in assignment and examinations to the students during English teaching are multiple-choice questions examining grammar mostly. This approach prevents motivation of the student and functional use of the language (S.U. Education Reform Initiative Education Monitoring Report, 2013). Based on such issues, it can be said that FLE needs improvement in terms of the components of education program.

Various studies conducted in our country referring education reforms and the impacts of them on FLE process pointed out that the maximum change was observed in 1997, by changing the beginning level of foreign language learning to 4th grade. Besides being an important tool of achieving career opportunities and information, foreign language education programs have been reshaped upon formation of the concept of European Union in Turkey and English education permanently took its place in national education with the ‘Regulation on Foreign Language Education and Training of the Ministry of National Education’ (MoNE, 2006). With respect, MoNE aimed to introduce students with English earlier to make them familiarised with target language (Damar, Esim & Korkmaz, 2017). Even the study stated that it was the biggest change in FLE in Turkey; it also mentioned other improvements that influenced education programs. In 2005, the

numbers of English classes were increased in middle schools and in 2012, foreign language education became compulsory in Turkish education system starting from the level of 2nd grade. Besides, the renewed curriculum of 8th graders focused on interaction in target language and pointed out the main aim as understanding and communicative language teaching of English (MoNE, 2012). Upon the decision taken by MoNE, it has been decided that English language education will be provided from 2nd grade starting from 2014-2015 academic year (Board of Education and Discipline, 2013) and positive feedbacks were started to be acquired. Likewise, with the same decision, the number of courses was increased in middle school and high school English language education programs and elective foreign language courses were included into education programs. Thanks to the developments in education system, foreign language teaching environment has been reshaped (Board of Education and Discipline, 2013).

Accordingly, some considerations have been stated based on the Principles of Common European Framework for Languages in relation to the learning environment. Looking through the statements, it is underlined that as English language shows parallel development with its use, it should be promoted to benefit from the target language in an authentic way other than learning environment. Moreover, language should be considered multi-lateral and its improvement should be supported by following various teaching methods in order to correspond to the nature of human (European Commission, 2007). Considering these points, some principles have been created in relation to learning environment by MoNE in conjunction with the development of policies in language education. The most emphasized points were that communication is attempted with target language, new information is obtained by using English and errors are automatically noticed and corrected within flow rather than authority and acquired skills are effectively used outside the class (European Commission, 2007). It is emphasized that English language is not just a theoretical knowledge and language learning should be realized in an environment where its use is encouraged. As teaching approaches adopted in language teaching at secondary level and practices are preceded with individual focus, acquired language has remained limited in terms of development considering the fact that language exists with interaction in FLE. Still, the desired

level of English language education is not reached despite the reforms in the area that is a phenomenon for years. For this reason, new solutions are being attempted to be found out by authorities that both encompass teacher training and renewal of methods in language education program.

According to Güneşli and Demirel (2006), language education requires functional use and permanence of learned language is ensured with reciprocal interaction other than individual-based education. In addition to this, as language is described as a living phenomenon that is required to be kept active it should be developed by ensuring the use among individuals and societies other than maintaining and exhibiting it like an individual learning outcome. Middle school level is a period individuals get aware that they live in a society and everyone depends on each other to interact. For this reason, communities in language education programs, group motivation and collaboration should be prioritized and each practice should be regulated accordingly in language process (Szapkiw, 2009). As mentioned in many studies, getting information for adapting to the era is of utmost importance and the shortest way to reach the knowledge depends on education. Specific programs and methods should be complied with for a proper process and requirements should be satisfied. Despite the importance given to FLE in Turkish educational system, students fail to accomplish foreign language skills. Methodologies that are implemented are also considered one of the factors in language learning (Karahan, 2007). Acquisition of target language in current constructivist education approach is a phenomenon that can be achieved with interaction. Learning is a process that occurs by forming ideas and defending them, focusing on problem and exchanging ideas with the other individuals, aiming at problem solving and active participation (Patall et al., 2008). Learning process should not be seen as mechanical development limited with a certain environment, time or person.

In a study about foreign language education in secondary schools in Turkey, Genç (2004) introduced the program of foreign language education, the number of the lessons, curriculum and materials used in the process. Previous studies about these points are investigated during the research and it is concluded from the study that

foreign language education is not only teaching another language but also it is important for the student to live the language and get to know how to use it and realize the differences in terms of cultures and society. The study claimed that by the way of these, the student becomes more willing to acquire a new language, which is very important in language learning. In various studies about foreign language learning, motivation is also considered as one of the factors in the process (Dörnyei, 1994; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Ellis, 2007). Based on their study about language learning potential of highschool students, Stansfield and Winke (2008) revealed that providing a high motivation on the students promotes foreign language learning, which depends on the methods and practices during teaching process.

With the influence of ever-increasing popularity of English education, the studies on learning English gained importance and are increasingly rising depending on new-era. Teaching programs are also developed in conjunction with presenting new approaches and methods and as a result of this, adopted practices and learning methods have also undergone changes (Güleç, 2014). Examples for that include teaching aids, followed practices and homework methods. According to Demirel (2012), learning is a process that should be maintained not only at school but also outside the school. The student should be involved with activities related to the acquired knowledge in order for the process outside the school to be maintained and should add new knowledge over them. Especially, education process that is kept active entails interest and follow-up outside the course. One of the most effective ways to maintain control is homework practices. This method has existed and continues to exist in each process where education programs are implemented. Therefore, suitable comprehension of homework applications and their effective use are considered important by most authorities. Once appropriate and effective use of education concept of era are met, homework assignments that are strong and permanent language applications have always attained a place in education process owing to the fact that individual reinforce what is learned (Sallee and Rigler, 2008). Homework as a learning method in FLE will be discussed later in this section.

2.2. Homework as a Teaching-Learning Method

Beliefs about homework have changed over time. While homework is a primary method used for rendering learning and teaching process effective for some instructors today, before 20th century, society thought that homework disciplined the mind. Assignments are defined in many ways by researchers in the relevant studies. In general terms, homework can be expressed each of tasks given by teacher in learning process.

While Tan and Erdoğan (2004) express homework as the studies requested by teacher, they point out that homework is an effective tool for adding meaning to previous knowledge and acquiring new information. Cooper, Valentine and Lindsay (1999) consider assignment as an activity developing responsibility and independent personal characteristics of learning individual, engaging family into education, ensuring exhibition of positive behaviour against the product obtained with accomplishment of children. Homework practice is also emphasized as a non-class activity created for the purpose of maintaining working environment where students are engaged and developing their studies by going into details (Swanson, 2001). Homework as a learning method is an opportunity for the learner to acquire a skill or conduct further training and practice on the subject. (Association of American Publisher, 1989) Papandreu (1991) defines homework as the most useful and commonly learning method realized outside the class. However, there are also numerous studies that consider homework not only a method but also a tool to reinforce learning.

As being stated in most of the studies assignments are practices being followed for reinforcing new information and reflecting study habit of student irrespective of whether they are prepared inside or outside the school (Küçükahmet, 2004). Homework practices can be defined slightly different in terms of both students and teachers (Yapıcı, 1995). Homework regarded as a frequently referred teaching technique by teacher is a strong way of supporting learning in terms of student. In other words, homework can be defined as an alternate way for both teaching and learning. While considering the definitions on homework practice it can be stated

that homework is associated with many aspects of education process. Homework activities followed as both individually and group-oriented ensure that students transfer acquired knowledge into their lives by making use of it, reinforcing and sharing acquired knowledge, gaining problem solving skills and responsibility, rendering learning continuous and active, comprehending individual differences and gaining awareness of community especially with group-oriented assignments.

Considering the fact that assignments are actions that can take part in every moment of education process, that this application is included in education programs and is created in line with its purpose has become a crucial aspect in education policies. Cooper and Valentine (2001) indicate that even very little homework has an impact on self-control and academic achievement of students especially at primary and secondary level. While the theories on foreign language education in secondary school are investigated, the role of homework is often emphasized by authorities (Açıkgöz, 1993; Ulutaş and Dinçer, 2003).

That homework plays a crucial role in education and teaching process has led to the need for doing research about homework practices. Discussions have been maintained concerning the impact of homework in students' success and attitude of individuals towards homework practice. The fact that homework practice has been studied mostly from certain aspects has led to ignorance of different perspectives of homework. Even if there is no sufficient research and source in regard to homework practice and methods especially in our country, the term has gained a seat in Turkish Education System and has become a technique that is utilized throughout teaching process. Considering the impact of assignment applications in this process, it can be stated that planned and conscious formation of homework can have effect on learning. Therefore, it can be said that academic studies relating to homework practice that are enhanced in parallel with modern education approaches are required in our country. After going over the studies related to homework practice, it is clear that homework fosters language learning but the preferred model or type plays an important role in taking advantage of it.

2.2.1. Homework and Academic Achievement

The impact of homework on academic achievement is one of the leading topics among the studies relating to homework practice. The importance of homework in education has been stated almost in all studies conducted in regard to homework activities and relationship between academic achievement and homework performance has been investigated.

Student achievement has always been an important criterion in terms of parents, teacher and school administration. For this reason, all kinds of applications that can boost academic achievement in education process should be evaluated. Homework method is one of the main practices associated with academic achievement in learning-teaching process (Collier, 2007). Many studies dealing with academic achievement and homework practices reached different conclusions and the reason for this is thought to be several variables (i.e., types, models, methods and approaches) in education process. For example, as the results of the studies conducted in regard as to whether or not assignments are effective in education process may vary; they have not yielded consistent results. The reason for this can be defined as the presence of several factors in homework process (Muijs and Reynolds, 2001). Again in a research conducted in the USA, the relationship between academic performance and homework has been examined (Cooper, Robinson, and Patall, 2006). When analysing the findings, it was found out that the relationship between homework and academic success depends on the age level of participants. Similarly, there might be various factors effecting homework performance of individuals which should be taken into consideration.

Many studies have been conducted claiming that homework practice has a positive effect on academic achievement (Akin, 1998; Demirel, 1989; Wetzel et al., 1991). Demirel (1989) states that the results reached through evaluation of homework performance show a relationship with the grades of students in the institutions of the Ministry of National Education. For this reason, significance of homework practices should be explained to teacher and student and its impact on education process should be emphasized. Some of the studies associating homework with

academic achievement are the studies conducted by using control group (Walberg et al., 1985; Cooper, 1989; Cooper, Valentine and Lindsay, 1999; Dettmers et al., 2009). While a group of students is assigned in the aforesaid studies, homework practices are not referred in teaching process to the other group. The studies being mentioned revealed that assigned group has higher academic achievement when compared with non-assigned student group and meaningful learning occurred at higher rate. Supporting homework practices in learning process, Cooper, Valentine and Lindsay (1999) summarized the positive aspects of homework assignments in his study investigating the effect of homework on achievement and underlined that homework practices are effective in developing positive attitude against school the sense of responsibility and independent learning of student. Besides, thanks to the assignments, the students adopt the idea that learning can continue outside the class. In parallel with the study conducted by Cooper, Valentine and Lindsay (1999), Yücel (2004) underlined the place of homework and the intended purposes of it in education process and stated that homework helps to gain the ability to plan and establish communication, benefit from acquired language and sources. Besides, it is expressed that thanks to homework, the students learn collaboration and look to the topics from different aspects and they start to consult and discuss. They also do research, ask for help and enjoy learning.

As can be understood from the objectives set out in the related literature, homework should not be defined only as a personal task required to be fulfilled by an individual. Instead, with the effect of modern approaches of education, its contribution towards both individuals and student communities sharing the same objectives should be emphasized. Also, considering the defined goals, it can be said that with homework can give perspective to student in the issue of personal skill and social understanding other than theoretical knowledge. One of the important criteria in order to achieve the goals with homework is the quality and comprehension of assigned task. At this point, the teacher should be aware of what he has intended with the assignment given and should observe whether it has contribution to learning.

Kapıkıran and Kıran (1999) has determined 3rd grade students who are in the same class as working group for investigating the relationship between homework and academic achievement. After dividing the class into three different groups, no assignment is given for one of them while another one is assigned to complete research based work. The last group was responsible for completing homework based on repetition and details. The findings did not reveal a significant relationship between academic achievement and homework assignment in any of the groups. Thus, it can be concluded that there might be other factors having a role in abovementioned relationship. Based on the study, homework as a learning method shapes with various elements and characteristics and homework practices should be analysed in details including style, model or scope.

Hence, many studies arguing that homework has an impact on academic success focus on learning styles, interest and individual skills of students. Hughes et al. (2002) have noted that the educators arguing that assignment should be present in education process have associated academic achievement with doing homework. The main reason is that students exhibit their skills while doing homework, realize their learning styles, and discover their skills and thus, they add new information on the acquired knowledge. Assignments are also effective in revealing learning styles of individuals. Homework is an effective learning method especially for the students adopting searching and discovery learning. With the entrance to the new era in current education, learners are interested in research and making an effort by using various methods. That should be taken into consideration in newly developed homework practices. Homework not intended for needs and interests of student may cause developing a negative attitude against learning process (Yapıcı, 1995). That students determine a path as to their own learning styles and are involved with homework in parallel with adopted learning style directly affect academic achievement. As a result, if homework assignments are given based on individuals' learning styles they are quite effective on academic achievement (Lenehan et al., 1994).

Xu (2009) claims that assignments attracting the attention of student and appropriate for contemporary education policies and approaches of our time

reinforce learning and as a result of this, they affect academic achievement. In addition to this, that homework is related with the next course and enables students to use and develop what they have learned increases the motivation against completing homework and this contributes academic achievement as a result (Elsasser, 2007). Doubtlessly, all the works contribute to maintain new learnings. Hughes et al. (2002) argue that homework practice is an integral part of education and has an effective role in academic achievement. Homework encourages students to discover their talents and even reveal new information by implementing their own skills. Reaching information on one's own directly affects student's view of learning. Walberg (1984) argues that assignments yield positive results in school success in especially at the field of social sciences if new approaches in homework practices direct student to be active in process.

Some of the studies conducted in relation to homework practice in education argue that the effect of homework on academic achievement may vary based on learner's grade level. Cooper (1989) performed an experimental study whether or not the relationship between student's academic achievement and homework practice changes as to the grade level and came up with the following results: a) There is an achievement increase at the rate of 4% in primary level, b) at the rate of 12% in secondary school and c) at the rate of 24% in high school after giving homework. When the effect of homework on academic achievement is compared, even if homework practices show an impact at high school level, Cooper (2001) argues that homework is crucial in each level and notes that homework assignments contribute developing positive behaviour against school and developing the notion that learning can be realized not only in school but also outside (Marzano et al., 2001).

Many studies in relation to the effects of homework on students' achievement were conducted from different perspectives. Even if there are studies in relation to academic achievement and homework in Turkey, no extended results have been obtained from most of the studies. Besides, studies do not map out a certain route in terms of foreign language education process. Akın (1998) argues that homework has increased academic success in his study being conducted in primary school

level. The study was performed by applying a questionnaire to the teachers of 5th class. The questionnaire got data about the teachers' perceptions on homework and academic success and there were not any data provided by the students about their opinions and perceptions of homework. The results of the study were not sufficient enough to make a conclusion as there were only the answers of questionnaires for teachers. However, without opinions of students, the study cannot represent sufficient results.

Based on the study conducted by Cooper (1989), Kapıkıran and Kıran (1999) investigated the effect of homework assignment on academic achievement of 3rd graders. While no assignment is given to a group in the study, the other group was responsible for a small amount of homework and the last one was assigned with a large amount of homework. After a while, students took a post-test on Maths and no significant difference has been observed in academic achievement after comparing the results with previous tests. Özben (2006) conducted a similar study on the secondary level students. In the study where the effect of Science homework on academic achievement is examined, it has been stated that homework is a factor enhancing student achievement. Review of the topics and related activities as homework practice make learning permanent and increase academic achievement (Özben, 2006). The following inference can be made by considering the two studies conducted in different grade levels: Both of the studies dealing with the impact of homework on academic achievement in terms of grade level and the amount of homework revealed different results. One of the factors that cause discrepancy on results might be about the subjects. As Cooper (1989) conducted his research on Maths class, Özben (2006) preferred Science. These differences prevent us to make generalization about the impact of homework on academic achievement in language classes.

A great part of the studies on homework practices in literature are conducted as a result of encountering problems in homework performance. Kriesberg (1996) who is also a teacher noted that he has some conflicts with his students regarding homework and resorted to some methods to overcome the situation. Having attempted various methods for motivating the students in the issue of completing

their assignments, the researcher observed that successful results have been obtained when they do their homework within collaboration outside home. It has been observed that students complete their assignments outside home (i.e., laboratories, educational institutes, cafes or libraries) in motivated and efficient manner. The results of the study indicates that completing homework with groups of friends increases cooperation and saves time in learning process by acquiring new information from one another. Besides increasing homework performance, the mentioned method of homework enhanced academic achievement. Based on this study it can be concluded that homework which is suitable for the needs of learners and modern approaches increase academic achievement.

As numerous studies claim that there is a positive relationship between homework and academic success, there are also studies arguing that there is no relation between the two aspects. According to Muijs and Reynolds (2001), there isn't any relationship between academic achievement and homework practice and argue that excessive homework affects academic achievement negatively. In the studies of Trautwein and Koller (2003) investigating the effects of frequency of homework and its amount on student achievement, it is noted that assignment given periodically affects student achievement positively but a large amount of homework and spending long time on completing it have no contribution in learning. In addition to this, homework that has no purpose leads to student's exhibiting an unwilling manner against homework and this situation inhibits contribution to academic achievement (Marzano et al., 2001). Moreover, when homework is assigned under the name of punishment, it decreases homework performance of the student (Kellough, 1997). In the study that Vruwink and Otto (1987) investigated the effect of homework on the grades of end of term exams, they compared the groups to which various assignments have been given with the groups having no assignment and it is noted that assignments have no effect on the grades of end of term exams and thus, on academic achievement.

Considering the studies conducted in relation to the academic achievement, different results can be obtained about homework practice. However, it can be stated in general that homework practices provide learning skills that might turn

into an outcome for the learner. Besides, it is stated that homework improves personal and social responsibility and decision mechanism (Cooper, 2001). Considering the studies on homework as a method and the effects of homework on academic achievement, various ideas come out. There are studies arguing that homework has positive effect on academic achievement and there are studies emphasizing that giving homework does not have contribution to academic achievement.

Based on the studies conducted in the field, it can be said that employing homework assignments in education does not have any adverse effect on student achievement. However, at this point the quality, purpose and the amount of homework, its matching with modern education approaches, appeal to modern understandings in learning and associating with newly learned subject are of utmost importance for student. Even thoughts of authorities and individuals involved in education process regarding homework have changed several times throughout history, it has been emphasized in many studies that homework as a method reinforces what has been learned in education, develops sense of responsibility, enhances interpersonal interaction and helps an individual realize himself and community he is engaged in (Babadoğan, 1990; Cooper, 1984; Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001). For this reason, it is stated in education programs that assignments suitable for adopted approach should be developed and is pointed out that assignment will always get involved in education-teaching process. Considering the significant points while giving assignment, it is important to prefer homework styles putting student in a centre, compatible with interests of individual, enabling student to reach knowledge by his own efforts and developing responsibility (Köse, 2013; North & Pillay, 2002). While new policies are being regulated in education, as the effect of homework practice on academic achievement cannot be disregarded, designing homework coherent with modern education approaches and the community where learning occurs should not be also forgotten.

2.2.2. Types and Models of Homework

Homework is described as a learning experience frequently preferred by educators and educational institutions in teaching process. For this reason, homework concept is emphasized in studies and education policies. The studies conducted on homework examine the concept from many aspects and focus on different components of homework practices. Studies conducted in relation to homework practices raise ideas about homework types or preferred models. It is likely to come across different classifications for types of homework in various sources. Even these classifications vary depending on the study; they show similarities in terms of definition. In the field of educational studies, Lee and Pruitt (1979) categorized the types of homework as follows: practice, preparation, creative and extension. Again, in another classification in the literature, types of homework are expressed as practice assignments, preparation assignments, formative assignments and integrative assignments (Connors, 1992; Doyle and Barber, 1990). Practice assignments are given for making learning permanent and implementing and transferring it into life (Doyle and Barber, 1990). Through these assignments, students transfer the acquired knowledge into their lives by way of reinforcement and make it permanent by practicing. Preparation assignments are given for making the student ready for the course in the following process. In this way, student gets familiar with the forthcoming topic and realization of learning will be facilitated (Lee and Pruitt, 1979). Formative assignments enable the students to move forward with the knowledge they acquire. The acquired knowledge features in revealing a new idea. According to Laconte (1981), formative assignments enable the student to add new knowledge considering the knowledge that the student acquired and, in this way, they contribute to develop lateral thinking and creativity. Integrative assignments are the assignments completed by student's integrating the acquired knowledge with different skills. Extensive assignment applications (i.e., project paper or term paper) are considered as integrative assignments. Students integrate the acquired knowledge with their own skills in integrative assignments. In this way, individuals aim to reveal new information by using the acquired knowledge. As it can be concluded from literature, types of homework are classified mostly in terms of content. There aren't any

classifications of homework types based on a particular education approach or a homework method.

Traditional and individual based homework practices are defined in aforementioned types of homework. Dividing homework into different types in terms of individual's aim and the targeted information can be useful in some points. However, this classification and preferred type of homework may not yield the same result for each course. Adopted learning approaches that are suitable for the course should also be taken into consideration. For this reason, different types and methods of homework in parallel with modern education approaches are discussed. Newly adopted approach in FLE is based on social responsibilities by considering the needs of an individual and modern understanding of education (Arslan, 2007). New learning approaches develop homework in terms of quality, content and aim which also promotes the performance to complete the tasks.

Johnson and Johnson (1999) classify learning experiences and accordingly, scopes of assignment in three groups as competition based, individual learning based and cooperation based. Communities-based assignments have become mostly preferred in learning processes that promote cooperation. These types of assignments are developed parallel with modern understanding of language education as they represent common characteristics. Negative attitudes of individuals against traditional homework practices create the need for new methods of homework that take interaction and the sense of being a society to forefront (Trautwein & Lüdtke, 2009). Community of learners is one of the modern understandings in constructivist teaching (Hord, 2009). This understanding promotes cooperation and the sense of being a community around a common purpose. Even if the studies relating learning communities are one of the prominent issues in recent times in the field of education, the studies regarding especially how this understanding might reshape homework practices and create new models of homework for FLT have not been handled yet. When considered that the sense of community and interpersonal interaction are important in each field in today's education system, all the components of learning should be organized accordingly. Learning communities and group-oriented homework practices try to make individual aware

of community and homework methods are created according to that idea (Rovai, 2002). In this context every student is responsible for the success of the community. Everyone has a common goal and they try to reach this goal together. They fulfil both their duties as an individual and also they aim to contribute to the members of community. The ultimate goal is to reach social awareness and acquire knowledge by providing interaction. As a result, as the students are in search for the sense of belonging a society rather than experience the process on their own, community as a sense has become important especially for the instructors and educational psychologists (Pretty et al., 1994).

Slavin (1987) has determined that assignments provide much more contribution for achievement when they promote cooperation compared with individual and competition-based assignments. Besides, students complete their assignments more properly if the assignments are completed with a group. The tendency in acting with group and fulfilling tasks within cooperation has always been present in the societies where humans live together (Johnson and Johnson, 1999). Instead of traditional approaches in education, interpersonal learning, cooperation and community based studies are given importance especially in the studies conducted in social sciences in our country. Although learning and socialization are addressed in several education studies and new programs are designed based on the characteristics of constructivism, especially learner communities based education and related homework practices are not analysed in terms of English education. As traditional learning methods lost their significance with the modern understanding in education, new ideas have been suggested. As a result, all elements of education process need a change coherent with the new improvements. Homework practices that are also a part of education process should keep up with modern approaches by becoming more interactive, communicative, community-oriented and open to cooperation. Considering the definitions relating to types and models of homework and studies conducted, it can be said that homework practices should be developed in regard to new education trends and interests of individuals and society.

2.2.3. Attitudes towards Homework

Attitude can be defined as opinions and emotions of an individual showing continuity in relation to any phenomenon. Özgüven (2005) defines attitude as readiness to the behaviour of accepting or rejecting an object, person, group or thought of an individual. Attitude arises from the decision of an individual. Tavşancıl (2002) argues that an individual does not acquire attitude innately against a phenomenon, rather, it is acquired with experience. For this reason, he states that psychological reasons underlie in the background of human attitudes. Singh, Granville and Dika (2002) state that beside cognitive characteristics, students' affective aspects play also an active role in learning, for this reason, attitude should be considered in education process. The relationship of affective characteristics with achievement as well as cognitive characteristics is emphasized in many studies. Attitude, one of the affective characteristics of individual, is essential in education as attitudes of individuals in learning experience are observed in details.

2.2.3.1. Attitudes of Teachers

Both teachers' and students' attitude against assignment has a key role in homework performance (Eilam, 2001). As teachers' opinions about homework are generally positive, the studies are mostly conducted about the problems they experience in homework practices. According to many studies, instructors claim that homework practices motivate learners in learning process and acquisition of new information. As a result, the learner reaches the objectives in time (Ulutaş and Dinçer, 2003). Assignments are frequently used as self-confidence boosting tool by teachers. In this point it is important that the teacher is aware of interests and abilities of students and the tasks are designed accordingly. As well as developing individual skills, assignment applications may promote social consciousness, social experience and solidarity based on type of homework adopted by teacher.

Connors (1992) argues that the attitude of teacher towards homework affects the attitude of student. To give an example, the idea indicating that much homework

given by teacher increases achievement of student may lead to developing negative attitude against the course and homework. For this reason, it is claimed that the attitude of the teacher relating the amount of homework is quite important in development of students' attitude. Similarly, Farrow et al., (1999) argue that attitude of student towards assignments is partially parallel with attitude of teacher. Teacher is supposed to plan assignments well and consider the need and interests of student and class. It is argued that this attitude of teacher will allow student to develop more positive attitude against assignment. Shubert (2004) emphasizes that teachers frequently prefer homework that they consider as a useful tool to enhance learning in education process and at this point, they are supposed to explain the students that homework is a good learning strategy in the process. With this way, it is expected students have positive attitudes towards homework.

Another fact that increases the function of homework is that the teacher's attitude corresponds to modern understanding of education. In other terms, homework should catch up with the current time so that it attracts students' attention and encourage them to use their skills (Corno, 2000). If the teacher takes a positive attitude towards homework that attracts students' interest and supports interaction, this situation allows students to utilize new knowledge and reinforces the sense of community while completing homework (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001).

Concerning the attitudes towards homework, it is expressed that the attitude of teacher towards homework should be equal for every student in certain homework (Cooper et al., 1999). In the contrary situation, student might show negative attitudes towards homework. As stated previously, with the new approaches in education, students should be aware of community instead of isolating themselves during learning process and should develop the understanding of coming together for the same purpose and become aware of each other. Based on the results of a study about homework attitudes of teachers in our country, it has been stated that a vast majority of primary school teachers employ homework as teaching method and a way of revision (Hizmetçi and Oflazoğlu, 2006). Teachers' attitude towards homework affects the quality of it (Wiesenthal, Cooper, Greenblatt, & Marcus, 1997). Also, it has been observed that the teachers deal with the completion of

homework rather than the performance of students which actually causes inefficacy in practice.

One of the elements affecting homework attitudes of teachers is the place of homework in curriculum (Wiesenthal et al., 1997). It can be concluded that education policies attaching importance on homework enhance positive attitudes towards performing it. Homework assignments are always part of education process in education policies and regulations published in our country and it is emphasized managing homework practices by teacher is useful in learning. However, there are contradictions in terms of homework attitudes that might be the result of preferred homework models in learning process. After the literature is reviewed, numerous studies can be found about the attitudes towards homework (Brock et al., 2007). Based on the studies conducted, it is observed that teachers develop a positive attitude towards homework practice in general. Moreover, it can be stated that their attitude determines the quality of homework, the preferred method and finally, attitude of student. In particular, developments in the field of foreign language education and providing permanent learning take place through interaction. Interaction occurs only when there is cooperation in learning environment that also needs the sense of community. Therefore, foreign language teachers should prefer homework requiring interaction and communication and develop a positive attitude towards homework based on community and group-oriented tasks in language classes.

2.2.3.2. Attitudes of Students

The importance of homework in education process has been always controversial issue. Studies examining contribution of homework to academic development have considered the attitudes of students towards homework as one of the factors of homework performance. For this reason, attitude is among the issues highlighted in most of the studies.

Attitude is a phenomenon that is gained afterwards and acquired with experience. For this reason, it is effective in directing behaviours of individuals. Acquiring

different results in the studies regarding homework practice of student depends on specific variables (İnceoğlu, 2004). Examples of these variables can be listed as family, school, sex, course or academic level. Referring to the literature, student attitudes towards assignment and the studies conducted on opinions about homework practice mostly focus on primary school level. The studies relating to the attitudes of students in secondary school are very few when compared to primary school. In addition to this, although significance of homework in foreign language acquisition has been subject to many studies, researches discussing the attitude of student towards homework as a language teaching method have not been encountered (İleri, 2013). Many students define homework as a source of stress (Kouzma and Kennedy, 2002). Especially young learners state that homework tasks take too much time and restrain their free time. Hence, it can be concluded that students have developed negative attitude towards homework and causes the student associate homework with stress. In a study conducted to understand of teachers', parents' and students' viewpoints towards homework, the concept and aim of homework assignments are questioned (Warton, 2001). While teachers and parents describe homework practice as a tool used for reinforcing newly acquired knowledge, students' opinions were quite different. While most of the students at primary level do homework to be appreciated by teacher and parents, the opinions about homework perception changed in upper grade levels. Secondary and high school students see homework practices as a learning method used for permanent learning and revision of the topics. Concluding from the study, student's awareness of learning process and the age level affect the attitude towards homework (Warton, 2001).

Especially in secondary school level, attitudes of student towards homework vary according to clear explanation of task, expectations of it and compatibility of homework with different interests and skills (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001). If the student is aware of what is expected from him and if the homework overlaps with his interest, a positive attitude is developed towards homework. Herein, the approach preferred in the learning process by the teacher and homework method developed in parallel with the approach has a crucial role. Aforesaid, attitude of student towards homework depends on the attitude of teacher (Barnes, 2001). One

of the main principles directing the attitude of student towards homework is about how homework is practised based on its' type and approach adopted in learning process. Homework that is not in accordance with modern concept of education has a negative impact on the students' attitude (Rowell and Hong, 2002). Thus, it can be stated that assignments given within the framework of traditional approaches results in negative attitude towards assignments (Kaplan, 2006).

In the study conducted by Xu and Yuan (2003), the attitudes of students towards English homework were investigated under four headings of a) importance of doing homework b) reason for doing homework c) studying environment and homework, d) other issues relating to homework practice. While the students argue that doing homework is important for school achievement, they also believe that homework provides revision and permanent learning. In addition, even though most of the students deny that assignments support the sense of responsibility, some have stated that they develop learning skills and become more responsible thanks to homework practice. Discussing the results of studies on students' attitudes towards homework, the students do not reflect any negative attitude in relation to presence of homework in general; however, there are some critical points that might cause negative attitude depending on preferred content, type and model of homework practice.

According to Eccles (1983), the attitude towards assignment is shaped by adopting the task willingly and succeeding in practice. In other words, internal and external motivation is effective in the attitude towards homework. Ensuring motivation is facilitated with positive interaction developed with the individuals involved in the process which promotes learning communities.

Students' attitudes towards homework are emphasized to be negative in most studies and underlying reasons are being attempted to find out. One of the important factors affecting the attitude of student towards homework is defined as adopted modern approach and a homework style that is coherent with. Traditional learning approaches and individual based homework cause anxiety and loss of motivation in students. Similar to today's constructivist approach, assignments

based upon learning communities and cooperation might enhance positive attitudes towards homework. Referring to the studies conducted in relation to attitudes, the effect of homework practice on learners' development in education is emphasized and for this reason, it is noted that developing positive attitude towards homework practice might increase language learning achievement. Hence, assignments should match with modern understanding of language education and the interests of new generation.

2.2.4. Place of Homework in Turkish Education System

Homework practices that are specified in many studies as an effective learning method have various definitions in literature. While Gürlevik (2006) states that homework increase knowledge retention through revision, Şahin and Altınay (2008) define homework as a task that can be performed individually or with group, developing problem-solving skills. Besides active listening, practice in learning process has also an important role in student's developing the acquired knowledge. Assignments help reinforce the acquired knowledge during teaching and associate the knowledge with life. Thus, they allow practicing the theoretical knowledge (Köse, 2013). Homework can be defined as an important practice in transforming learning into experience provided at school. Assignments are defined as an output to be revealed by the individual activities or group work outside the course in line with the objectives identified in the curriculum (Journal of Communiqués, 1989).

Educational process does not cover only theoretical knowledge. At the same time, it helps to transform the acquired knowledge into practice. In-class time passes mostly by covering theoretical knowledge and following the lesson plan up to desired point. It has been shown by many studies that outside-class activities are also part of education process and they allow the student to make use of new information and develop the acquired knowledge. It is an essential that assignments should be included into education program in a controlled and planned manner. Provided that they are identified clearly and are planned in parallel with in-classroom instruction, they will contribute to academic achievement (MoNE,

2012). In Turkish National Education System, homework practices are used for regulating especially extracurricular activities in education programs and national education policies and articles regarding their functions are published in the educational regulations. As the existence of homework in learning process become important in learning process, directives and programs that involve homework practice are published by MoNE (2018). Thus, as assignments become an integral part of our education programs, a circular about homework practices was published stating that homework should be planned as in-school activities (the Official Gazette dated 10 November 1976, no. 15759, page 10).

Another regulation published for organizing out-of-school activities in educational institutions was announced on November 8th, 1989 under the name of "Regulation of Extracurricular Activities in Secondary and High School Institutions". According to this regulation, in class and extra-curricular activities should complement each other. Extracurricular assignments must also be organized in parallel with the main objectives expressed as taking a different approach to the assignments and consulting with the community during homework, communicating with each other and making use of different sources, and lastly enabling collaboration and gathering around a common goal. In aforementioned circular, the significance of assignments in learning process is expressed as follows:

Assignment is one of the activities involved in the process and is of high importance in terms of students' loving doing their homework on their own or with group and creating willingness and excitement of study and achievement (p. 942-944).

In the dates of 2005-2006, within the framework of modern education, all the elements in education program in Turkey including homework are organized based on constructivism. After the improvements in education programs, homework assignments become more important for authorities. Gür (2002) states that homework behaviours of student give clues to educator regarding school achievement in our country. As one of the elements included in the education process, assignments should be re-shaped according to the principles of modern approaches. Accordingly, especially in language education, assignment

applications directing individual to observe, interact and gain sense of community should take place in our education system (Regulation on Primary Education Institutions dated 27 August 2003 and no. 25212).

Thanks to modern understanding in education, students have become the focal point of education planners and it has been aimed to raise communities interpreting, sharing and questioning the acquired knowledge. (Apaydın and Aydın, 2008; Demirel, 2009) Homework practices should be shaped according to this understanding in education process. Homework is frequently preferred as extracurricular teaching practice by language teachers both in the world and Turkey. The researches show that this practice continue to survive as an integral part of education program; however, new perspectives are required in homework method together with new education policies.

2.3. Studies on Homework Practice

Considering the literature, homework as a learning method in education became one of the main subjects of the field with the changes in education programs (Babadoğan, 1990). Numerous studies were conducted on homework practices in various fields of education and a considerable amount of studies state that homework plays a crucial role in students' comprehension. While some focus on the attitudes towards homework in learning, other authorities discuss the types of homework or the importance of motivation in completing the assignments. There are also studies in literature implying that homework has a negative effect on students' learning. However, after they are analysed in detail, it can be concluded that homework assignments are considered as helpful tools for comprehension but there are some factors that determines the impact of homework. Thus, provided that these factors are shaped in accordance with students' needs and requests, homework practices are highly welcomed and preferred in education process. Similarly, with the improvements in the field of education programs in Turkey, homework is considered as one of the main aspects in curriculum as with the homework practices, students have the chance to review the learned subjects which contributes to students' academic performance (MoNE, 2006). In other

words, the new approaches in education in our country provides new opinions about homework and similarly to most of the authorities' ideas (Rengma, Saikia & Sunny, 2015; Tan and Erdoğan, 2004) thanks to homework assignments, students get information from different sources during completion, organize the new knowledge and interpret them with their own words, which enables critical thinking, in contrast with traditional approaches in learning process. The new adopted program in Turkish education system also determines that homework should not only help students' own learning but also possess some characteristics synchronised with modern understandings. To give an example, homework practices should be appropriate for learners' social and cultural conditions and give them opportunity to share their knowledge with other learners by interaction (MoNE, 2006).

Parallel to these improvements in education, the present study discusses new model in homework practices in FLE classes. As the present study deals with learning community-based homework, the literature about homework and learning communities and new understandings in homework practices need to be analysed additionally.

In a study conducted in relation to cooperative learning applications in 9th grade students (Mattingly and Van Sickle, 1991), some assignments for the students were organized as tasks that should be completed as group studies while individual tasks given during the period had to be completed individually. After the homework practices, the students received a questionnaire about their experiences on cooperative homework and individual tasks. After comparing the results and checking the tasks it was revealed that cooperative assignments are more effective when compared with individual tasks in terms of homework completion and motivation. A similar survey to the aforementioned study has been carried out in Turkey on university students. The study aimed to find out whether the learning-teaching approach has an effect on promoting permanent learning. Within this scope, homework practices were also turned into cooperative tasks as they are a part of learning process. Different from the current homework practices that are based on traditional type of homework, the instructor makes the students to study

cooperatively in tasks. By way of following cooperative practices, it is discovered that cooperation-based homework had much more effect on ensuring permanent knowledge when compared with traditional ones in the research conducted for examining the effect of cooperation-based learning and traditional learning of university students in terms of permanent learning and affective characteristics (Açıkgöz, 1993). Thus, as being one of the elements in learning process, homework practices should also be designed according to the new understanding in order to make learning permanent (Açıkgöz, 1993; Bilgin & Gelici, 2014).

Corno (2000) has concluded the following results in the study conducted for his article named as ‘Looking at Homework Differently’ prepared in relation to different roles of homework assignments: When homework assignments are community and cooperation oriented, they enhance social communication and interaction between individuals, build sense of community and belonging to a group, in contrast to traditional models of tasks promoting students study individual and be in a competition with other members of the learning process.

North and Pillay (2002) conducted a study with 85 Malaysian English teachers to find out their views and preferences about homework practices and academic performance. The questionnaires prepared for the study was distributed in schools where the researchers were able to had contact and return them. The results show that %73 of English teachers give homework two or three times in a week which shows that most of them prefer homework in learning process. Although homework is given importance in the process, teachers’ preferences about homework assessment and the type of tasks indicated that there is tendency to practice traditional homework models even the syllabus is organized based on communicative approach. Besides, it was determined that approximately 40% of teachers are satisfied with the results in homework. Based on this study, Şahin (2014) stated that teachers do not have sufficient knowledge in the issue of homework and objectives of these practices promoting effective language learning and modern education approaches.

In the doctoral dissertation conducted by Rozier (2003), freshmen were chosen as a sampling group to reveal the impact of group assignments to homework performance and academic achievement. The participants were divided into control and experimental groups to observe the difference on homework process. Before the action began, a pre-test was performed. Thereafter, new homework practices were designed based on group work and these assignments were given to experimental group in chemistry courses where approximately half of the students fail while the control group continued with common model of homework. A post-test was also implemented when the homework practices are all completed and after observing the homework performances and pre-test and post-test results, even there was no significant difference in academic achievement when analysing the test results; positive results were obtained in terms of developing attitudes and completing assignment.

In another study on homework, Gündüz (2005) addressed homework based on different learning types. The study conducted with university students aimed to reveal the effects of different types of homework practices on academic achievement and the attitudes. In the study dealing with the effect of traditional-web and individual-cooperative homework practices on undergraduate students' achievement, sampling group was divided into two and while the first group prepared homework in traditional-individual way, the other group completed the work in a cooperative way by using web if needed. While both models have a similar effect on academic achievement, no superiority has been observed in terms of homework attitude.

In the study conducted on 5th grades investigating the relationship between homework styles and academic achievement, 719 students took part as participants. Their homework styles were determined with ‘‘ Identification of Homework Motivation and Styles’’ scale designed by Hong and Milgram (1999) and it is observed that a great amount of students desire to have someone directing them while doing homework and motivating them during tasks. Besides, it is determined that they complete their assignments willingly with peer groups

(Hizmetçi, 2007) rather than practicing individually and motivation has a meaningful relation with homework performance.

Cheng, Kuo, Chen and Baw (2008) conducted a study with a group of 98 university students to check whether there is a significant relationship between homework model and attitudes towards the course. In an 18-week study, experimental and control groups were designed and while assignments based on cooperative learning method is employed in experimental group, traditional method was maintained in control group. After the implementation of different homework models, the students were given a questionnaire to get information about their current attitudes towards the class. When the data collection was finalized and results were analysed, a remarkable difference was observed in the attitude against the course between two groups. The experimental group developed more positive attitude against the course when compared with the control group following traditional method in homework practices.

There are various studies in literature about homework practices in Turkey, either. One of these studies is conducted on 7th graders in which the researcher questions students' homework self regulation related to teachers' homework practices (Taş, 2013). 8318 students and 344 Science teachers were participants of the study. Student completed Student Homework Scale and Achievement Test and the teachers answered the questions in Teacher Homework Scale. Analyses were conducted in hierarchical linear modelling and the results revealed that attitudes towards homework effect the self-regulation of students. It was found out that student perceptions of homework quality and feedback shapes their self-regulation. Based on the data, in classes where the students have high perception on homework quality and higher teacher support for using deep learning strategies in homework practices do not delay their homework and are more successful in conducted achievement test.

Online homework is also a common type of homework in today's world and there are studies dealing with that case in education. Studies on homework practices and technology use are increasing as a result of improvements in technology usage in

education. In the study (Bora, 2018) related to that point, the researcher aims at analysing the effect of online homework practices in science classes in terms of academic achievement and students' attitudes. A quasi experimental design is adopted in the study with pre and post-test and a control and experimental group was defined from 48 students in an elementary private school. Besides, an attitude scale was also used during the research. An achievement test was designed based on the objectives of the lesson and it was performed by the participants as pre-test before the implementation process and as post-test after the process was finished. The quantitative data were analysed with the help of SPSS by conducting sample t-test and ANCOVA. After analysing the data, it was revealed that there was not a significant difference in post-test results between two groups but there was a significant difference in the attitudes of students. Students who studied online demonstrated a positive attitude towards homework when compared with the control group.

Another study about homework practices (Köseoğlu, 2016) focuses on analysing the effects of homework practices shaped based on differentiated education approach on the homework attitudes of students having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The participants were 5 primary school students from different cities, their parents and teachers. During the action study, qualitative data were collected through interviews and when the data were analysed, it was revealed that thanks to the differentiated homework practices, students developed a positive attitude towards and stated that they complete the tasks with less assistance and in an ideal time. As a result, it can be concluded that homework models that are arranged based on the needs of the students are much more efficient and meaningful in learning process.

Some studies on homework are focused only on teachers' perceptions in literature. In his master's thesis, Yel (2019) aimed to designate the opinions of the teachers about the effects of homework. Scanning method was used during the study. The participants were 783 teachers from different primary and secondary schools in Ankara. In order to determine the perceptions of teachers about homework, a questionnaire was conducted and based on the data, the effects of homework were

analysed in cognitive, affective and social aspects. The perceptions of teachers were positive in terms of cognitive effects whereas it was not stated that it has a significant effect on affective and social aspects.

Researching the literature, many studies relating to homework practice and the importance of it in educational process, its' effect on academic achievement, types and techniques of homework and motivation in homework practices have been conducted so far. However, a study discussing the effect of foreign language education programs based on homework practices in parallel with learning communities haven't carried out yet. Besides, the effects of learning communities based homework on assignment performance and academic achievement have not been discussed in any study about language learning. Even if cooperative learning comes together with learning communities in some points, it is clearly concluded from the studies that there are some differences from some perspectives. For this reason, cooperation based homework does not fully reflect the features of learning communities. In addition to this, even the studies conducted abroad reveal the importance of assignment applications in foreign language education in some cases, although language acquisition in our country becomes more of an issue, there are no studies relating to new understandings and models in English homework practices. The studies on homework practices deal mostly with the impact on academic success or attitudes rather than focusing on characteristics of homework in language classes or how to design a new homework model appealing to new generation of learners. In addition, even if some studies define learning communities in general terms, none of them suggest an idea about learning communities based homework as a method of language practice and a new model of homework.

2.3.1. Studies on English Homework Practices

Along with the changes in national education system, there were also improvements in foreign language education programs. According to the revised program, homework practices were stated as one of the main elements of English language curriculum, providing reviewing of the lesson and promote students'

acquisition (MoNE, 2015). With the renewed program, it is emphasized that homework assignments are effective in learning if they are implemented in the light with modern approaches in FLE.

The studies about homework in education process are mostly on Maths and Science learning and not many resources are encountered relating to significance of assignments in learning English as a second language. The major reason for this can be foreseen in review of literature that foreign language educators and researchers mostly focus on in-class learning rather than homework practices, which is considered as outside class activity. Considering the fact that learning continues outside the class and the most effective method for this is homework practices, more studies need to be conducted for assignment applications in FLT (Nunan and Richards, 2015). Conducted in the field of language education in recent time, discussions are initiated on the standards, scope and content of assignments in the studies (Lee and Pruitt, 1979; Cooper, 2001).

Motivation in FLE is one of the promoting factors for effective learning (Cooper, 2001). Many studies are carried out indicating the fact that motivation of student in education process enhances passion and positive attitude is developed towards the things learned (Coutts, 2004; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). Assignments are one of the ways used for obtaining information about the student's motivation. Pintrich (1999) states that motivated student cares about foreign language assignments much more and student does not escape from completing the task. If student feels anxious while doing homework, he doesn't get the desired result in homework because of the loss of motivation (Tobias, 1985). When the effects of motivation and anxiety on homework are observed, it can be stated that both have an effect on homework performance. For this reason, while planning homework, practices that reduce anxiety of student and increase motivation should be preferred.

Especially in the education programs where English education is compressed to certain class hours and in the countries where English is not commonly used for communication, useful ideas should be generated in relation to homework models and success in FLE. Krashen and Terrel (1983) argue that being exposed to target

language outside the learning environment facilitates learning. Continuation of the learning process outside the school is provided by homework practices adopted in education program. It is emphasized that students are given homework to get exposed to target language, revise the lesson and make use the target language (Wallinger, 2008). Practising language is a crucial factor in realization of learning. Therefore, as the government attaches a remarkable importance to English education in Turkey, homework as an efficient method of learning should always be developed based on modern approaches in education.

The number of studies conducted in the past in relation to the place and importance of homework in foreign language education is very limited. Therefore, there is not sufficient information to make judgement regarding the effect of homework practices in terms of models and types on academic achievement in FLE process (Wallinger, 2008). That assignment has different variables (i.e., type, scope, model and standards) it is required to evaluate the relationship of assignment applications and academic achievement from many aspects. Looking through the literature, there are some studies about homework practices in foreign language education worldwide.

By analysing the articles about homework and experiments conducted between 1904 and 1984, implications were stated by Foyle and Bailey (1988) that the effect of homework practices given in English classes on academic achievement varies according to grade levels. Based on the investigations, it was concluded that while there was no relationship between homework and academic achievement in high school, the results were different in elementary and secondary level as homework effected student achievement positively. Moreover, it is stated that homework practices did not decrease the academic achievement in any of the grade levels.

North and Pillay (2002) conducted a study in relation to what English teachers' ideas were about traditional homework and their effects on learning and reached the following conclusions: In the study conducted based on the homework performance of the students, while 40% of the teachers are satisfied with the results of traditional homework, 60% of whom think that these assignments have

no effect on performance. Based on the results, it is concluded that there are teachers who still prefer traditional homework even it does not meet modern understandings in education.

Cooper et al., (1999) and Kazmierzak (1994) made similar interpretations relating to foreign language assignments in different studies and emphasized the diversity in English assignments. It is pointed out that the development of foreign language cannot be measured from a single aspect; acquisition of English can be ensured with developing skills such as speaking, writing and comprehension. Thus, English course helps to learn diversity in assignment applications (Wallinger, 2008). Accordingly, these matters should be considered while arranging homework for developing target language skills.

What is important in homework activities for developing language skills is to complete them by using the newly acquired knowledge. In addition to this, homework practices developing listening and speaking skills in foreign language acquisition support active use of the target language. Focusing more on theory leaves language practice aside. Language is an active tool for communication that develops by way of taken advantage. Therefore, assignment applications focusing on comprehension and speaking, directing to use target language with the community should be developed. One of the important points in homework performance in English classes is related to homework assessment system (Wallinger, 2008). It is revealed that teachers check assignments generally in three ways: Some of the teachers focus on whether it has been completed or not while the other group cares the accuracy of the answers and as the last group there are also teachers scoring every completed assignment. At this point, it is believed that grading without assessing the accuracy of answers; it is not possible to have an idea about achievement in language learning (Keith, 1982; Chen and Ehrenberg, 1993). Thus, homework practices might also be utilized as evaluation of students and the lesson. At that point, the teacher should attach importance to the quality of the answers given.

In a similar study by Trautwein, Lüdtke, Syhnyder and Niggi (2006) conducted on ninety-three 8th grade students, it is questioned whether types and evaluation of English homework influence motivation of doing it. Based on the results, it was concluded that according to the students, the type of homework in foreign language classes are important in foreign language classes and it was underlined that the learners care about the type of homework practices. Moreover, the study revealed that the students who are aware of assignments check in class are more motivated to complete homework.

Demirel (1989) conducted a study on the effect of the assignment given in English class on academic achievement of the students. In the study, the effect of assignment on 5th grade students' achievement was analysed and significant results were found about the relationship. During the study, the students were given homework regularly in every class and after analysing the homework completion rates and exam results, it was revealed that assignments were effective in language acquisition. On another study conducted with more than 500 English teachers employed in different educational institutions in Istanbul, teaching methods that they employ in language teaching were investigated and the findings were surprising as it was revealed that most of the teachers preferred outmoded traditional teaching methods (Haznedar, 2010). As shown up in the results, linguistic-auditory method based on memorization and repetition is among the most prominent answers of participants. As authorities head towards creative and communicative methods in language education, it is remarkable that teachers prefer an outdated method in teaching (Richards and Rogers, 2001). That homework-based learning, a considered method in recent years remained at the level of 39.8% has been among the critical points of the study. Also, it is observed that the most highlighted methods in language learning are preferred at low rates in Turkey. The result has necessitated that modern teaching methods of FLE should be emphasized in teacher education programs and be arranged based on the characteristics of new understandings in language teaching (Haznedar, 2010).

It has been often pointed out in literature that students' opinions about homework play an important role in education in order to make use of it efficiently. Zilker

(2015) conducted a study on students' perceptions towards homework in English classes. The participants were 60 students of a primary school in Kars. Both questionnaires and interviews were conducted during data collection in order to get deep information. With the results in statistical and content analysis, it is revealed that homework practices are considered as integral parts of learning by students. Besides, students prefer tasks that are fun and more visual elements, which revealed that, compared with the students' attitudes towards homework, the model of homework is crucial in perceptions of students.

Similarly, a study on homework practices investigated teachers' and students' perspectives on current homework system in English classes in terms of quantity, individualisation, motivation, homework correction, creativity, working in groups, parents and use of computer (Özmen, 2002). The participants were 250 students and 25 teachers in various public schools in Bursa. Both questionnaires and interviews were conducted to get data and also the teacher took observation notes during the process to get deeper information about the system in homework practices in EFL classes. After analysing the data, it was found out that both teachers and the students do not prefer a large amount of homework. Teachers and students also claim that individualisation is effective during homework correction but the teachers think they do not have enough time to spend time for every learner individually in classes. When it comes to motivation, both teachers and learners emphasize that motivation is important in assignments and correction of homework is crucial to utilize homework activities efficiently. One of the intriguing results of the study was about group homework. Learners' were in the opinion that if they work with group during homework completion, they feel more motivated. Hence, it is concluded from the study that current homework practices should be revised according to the opinions of teachers and students to make homework practices more effective in English learning process.

A newly conducted study on gamification in EFL classes and its impact on students' motivation for homework and homework performance, the researcher defined twenty-two 9th grade students from a private school in İstanbul as participants of the research (Selvaslı, 2018). At the beginning and end of the 4

weeks-period, motivation for homework scale was improved and implemented as pre and post test. In order to find out whether there is a significant difference between the two results, paired sample t-test was used in analysis. Afterwards, to get a deeper sight about the impact of newly applied homework model on motivation and homework performance, a semi structured interview was conducted with 3 students from the participants. Similarly to t-test results, gamification showed a positive impact on homework motivation and accordingly, after comparing homework checklist before and after the new model of homework, a significant difference was observed between homework performances of students. Apart from the mentioned literature, there are also various studies that deal with the perceptions of students towards homework in high school and its relation with various points about homework practices especially in foreign language education (İleri, 2013; Tilgel, 2010; Yalçın, 2019; Zelyüt, 2017).

The studies conducted in relation to English assignments are mostly related to the effect on academic achievement, students' motivation and language skills developed by assignments. However, the amount of the studies and their conclusions are not sufficient enough to make generalisations about homework practices in FLE. Furthermore, no significant study is encountered in relation to homework practices especially as a method of language learning, homework models and modern understanding in assignments. Besides, there is not any study that focuses on a homework model shaped in line with learning communities understanding, which actually a concept that overlaps modern approaches being suggested by authorities for language learning.

2.4. Learning Communities

Being suggested by Lave and Wenger for the first time, communities of practice is described as a group that share common goals, interests or problems and try to overcome the situation together by exchanging information (Wenger, McDermott & Synder, 2002). People have the tendency to live in communities by their nature throughout the human history and that case resulted to fulfil the needs for food and living together with the society (Aydın, 2002; McLaughin & Talbert, 2001).

Similarly, learning requirements of people can be easily supplied with enabling interaction among the individuals sharing the same environment and community. As a result, learning and teaching processes do not only aim at providing new knowledge, skills and attitudes for individuals, but also it should enhance presenting the new knowledge and discussing it with the other members of society in order to make learning common, permanent and collective (Harasim et al., 1995).

Change is an inevitable process that occurs naturally in many areas of life. Developing different perspectives in education and introduction of new concepts for the process can be referred as change. The most important function of education is to enable individuals to become compatible with the modern world. For this reason, education process should equip individuals with the skills that the current era requires and should bring specific qualifications (Çelikten et al., 2005). Traditional learning methods have started to lack in the opinion of education authorities with the spread of modern approaches in education and education understanding developed in parallel with this and many theories and approaches have been attempted to be improved to make learning process more meaningful (Rengma, Saikia & Sunny, 2015). Traditional methods and individual oriented approaches adopted for years are replaced by education models that help adapt to community and provide socialization (Yavuz, 2016).

One of the biggest reasons that traditional approach is in a serious transformation can be seen as change of era and accordingly, needs of learning individual. Teaching processes and elements included in the process have been involved with this change. Theories and approaches supporting active participation within creativity and process containing reciprocal interaction and communication come to the fore instead of learning processes where teacher is defined as a leader and students are inactively try to acquire just the transferred knowledge. Considering the effect of traditional theories on learning and to what extent they meet the needs of individual and society, new theories have been discussed by the education authorities. It is considered important that the developing theory has a concept suitable for the current time, supporting modern education understanding.

Doğan (1996) states that the education understanding of the new century argues that individual receives education contemporarily, develops a character reaching the solution of problems by researching and achieves intellectual and emotional depth required for social relations. When the said individual properties are considered, it will not be possible to reach the desired objectives with ordinary education methods. As a result, different approaches and education models developing with modern understanding have started to modify the elements and policies in learning in order to become social and active during the process.

Changes in modern education understanding in the world have also brought new perspectives to the field of education in our country. New programs being developed in our education system make changes including education approaches prioritizing reciprocal communication and interaction in learning process other than the applications only paying attention to one-way communication and decrease participation. Active participation depends on the learning process designed and the approaches and application preferred by teacher in class (Öztürk, 2000). Interaction both gives tips to the teacher related to learning and is a situation arousing curiosity and interest to student. The presence of communication among individuals is as important as the quality of interaction realized. In today's educational approaches, teachers are expected to strive for increasing interaction (Öztürk, 2000). Individuals' understanding one another, sharing, valuing and acquiring social consciousness are integral parts of communication and becoming a community (Charalambos et al., 2004; Cross, 1998).

As is seen, the concepts of interaction and communication have become popular particularly in the educational policies related to social sciences. Especially with the improvements based on modern understandings, social sciences look for different approaches suitable for the needs of individuals. Therefore, educators involved in the educational process should pay attention to all-purpose communication and active individuals in the learning environment. In this way, learning is no longer a process of storing knowledge and becomes a socially prominent value. In particular, the concepts of interaction and communication

have been emphasised also in foreign language learning processes and various ways have been tried to ensure efficiency in language acquisition.

As constructivism underlies in the understanding of communities in learning, it is also discussed briefly in this section before continuing with learning communities. With the needs of improvement in education, modern approaches are suggested that fulfil the needs of modern understanding in FLE (Çınar, Teyfur and Teyfur, 2006) to raise learning. Following new advances, the aim of FLE program is defined and interaction and utilizing the target language are put to the forefront in teaching process (MoNE, 2006). Constructivist approach being developed as a reaction to behaviourists has started to find a place in Turkish education policies since 2006. Constructivism, stated as being coherent with the new principles of FLE has been adopted as a new approach in language classes. It was forecast that the desired objectives cannot be attained by adopting traditional approaches and as a result, new approaches were addressed for language education programs. Constructivist approach adopts a student-centered education process. Constructivism supporting active engagement of student in learning process emphasizes that students should undergo learning experiences with different ways. It can be said that students questioning the acquired knowledge, utilizing the new information and being in interaction with each other realize themselves in learning process and accordingly, they learn to generate solutions for their own learning (Hord, 2009). Researching, questioning and commenting in the process of acquiring knowledge, individual should be able to find solutions to the problems he faces (Apaydin and Aydın, 2008). Constructivist approach and related implementations take student as a center, where student plays an effective role in the process, encourage student to be initiative, express himself and start communication and make use of the new knowledge (Hoşgörür, 2002; Marlowe and Page, 1998). Considering the principles of constructivist approach, it can be noticed that it supports the methods based on modern education understanding (i.e., support active engagement, build communities or conduct collective practice), different from traditional methods in education.

Together with adopting constructivist approach in primary and secondary education in Turkey, various elements in teaching programs also undergo some changes and new understandings show up in education process. One of these changes came up in homework styles and their implementations (Açıkgöz, 2003). With the new model, it is aimed to raise students that are willing to search and be creative during tasks. In order for homework assignments to be arranged according to modern approaches, assignments encouraging utilizing the acquired knowledge together with community and requiring active engagement in the process and establishing communication should be organized and practiced. Considering the studies relating to homework today, even if modern approaches are emphasized in language education programs, existence of the traditional approach is commonly observed in homework applications. As an important learning method for especially foreign language courses, if homework assignments are arranged according to modern approaches that support building a community of learners, learning from each other by studying together, reducing competition and being active in the process, it can be expected that improvements might be observed in both homework performance and English learning process considering the points facilitating language acquisition and making learning permanent. As constructivism supports communities of learners understanding in language learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), it is believed that with encouragement of modern approaches in education, LC will make a breakthrough in FLE.

With the new century, the new understandings in education head towards learning together in a society rather than learning individually. The concept of learning communities is also one of the current understandings that is newly discussed in the field of education and literature (Hord, 2009). It is observed that there is an increasing interest towards learning in communities of common purpose. A general definition of LC is expressed as a group of people who share common interests and aims in order to build collaborative knowledge. Communities bring students together around a common goal which is valued by every individual (Riel & Fulton, 2001; Shaffer & Anundsen, 1993). Learning community is a new understanding in social sciences which encourages interaction and interpretation,

enables integration among the students (Bell, 2005). Learning communities can be expressed as an approach developed as a result of the new perspectives and needs.

In order to interpret the learning communities, the concept of community should be known in first place. Community can be defined as a human group coming together or united together for a common purpose. The sense of community helps the individuals comprehend their responsibilities in the group and their places in the society where they live (Himmelman, 1994). The concept of community is defined in many ways in the researches. The concepts emphasized by these definitions are the sense of belonging of individual, common purpose in a group and establishing interaction (Rovai, 2002). Although the sense of community is a concept mostly emphasized in the field of social sciences, the concept of community in education has started to be discussed recently. Communities in the learning process have been become prominent in the educational policies mostly since the 1990s (Willits & Brennan, 2016). It has been stated that the education programs followed by schools and universities do not meet the requirements of the era and reaching the objectives takes time. Thereupon, the American Council on Education has aimed to form a learning environment developing task sharing and learning of shared values, personal development, social responsibility and interpersonal respect. At this point, the first principles have been created in the literature that can be accessed on the concept of community and learning community, and these principles published by Ernest Boyer have marked out the boundaries of learning communities (Spitzberg and Thorndike, 1992).

There are six principles for shaping learning communities according to Boyer (1990a, p. 6-8). Accordingly, learning communities are defined as follows:

- It is a community seeking education, where members act together in order to strengthen teaching and learning.
- It is an open community where freedom of expression is maintained and affirmed.
- It is a disciplined formation where individual accept their responsibilities to public and act for the benefit of the community.
- It is a formation where sensitive attitudes are followed and diversity in the community is pursued.
- They are communities encouraging individuals to help one another, where each member supports happiness.
- They are communities where cultural differences and rituals of individuals are approved.

As it is seen, learning communities are the formation gathering individuals and encouraging common progress in accordance with certain objectives, unlike individual-oriented and competitive approaches (Boyer, 1990). As the theories and approaches adopted in education have begun to lose their old values, the learning communities started to come to the fore in the studies carried out in the field of education and teaching. The concepts of community and social life fundamentally based on the foundations of existence have outlined a new model in education.

The terms of social formation and learning communities in education was put forward by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991). Learning community is a human group with interaction with one another, coming together in order to complete a certain task in the best way or realizing learning process (Wenger et al., 2002). Wenger et al. (2002) explains the relationship between the learning and community concept in three dimensions: 1) Both individual and learning are social being, 2) The knowledge obtained in social environment has a meaning when it is evaluated with knowledge communities, 3) Being active and interacting increase the knowledge obtained.

In fact, the concept of community and learning with community are not new formations for humanity. Since the ancient ages, humanity has consulted with one another for the needs such as sheltering, defence and nutrition, made division of labour and directed the society with interaction in some way. The concept of community and learning communities formed spontaneously or intentionally has been taking place in our time. It has been observed that many individuals feel the sense of belonging for the community gathered consciously or unconsciously for a certain purpose in school or family (Spitzberg & Thorndike, 1992). This brings forward the idea that the concept of community has an effect on each area where individual exists. The association of the concept of community with education has been one of the topics on the agenda with the discussions generated regarding the traditionalist approach and individual-oriented education processes. As the learning communities adopt the learning in social environment and peer solidarity, they bear resemblances to social constructivism theory and social cognitive theory developed by Vygotsky (1978). As this suggests, different approaches and

practices should be shaped in line with the age and individual together with new perspectives emerging in education.

Relationship of community and education has been evaluated in different ways by authorities and it has been attempted to define what kinds of effects the community concept would have on school environment and learning. In many studies carried out in this field, it has been expressed that the concept of community in education is effective in learning process (Deborah, 2012). At the same time, the studies related to the learning theory, the way of functioning of brain and the learning environments based on joint study have emphasized that learning is ideally realized with community (Kuh, G. et al., 2005).

Bickford and Wright (2006) describe the importance of the existence of the community in the education process as follows:

The importance of community in the learning process is not highlighted as it is supposed to be. If the concept of community did not have an effect on the learning process, the institutions such as university or school bringing individuals together would not exist. However, the studies carried out indicate that interpersonal interaction and sense of being community are the factors increasing learning (p. 64).

The learning community approach is an approach aiming to realize permanent and continuous learning process by creating a learning environment within the frame of the concepts argued to have continuously to learning process. As a result of developing societies and varying expectations, many approaches adopting the learning community and community concept as a principle have been put forward. In particular, the applications in the field of social sciences have been tried to be regulated according to the learning community approach; thus, the sense of self-confidence required for the fields such as foreign language education, community consciousness and interaction concepts have been attempted to be included in the learning process.

Learning is corroborated by means of cooperation in the learning communities. In an education process where learning communities are adopted, the important factor for receiving successful result is that students reciprocally benefit from one another in cooperation and adopt the concept of community (Palloff and Pratt,

1999). Besides, in the class environments where the learning communities are created, members share sense of belonging and trust, act by being aware of that fact that they have common responsibility and purpose and agree that individuals in the group and all the class have a task in learning process (Rovai and Lucking, 2000). The concept of community in the learning communities strengthens social values such as commitment, solidarity, togetherness and love. These values encourage acting with the community and the sense of responsibility by bringing individuals together (Willits and Brennan, 2016). The learning communities making learning process more entertaining, terminal and intriguing help individual understand that he is a member of the social community and created an identity suitable for the community consciousness (Wenger et al., 2002).

Wilson and Ryder (1998) refer to the learning community as a group of individuals supporting one another during learning programs. And in these communities everyone is willing to learn and there is a spirit of common purpose. Wenger et al. (2002) state that human group constituting learning community is comprised of individuals learning together as to how the things can be better by being in a regular interaction and feeling anxiety, interest or passion for what they do.

Romsdahl and Hill (2012) have stated that cooperation in the learning communities develops the study skills of individuals, which provide contribution to personal and social development. In addition, it is emphasized that cooperation in the learning communities reveals the sense of belonging in individual, which affects the learning process in a positive way. Wilson and Ryder (1998) have stated that there may be many groups in education and the feature distinguishing the learning communities from other communities is the consensual purpose sharing towards the support of individual to one another in the learning process. For this reason, everyone in the learning communities is expected to be ready to acquire something and participate in the applications and activities. In particular, it is argued that the concept of community supports cooperation and interaction. It also develops the sense of community and group consciousness, and learning perception (Garrison, Anderson, and Archer, 2005).

Charalambos, Michalinos and Chamberlein (2004) describe the general features of communities as follows:

- There is a common sense of responsibility among the participants for the task assigned and the application to be performed.
- Common vision, control, purpose and products of the community are shared evenly.
- The participants know that they will not be attacked by other participants and convey their opinions freely and ask questions regarding the process.
- The interaction among the members and source sharing depending on a certain level of structural interdependence.
- There is a reciprocal support between the members and the communities (p.138).

As the concept of learning communities begin to spread in the field of social sciences, the opinions about the inclusion of the community concept to the learning process have been put forward in the educational studies and new definitions and principles have been introduced in the literature. Given the definition and principles of learning communities developed by authorities, joint acting among individuals during learning process, forming interaction environment, emphasizing interpersonal commitment and sense of trust, gathering around a particular goal and realizing individual learning with the support of group where each individual is involved in learning process come to the fore.

Learning communities based on the sense of community have an important place in the field of educational psychology (Sarason, 1974). Considering that communities hinder the sense of loneliness and despair of individual, community formation in learning process helps individual undergo a desired process. Learning communities do not refer to only a learning process realized in the class. At the same time, it keeps student active out of class and school in term of learning activities (Zhao and Kuh, 2004). Also, it has been proven by researches that learning communities increase the intellectual communication between student and teacher, make individual be aware of himself and his environment and strengthen the ability of critical thinking (Butler and Dawkins, 2007; Mitchell and Sackney, 2011).

Together with the needs of the modern era, in order to educate individuals who can contribute to international interaction, the importance given to foreign language in the field of education increases each passing day (Candel-Mora, 2015; Coleman, 2010;

Truchot, 2002). Language taught in the educational environment is tried to be reinforced with life experiences. As previously mentioned, language is a living tool continuing its existence with the communication among individuals (Altıntaş, 2000; Saraswathi, 2004). Therefore, the approaches encouraging communication and interaction in foreign language education are considered more effective in achieving the goal (Castle, 2004; Güneş, 2012). Learning communities allow individual to resize his knowledge and experiences, to share them with the community of which he becomes a member and to diversify the knowledge acquired (Aydın, 2002; Harasim et al., 1995). At the same time, individuals, a part of social life, develop the sense of belonging, sharing and assistance required for common life (Charalambos et al., 2004; Cross, 1998). Instead of the belief that the feeling of competition and the knowledge acquired are only for individual, learning communities arguing the cooperation of individual and the concept of interaction prioritize the concept of cooperation and group-oriented applications (Rengma, Saikia & Sunny, 2015; Yavuz, 2016). LC as a new understanding in learning process encourages students to unit within the frame of a purpose rather than prompting individual to competition and race (Bell, 2005; Boyer, 1990). As one of the facts required to realize the action of union is communication, it both develops human relations and encourage using of the language learned in the practice provided.

Learning communities encourage interaction, give freedom of self-expression to individuals and provide individuals with a real and integrative environment (Charalambos et al., 2004; Romsdahl & Hill, 2012). When the problems related to language education in worldwide and our country is expressed, traditional approaches and the realization of the language acquisition in a mechanical environment reveal results such as the prominence of the idea that the knowledge is only for the benefit of individual self. Learning communities, group-oriented applications and learning theories state that traditional approach is not suitable for language acquisition and causes lack of motivation in the fulfilment of tasks of individual. Therefore, considering that language phenomenon is a living tool involved in social life actively, it can be estimated that communities in learning is an appropriate viewpoint in language acquisition. While the nature of social relations and to what extent they realize in traditional applications is not important, the creation of knowledge in group-

oriented learning applications depends on the relation and interaction among individuals (Palloff and Pratt, 1999). The concept of interaction having quite importance in language education overlaps with the definitions and principles of learning communities. In this context, it can be estimated that, in class environment where the sense of community develops, the language teaching results in a more permanent and terminal way. In a study concerning the effect of the sense of community on educational environment and learning (Rutter et al., 1979), it is stated that the sense of community reinforces the feeling of common purpose among individuals, which helps them meet the needs of belonging, social support, being accepted by community, identity formation that are especially gaining importance during the adolescence period. In the study carried out by Battistich and Hom (1997), it has been found out that in the learning environments where the sense of community is dominant, individuals enjoy the process more, are more ready to learn and receive better result academically.

Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2005) interpret learning communities within the framework of three separate elements. These are expressed as social presence; cognitive presence and teaching presence are shown schematically in the figure.

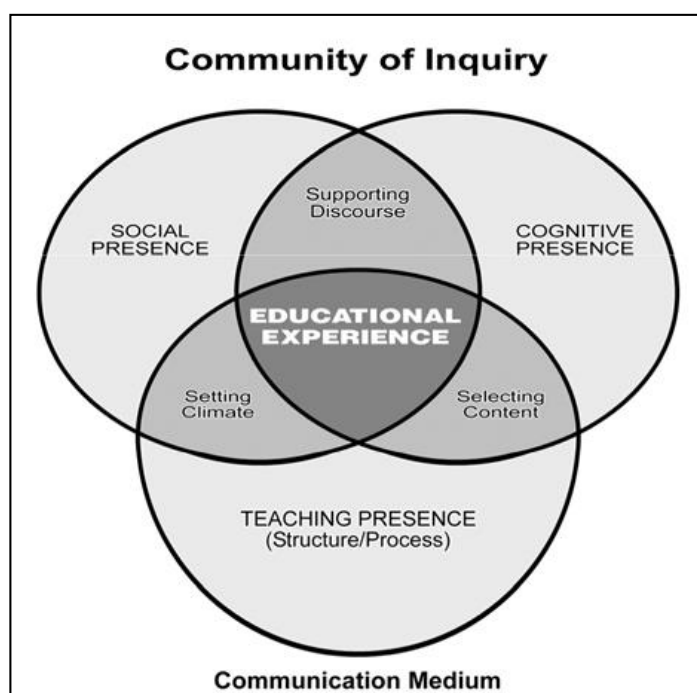


Figure 1. Learning Communities Scheme, Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2005)

Social presence is the ability of self-expression of individual and building one-to-one or collective meaningful relations with other individuals. This is an important element as it strengthens the effective communication and social ties in learning communities and forms the basis of learning communities. Swan and Shih (2005) stated that group solidarity is related directly to social presence. Cognitive presence is to realize learning by adopting focusing on research, being determined and solution oriented by employing cooperative and reflective theories.

In the teaching presence, the validity of the community is at the forefront. Interaction has an important role in learning communities; however, no community can come together without a plan and purpose. Therefore, a practitioner is required while creating learning communities. As is seen, the learning communities have begun to become popular in the field of education increasingly and have adopted the applications suitable for the needs and requests of the developing community instead of traditional education approaches. As the learning communities and group-oriented applications have been included in the education planning processes, the learning community committees and the unions supporting this approach have been started to be established. The representatives of learning communities have stated that union of professional learning communities is required in an education conference held in Kansas, 13 November 2015 and as a result of this, it has been decided to establish an association with the name of "*Learning Communities Association*" and the mission of this organization has been determined as follows: It was aimed to encourage students to learn, succeed and realize themselves, by benefiting from learning communities. In order to ensure and make learning of students permanent, the sense of research, inquiry, interaction and social consciousness adopted by learning communities will be encouraged (Huerta, 2017).

Looking through the related literature, it is emphasized that learning communities create learning environments suitable for today's education understanding and get individual willing to learn as it appeals to. Learning communities have gained more importance with the adoption of social constructivist approach in the field of education as it was observed that collaborative school environments promote

success when compared to traditional school environments (Joyce, 2004, as cited in Phillips, 2009). Therefore, when all the elements included in the education process have been reorganized based on modern ideas, identified as learning communities understanding in the present study, it will be able to support the achievement of the points aimed in education. In particular, considering that foreign language education can be reinforced with interaction and communication to be realized in learning environment, the applications used in English education process can be regulated according to the learning communities understanding. The information obtained by researching the literature related to learning communities proves that this approach might be effective in education program and especially in the courses in the field of social skills. However, the fact that the researcher has not been encountered a study on learning communities and its adoption to FLE and homework practices paved the way for the present study. Coming in sight with new approaches in education as constructivism, learning communities is predicted to enhance homework practices in English classes. As it is believed that enabling interaction between the individuals enhance the desire to learn, being one of the elements in education, homework practices might be designed based on the principles of learning communities in order to catch up with learners' viewpoints about tasks. With that way, it can be foreseen that they might provide great contributions to homework performance and language learning process.

2.4.1. Studies on Learning Communities

Being supported by social approaches and constructivism, learning communities started to become a common understanding in education (Rovai, 2002). In these communities, every member of the society strive to work together in order to reach the common purposes. As it is mentioned recently in literature, it is stated that learning communities have a positive impact in terms of students' success, participation and personal, mental and social development (Palloff & Pratt, 1999). There are various communities in society that gather for similar purposes, interact with each other and adopt common rules throughout the process. As every classroom or group in which learning occurs come together within certain rules

and have the chance to interact, they can be called as communities. Based on that point, community cannot be shaped only by coming together. Interaction, common purposes and rules to be followed are required elements of a community (Preece, 2000).

Considering interaction as the main element of existence, learning communities become more important starting from 1990 and with the improvement of modern understanding; they were adapted to the field of education in terms of programs and approaches (Klamma et al., 2005; Saban, 2005). The main reason of this development is the increase on studies indicating the positive impacts of learning communities and the progress in new understandings that prepare the learner for the society, which differs from the traditional approach (Joyce, 2004, as cited in Phillips, 2009).

A learning community is mainly described as a group in which individuals feel sense of belonging and responsibility to each other and have common purposes to fulfil (Eroğlu, 2013). Education programs and lessons that promote social development of the learners might keep with the sense of community in learning processes. As mentioned before, interaction, participation and social learning experiences promotes being a whole in classes which is supported in modern approaches in learning (Smith & Regan, 2005). In every field of education, learning communities enables effective learning by activating interaction. Hereinbefore, interaction is pretty important in learning foreign language as it opens a road to interaction as one of the requirements for building communities. As such a new and wanted understanding in education, the sense of community and communities in learning process are getting popular in literature but it is not as common as expected. The studies that are mentioned in this section are related to the sense of community and communities in learning environments in general.

In a qualitative action research (Cumhur and Baydar, 2017) in Turkey, the effect of cooperative-based learning method on 7th grade maths course was discussed by employing various techniques (i.e., student teams, clustering and tournament). In the quasi-experimental study, 31 students in control group and 36 students in

experimental group were participants. In control group the lesson were based on traditional methods and tasks were given accordingly while in experimental group cooperative learning and working together as a society were in forefront during the process. An achievement was conducted as pre and post assessment and t-test was used to analyse the data. At the end of the study, most of the students responded positively to build teams or communities while learning and completing homework. The students stated that their friends facilitated their learning and it made fun. In addition to this, it was observed that their anxiety and reluctance against the course were reduced. The only challenge was the conflict within the groups and noise occurred during group-oriented study conducted within the class.

Summers and Svinicki (2007) have investigated the relationship between the sense of classroom community and achievement motivation which also has a direct impact on homework performance. The research was conducted with several instructors from a determined university. The participants were 483 undergraduate students of theirs, but 203 of them participated both in pre and post test. The data were collected with a previously designed 32-item questionnaire that measures learning-oriented attitudes and grade-oriented attitudes. Students' achievement motivation goals were measured before and after following interactive learning and classroom community understanding and by using MANOVA the results showed that the assignment relating to cooperative and interactive learning are in a significant relationship with the motivation and sense of community. When the students undergo traditional learning methods and receive competitive tasks, it has been reported that they have less motivation and no sense of community. As it was expected, students' perceptions of interaction promoted motivation, which is ensured by being a community.

Uysal (2009) studied the effect of cooperation-based learning method on critical thinking and creativity by observing Turkish courses of 4th grade students. Control and experimental groups were used in the study as enabling cooperation in experimental group and following traditional model by studying individually. Analyzing the data, a significant difference was observed in the fields such as writing skill critical thinking and creativity.

Gillies and Boyle (2010) conducted a fairly comprehensive study on cooperative learning in secondary school level. The study conducted together with 10 teachers, focused on effect and difficulties of the applied method. The teachers were employed in different schools and levels. Firstly, the process of the implementation was introduced to the students and started to be followed. Interviews with the teachers were performed after a 6-week period and their opinions were evaluated. Based on the obtained results, it was stated that cooperation-oriented learning method has yielded an effective result especially in younger groups and furthermore, it developed social relationships and sense of community among the students. Time use and preparation of activities that motivate students were defined as difficulties in the study.

The studies on cooperative learning are quite related to the sense of community in literature. Hence, almost in every study that questions cooperative learning notices communities in learning and interaction in classrooms. As mentioned earlier, studies that directly focus on learning communities are mostly about professional learning communities or online learning communities and their functions in the society. Besides, there are also various researches questioning the importance of the sense of community in learning periods and their elements.

Ma (2006) conducted a case study that aimed to evaluate online learning communities in terms of the sense of community in distance learning. 34 master's students participated in the study as the members of online community. After the distance learning process, a questionnaire was conducted about the perceptions of students and the results showed that there wasn't a real sense of community developed among participants and as a result, the interaction was not practiced reciprocal among the individuals. As a result, it was stated that the sense of community in online learning communities should be reviewed and redesigned in distance learning. With the results of the study, the educational part of learning communities was underlined and the sense of community in online learning was pointed out in order to be efficient in distance learning.

In a study analyzing the relationship between sense of community in classroom and academic performance both in cooperative learning environment and traditional learning environment (Summers and Svnicki, 2007), a questionnaire was conducted with 213 undergraduate students to get data. According to the results, it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between students' interactive learning perceptions and motivation in collaborative learning environment and the sense of community. Students who took part in traditional learning environment reported less motivation and sense of community in classroom when compared with cooperative learning environment. Based on the study, it can be stated that learning communities should promote collaboration in the process.

Another study conducted by Lear (2007) analysed the relation between ensuring interactive classroom and sense of community in learning environment. Interviews were conducted with 241 undergraduate students participated in the study generated the qualitative data of the research. After the data were analysed, it was stated that there was a significant relationship between the sense of being a community in classroom and the interaction among individuals. Besides, belonging, feeling comfortable and trust are defined as the most important elements in a community, which were the main themes of the study. It was concluded that the sense of community supports the individual to succeed in self and social development.

Another study about learning communities aimed to analyse the relationship between learning styles, age, gender and the sense of community in classroom (Smith, MacGregor, Mathews and Gabelnick, 2004). Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data from 360 public training students and according to the results obtained there wasn't any significant relationship obtained between learning styles and the sense of community. Concerning other aspects, girls have a higher sense of community when compared with boys, which shows a significant relationship between the gender and the sense of community.

Hung and Yuen (2010) conducted a study in order to increase the sense of belonging to a community among students and design communities of practice by using social media in a real learning environment. The participants were 67 students from two different universities in Taiwan. After a given period for the implementation of practice, the participants were interviewed and the results showed that the interaction among the learners in community via social media resulted in a positive learning experience. Besides, based on the results, it was stated that the loyalty among students, supporting each other in the community and increase in the participation during the lessons revealed that social media can be an effective tool in education when it ensures sense of community.

Ilgaz (2008) conducted a study that analysed the adaptation of technology by distance education students and the contributions of sense of online learning communities to students' satisfaction. The participants were 464 distance education students of Ankara University. Based on the data, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between the sense of community and satisfaction of students about the classes. According to the results, students who use technology to interact with individuals become aware of the sense of community in learning. Even it was a similar example for the present study in terms of the concept, the study by Ilgaz deal with the sense of community via internet technology rather than directly. Besides, there was not any statement about reshaping homework practices based on learning communities.

Similar to the study mentioned above, there are various studies in literature discussed learning communities in education. These studies are mostly conducted at high school level and deal with the sense of community in general (Davis, Chsng, Andrzejewski, and Poirier, 2010; Sprinks, 2007). Moreover, they search for a relationship between teaching styles and the sense of community or academical self sufficiency rather than conducting practices based on learning communities in the process.

Another study was conducted in USA analyzing the relationship between the sense of community among students and their misbehaviors Battistich & Hom, 1997).

The data were collected from 1434 students by using a learning community scale. According to the results, a high sense of community results in decrease of misbehaviors among students, which shows the positive impact of community in learning environment.

As stated earlier, most of the studies in Turkey about learning communities focus on professional learning communities in education (Alp, Banoğlu, 2009; İlğan, 2003; Kılıç, 2009; Öğdem, 2015; Subaş, 2010). Various studies were conducted on teachers' perceptions on PLC' and the variables of their perceptions and in all the studies in which a scale for professional learning communities were used, it was concluded that teachers' perceptions of professional learning communities represents differences based on various variables (i.e., age, gender, school type and working period).

İlğan, Erdem, Çakmak, Erdoğan and Sevinç (2011) conducted a study in order to analyse the conditions of elementary schools for being a professional learning communities. The study was carried out in two different cities of Turkey with 170 teachers as participants. The data were collected via a PLC' scale which was prepared by the Institute of Anneberg. According to the results, it was determined that the elementary schools are suitable for designing communities but there was no evidence about encouraging communities at schools. Based on the study, it can be said that the sense of communities in education environments should be expanded.

Based on the literature, the studies related to communities in learning environment are mostly based on how to provide the sense of community among individuals and the effect of communities in general terms. Generating communities in learning process is also a new understanding in our country. For this reason, it is not possible to mention various studies based on the present issue. Still, there are some research conducted on learning communities in Turkey mostly related to online learning communities and professional learning communities in the field of education. When the literature is analysed about learning communities and taking advantage of it in the field of education, there are some examples related to community of learners in terms of professional learning and online learning

communities. Moreover, there is only a little study in Turkey about the sense of being a community in the classrooms. The studies conducted on learning communities do not integrate learning communities to homework practices, either. As collaborative learning has some common points with learning communities, the researcher reviewed also some studies dealing with homework practices based on collaboration but it is not possible that studies on collaborative learning approach replace learning communities from every aspect. As a result, studies in Turkey and abroad related to the sense of community in education and different types of learning communities were reviewed by the researcher and even the importance of community in learning process is expressed recently, there is not any study about creating communities of learners in foreign language classes and shaping the methods of learning and elements of education programs such as homework practices based on learning communities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, in order to give information about the process, the overall design of the study, research questions, participants of the study, the role of researcher, the data collection instruments, data collection procedures, analysis of the obtained data, trustworthiness and limitations of the study are presented.

3.1. Overall Design of the Study

This is a qualitative study employing action research to develop homework performance in English language class through Learning Communities-based homework practices in a secondary school. The study aims to reveal the students' and teachers' perceptions of English assignments and attempts to redesign an ideal English homework model based on CoL understanding. The following research questions guided data collection and the data analysis procedures:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers and students for homework practices in 8th grade English classes?
2. How do students define ideal homework for English classes?
 - 2.1. How can homework practices be arranged based on learning communities in an 8th grade English class?
3. What are the impacts of learning communities based homework on English language learning process?

Twenty-four (N=24) 8th grade students at the same class and three English teachers (N=3) working in the same school were the participants of the study. Since action research aims to improve a situation observed in a process, it is important that the participants included were intended to be voluntary during the study. Besides, as the study focuses on particular characteristics, the participants were selected by typical case sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods. It is a process of selecting a small number of impact cases when they are likely to *'yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge'* (Patton, 2001, p. 236). In action research, the researcher can also be a part of the study environment (May, 1993). In the present action research, the researcher is the conductor of the study as English teacher.

As the teacher faces problems in English homework performance, she takes an action to solve the problem in an effective way. Firstly, she investigates the perceptions of teachers and students about the current homework practices in English classes. Afterwards, the students are interviewed to find out their ideas about an ideal homework model for English classes and the teacher designs a new model of homework practices based on the implications obtained from the participants and related literature. Considering the studies about new perspectives in education that are expected to be efficient in learning language, the researcher came up with learning communities understanding suggested recently in literature. Comparing the characteristics of CoL with students' ideas about ideal English homework, the researcher decided that homework practices could be arranged based on the characteristics of learning communities in order to enhance homework performance. Before introducing the new homework model to students, a week was devoted to make them aware of the concept and sense of community. Hence, they carried out activities together with classroom like tangrams or jeopardy games and the teacher started discussions about the sense of society. By this means, the students shared their ideas in a common environment and eventually realized that they also build a community or a society as generating a class together. Afterwards, homework for that week was designed based on CoL principles to observe the students' perfection in studying with a society for a common aim. The practice of the new homework model took eight weeks. Before

starting, the teacher remembered communities of learners understanding and its principles to the students. Thanks to the first week before the implementation, the students got familiar with CoL by discussing completed homework tasks with communities and became aware of sharing common goals as a community. After the communion, the teacher observed that students' attitudes resulted positive in general. In 8 week period, assignments were completed based on learning communities as planned and presented by the predetermined communities in the classroom. At the end of the practice, the teacher arranged semi-structured focus group interviews about CoL based homework with every community and each student were made to write a reflection report about their experiences studying with a community during homework completion and their opinions about the followed homework model. The ethical considerations were minded by distributing consent form for the teacher (Appendix D) and students (Appendix E) and sending parental approval forms to the parents of students (Appendix C) as the students are under their charge ethically. With these forms, it was made sure that data would be used only for scientific results and that the participant had the right not to answer any questions causes discomfort during the interview. Besides, the parents were informed about the study and made sure that the questions are prepared taking account of their psychological development. Besides, they were informed about audio recording during the interview so as to get clear information during the study.

Considering the aim of the study, action research was decided as the most appropriate design for the process. Figure 2 summarizes the steps of the study in order to present clear information about the process.

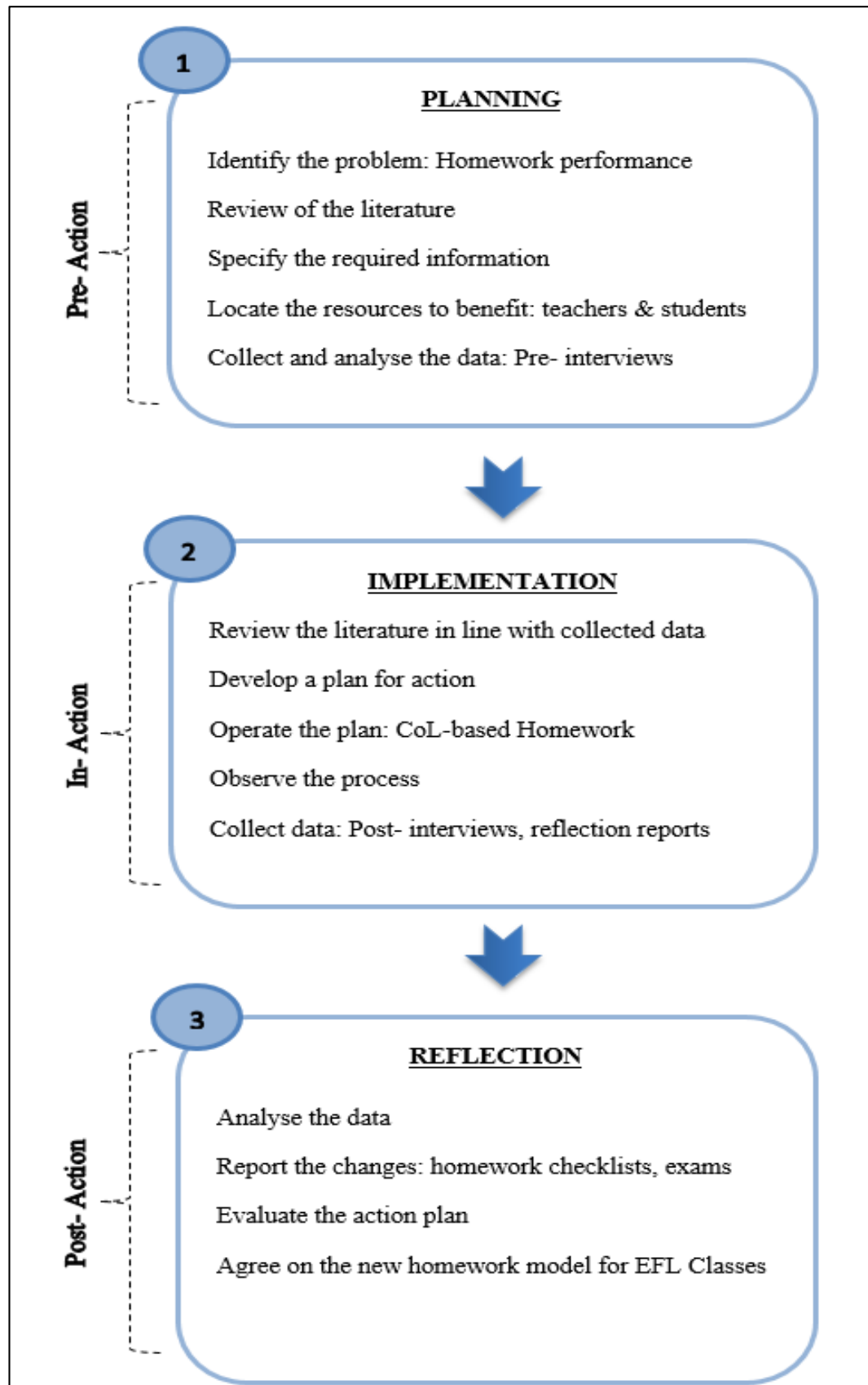


Figure 2. Overall Process of the Study

3.1.1. Action Research and the Present Study

In this section, the reasons of deciding on action research in the present study are explained in detail. There are various statements in the literature about the information for the source of action research. Although it is claimed that philosophers like Aristotle and Galileo involved information about action research in their writings (Tomal, 2010), Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) state that action research was first proposed by John Dewey especially in the field of education. In addition, Lewin and Stephen Corey are also known as pioneer users of action research in education (Corey, 1953; Ferrance, 2000). Along with the definition “teacher as researcher” by Stenhouse (1975), education authorities questioned the competence of scientific research methods in solving problems in educational studies and as a result of this, action research became popular. In parallel with that, authorities stated that action research could produce solutions to problems being faced in the field of education (Çakır, 2012; Ekiz, 2009; Masters, 1995; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Program, 1988; Holter and Schwartz-Barcott, 1993).

Defined as “teacher research” (Ferrance, 2000) in some sources, action research is frequently preferred by teachers who carry out a study and is defined in the literature from various perspectives (i.e., purpose, scope and implementation). *“Action research is a systematic form of research being conducted in order to find solutions to problems in daily life”* (Stringer, 2007, p. 1). Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) stated the action research as a research method involving gathering and analysing systematic data to understand and solve problems that showed up in the implementation process, and that the practitioner, who is the administrator, educator, or planner of the implementation, is directly involved in the process with or without another researcher. O'Brien (2003) states that action research is a process of identifying a problem, doing something to solve the problem, and observing to what extent the effort is successful, and following a way that supports learning by experiencing. Action research is described by Hien (2009) and Schmuck (1997) as the process of working in a real classroom to understand and improve the feature of actions and education. Action research, which allows teachers to question their classrooms, educational strategies and communication

with students in order to improve their own skills and increase their productivity, is a prominent approach in recent studies in the field of education (Mertler, 2009). The aim is not to give the meaning to behaviours but to make a change (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006; Kuzu, 2009). Eti and Gündoğdu (2016) and Öztürk (2012) defined one of the features of action research as the determination of a problem as a focal point in a process whose purpose is to solve the problem for the sake of the individuals involved in and it is aimed to fill the gap between educational research and practices in educational environment. With the improvement by time, action research enables the teacher and student to be aware of the problems that are faced in the educational process and learning environment (Borg, 1965) and eventually become critical of practices (Heydenrych, 2001). In the present study, the teacher questions the reasons of low homework performance in EFL classes and aims to change the situation by designing an action for solution. While Patton (2014) suggests that action research intends to solve specific problems in a program, organization and community, Whitehead (1989, p. 16) describes the action research as a process that researcher follows to answer the question "*How can I improve my work?*". Similarly, Elliott (1991) and Patton (2014) describe action research as a method to support the professional development of teachers which is also one of the points in the study as the teacher aims to design a new homework model in order to improve teaching by taking advantage of learning communities.

According to Johnson (2003) action research is a process of understanding a real school or classroom environment and improving the quality of the activities performed. Action research can also be used as a tool to work on solving a problem occurred during the learning process (Anagün, 2008). From this point on, the researcher teacher aims to handle the decrease in homework performance in English courses by adopting a different understanding in homework practice. As emphasized before, when the problems observed in foreign language teaching are considered, it is obvious that some improvements are needed related to the elements and practices appear in the curriculum. Consequently, the functions of the practices might be developed. As the teacher faced problems in homework performance in English lessons, she attempted to solve it by redesigning

homework practices and aimed to make a change in the situation. Thus, action research is decided to be quite relevant as the design of the study.

Action research allows foreign language teachers to observe their own practices in the process (Richards and Farrell, 2005). In addition, the teacher who is actively involved in the action research experiences the process. This case creates a bridge between theory and practice (Anagün, 2008). As action research allows the researcher to be a part of the study, teacher as researcher gets knowledge about students' improvements during process by observing their behaviours. In the present study, the researcher is also the English teacher of the class and witnessed the process. Eventually, the researcher has the chance to reveal the points that should be improved in terms of homework practices.

One of the main features of action research is that it is limited to a certain environment so that it can discover, develop and monitor the changes directly (Wallace, 2000). Therefore; this allows the researcher to get detailed information about the students' improvements. In addition, the teacher in action research process questions his professional development and is open to new learning practices and methods (Altrichter, Posch, Somekh; 2000; Chamot, Barnhardt, & Dirstine, 1998). As the present action research was conducted in a certain environment, the teacher-researcher had the opportunity to observe the situations and improvements afterwards. It was fruitful for the teacher to have detailed information about the process and the factors causing decrease in homework performance. Besides, the teacher got the chance to review her preferences and gain a new perspective in homework practices and their suitability with modern understanding of language education.

Based on the objectives expressed by Köklü (1993), the action research can be expressed as an effort to overcome the problem by following new perspectives. Individuals are open to developments in the learning process at any time. The development is not only observed concerning students, but also institutions and teachers. Action research is the process of working on the actual classroom situation in order to improve the quality of teaching (Johnson, 2015) and it enables

in-depth examination of the subject and observing developments along with the process (Nasrollahi, Krish and Noor; 2012). In addition, action research increases the credibility of the study by providing a multiple point of view for the research as it allows cooperation among educators during the study process (Anagün, 2008; Karasar, 2016; Köklü, 2001).

In almost all of the definitions related to the action research, the common points are as follows: identifying a problem, proposing a solution, implementing the planned solution to the process, and questioning the effectiveness of the implementation. The present study aims to solve a subjective problem of an organization and inform the teacher with new understanding for homework model. The teacher determines a situation about homework performance and collects the relevant data from the environment and identifies the source of the problem, interferes to improve the homework performance by developing a model based on the sense of community and observes the results. Looking through the literature; it can be stated that the main purpose of action research is to systematically understand the reasons of situations emerging in the educational process and develop an action plan to change it. Different from the other research methods, the action research not only describes the situation, but also aims to solve the existing problem. Therefore; it always starts with a problem definition and develops as a solution process in which information is collected, observations and discussions are made and practices are evaluated.

The common feature observed in the definition of action research is that it is practice-based and aims to improve the implementation of an action. In the present study, the teacher observed a problem in homework completion that emerged in English class and aimed to find the reason by examining the related literature, redesign homework practices in order to improve the situation and evaluate the results of the action study. The statements show that action research is based on critical theories. Based upon the definitions made on action research, the present study was designed as an action research because the researcher came up with a problem that needs solution to maintain the learning process. As homework practice is one of the effective methods in learning language, the need to improve

the situation is essential. The present study not only defines an issue but also aims to enhance the homework performance and academic achievement in English classes. Hence, it is predicted that there will be significant difference about the encountered situation.

3.1.2. The Process of the Study

Regarding the process of action research, it is not possible to mention a definite and unchanging linear process. There are numerous perspectives for the steps of action research in literature. Schön, (1983; as cited in Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016, p. 309) and Bassey (1988; as cited in Köklü, 2001), Cummings and Worley (1997) defined an eight-staged action research model, while Johnson (2014) developed a five-staged and Ferrance (2000) six-staged model of action research. Thus, the suggested steps in action research do not have a universal ranking and are based on the research subject or situation (Johnson, 2014). The process of action research is defined as a cyclical process unlike traditional research. As action research is a flexible design special to the study conducted, it is not possible to talk about a certain type and steps of it. As a result, researchers have different views on the steps to be followed (Burns, 1999; Ferrance, 2000; Grundy, 1988, as cited in Berg, 2001; McKernan, 1991; Kemmis et al., 1988; Mills, 2003; Stringer, 2007; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Even so, when the action research studies are examined, it can be said that the main steps are planning, implementation, reflection and taking action.

The steps defined by Mills (2003) summarize the main parts of action research. Accordingly, action research is a four-stage dialectical cycle. While the focusing area is defined at the first stage, data collection takes place at the second stage. The third stage is data analysis and interpretation is the final stage of the action plan.

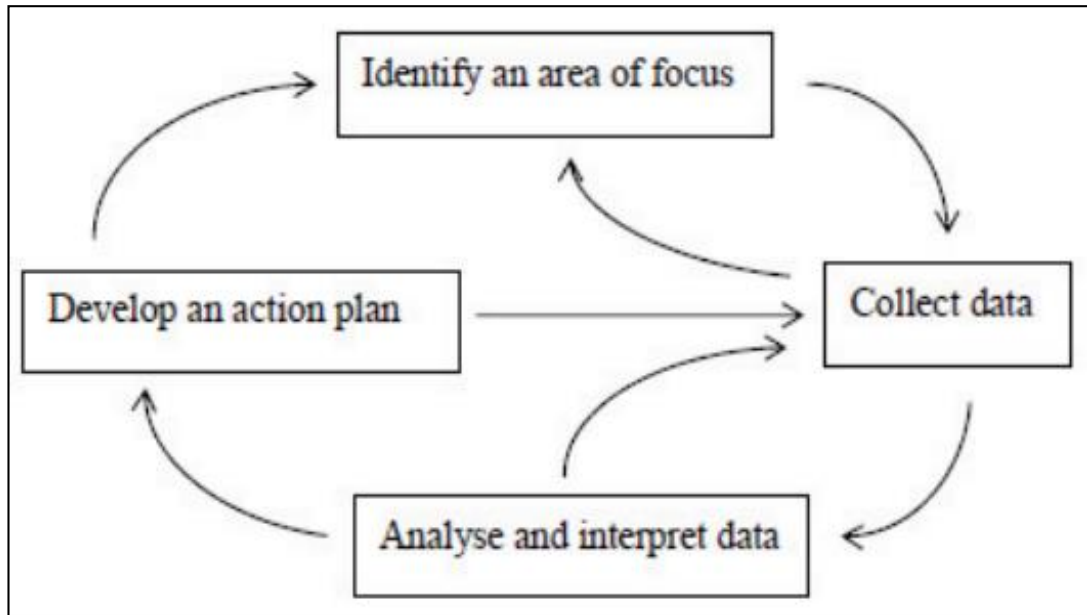


Figure 3. Dialectic Action Research Spiral (Mills, 2003; as cited in Nasrollahi et al., 2012)

As highlighted by Schoen and Nolen (2004), action research is a systematic process contains flexibility and diversity. The researcher can follow one of the concepts defined by the authorities in the process of the action research and can also form a synthesis of stages in accordance with the nature of the research by his own.

In the present study, the action research process defined by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) was taken mainly as a guide; however, as action research is a non-linear, distinctive and flexible design, the researcher had the chance to customize the steps in the direction of the needs. Thus, the researcher defined her own diagram in order to determine and display the process of the study specifically (See Figure 2). Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) emphasize that the process of action research is sustainable aiming at solving problems and they compare it to reflective thinking. The process of the action research is represented in Figure 4. These steps are described as a process which does not continue linear, but cyclical.

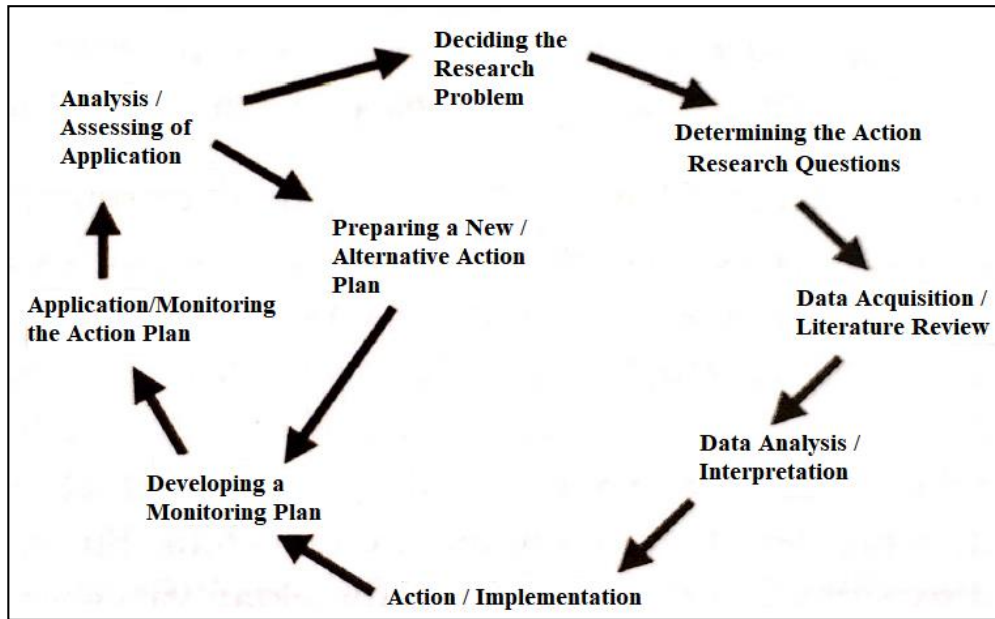


Figure 4. Process of Action Research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016)

Deciding to the Problem: An action research begins with identifying a problem situation or a dimension that needs to be addressed (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Therefore; firstly, the teacher decided on the problem. She observed increasing problems in the performance and completion of homework practices in 8th grade English lessons, questioned the reasons of the situation and as homework is one of the crucial parts of language learning she aims to overcome the problem. After viewing the homework checklist, the researcher came up with the following problem: *Students are unwilling to complete the homework given in English courses or they complete the assignments carelessly. What can be the reasons of it and how can I overcome this problem related to English homework?*

Identifying the Questions: The determination of research questions has an important impact on directing the study (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Following the statement above, the researcher defined the research questions to identify the problem clearly.

Data collection / Review of Literature: Various data sources were used to improve the quality of the data in order to ensure validity and reliability of the study. Considering the research questions defined by the researcher, the teacher

conducted interviews with her colleagues and the students to have an idea about the problem in detail and find answers to the reason of decrease in homework performance in English class and obtain suggestions for the solution. Together with the interviews, the teacher benefited from exam results and homework checklists as a data. Except for, discussions on English homework were held in the classroom in order to get foreknowledge about their homework ideas.

While collecting data to define the problem and its reasons in detail, the literature about homework practices in education and their importance in foreign language learning is reviewed simultaneously. After running through the literature, the researcher came up with different studies about the attitudes towards assignments, the importance of assignments in EFL classes and modern understandings in language learning. Afterwards, she realized a new term in education, communities of learners, a new understanding supported by various authorities. Learning communities, emerged with the effect of modern education understanding, was questioned in terms of being utilized in redesigning a new homework model.

Data analysis/ interpretation: Based on the collected data and review of literature, the researcher got some conclusions on homework practices and revealed some suggestions on the defined problem. Besides, with the interpretation of the data and previous studies, the researcher came into different opinions about homework models and reshapes the research questions. In order to carry out the study, the problem was identified, the questions were determined, the literature was reviewed, and data was collected and interpreted at the beginning. Based on the data, an action plan for the situation was prepared. In order to introduce learning communities to the students and see the applicability of the plan, a pilot study was conducted for a week by designing a task that is based on CoL understanding.

Developing an action plan: Based on the collected data and the literature, an action plan is prepared that makes a change in the situation (Uzuner, 2005). At this point, the distinction of action research appears; in the action research, the researcher not only defines a situation but also develops a plan for the solution of a problem and applies it to the process (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Thus; the researcher identified drawbacks

related to the homework performance and set up a systematic action plan to fix the situation. Based on the information obtained in literature, homework practices were redesigned based on learning communities.

Developing a monitoring plan: Along with the improvement of the action plan, to be able to observe and gather data about the implementation is highly significant to interpret how effective the plan is. Therefore; a monitoring plan has been established before implementing the action plan. The researcher planned to observe the impacts of learner communities based homework practice on the process with her diary and observation notes. Moreover; homework checklists and presentations of communities gave information about homework performances.

Implementing/monitoring the action plan: As a result of the information obtained from the literature and participants in the study, the researcher thought that the problem of English homework performance might be related to the followed traditional homework practices. Thus, she questioned the impact of learning communities on homework practices, as a modern understanding in the field. The teacher decided on a new homework model that is redesigned on the light of CoL and introduced it to the students. Following the development of the action plan, the newly designed homework practice was started to be implemented after the teacher announced the communities. The teacher remembered the classroom about CoL understanding being discussed recently and how they operate. Afterwards, she announced the learning communities for homework practices. Every community composed of three students based on their academic levels, homework performances and teacher observations. Detailed information can be found in Appendix O. After informing the students, the 8-week process to follow CoL-based homework model was started. Every community was responsible for doing the work together. Every week, a certain community presented the week's homework on smart board. Every community picked a card from the word box that includes the targeted vocabulary for the coming week and they prepared a dialogue or a text that contains those eight words together with the members until the next homework session. No individual work was accepted. The communities were also free to work together. The community who is responsible for presenting the next homework session prepared a presentation

containing their dialogue or text and a related worksheet including five multiple choice and five reading comprehension questions about the prepared text. 15 minutes is given to present the task and if there is time left, volunteer communities also were allowed to share their task. Afterwards, worksheets are distributed to the other communities (1 for each community) and they are given 15 minutes to discuss the answers together. In the last 10 minutes, communities share their answers and opinions about the presentation in the class. Lastly, the worksheets and the task prepared with the community are given to the teacher. After deciding the new vocabularies for the next session, the week's homework session is completed. The teacher takes notes during the presentation and she observes the effect of CoL in terms of social aspect and homework performance by analysing both the results of homework completion in communities and individual homework given every week. After the community finishes the presentation, the teacher conducts a semi-structured focus group interview (Appendix I) with the community to reveal their experiences and opinions about learning communities in homework practices. Moreover, every student writes a self-reflection report (Appendix J) about the redesigned homework model and gets the chance to state self clearly as the researcher do not demand the name. Besides, exam results are also taken into consideration by commenting the impacts of learning communities in designing homework model for foreign language classes. All the interviews were recorded and the researcher took notes during the process.

Analysis and Evaluation: Implementing the action plan and evaluation of it can be carried out simultaneously in action research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). The researcher implements both the action plan, collects data and conducts analysis. Since it is claimed that review of literature will contribute interpreting the data and solving unexpected problems that may arise during the process, the researcher continues to look over the literature. At the end of the process, all data were reviewed and analysed to get idea about the impact of the new model of homework practices. Eventually, the researcher decided to continue with the newly designed homework model in English classes and consequently there is no need to develop an action research as the aim is fulfilled about homework performance in English classes.

3.2. Participants of the Study

Patton (1987; as cited in Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016) emphasizes that purposeful sampling, which is one of the sampling methods that in qualitative research, allows the researcher to study the situations in-depth containing rich information. Purposeful sampling aims to select information-rich cases (Bernard, 2002; Patton, 2014). It is a process of selecting a small number of impact cases when they are likely to “*yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge*” (Patton, 2001, p. 236). The aim is to get an idea about a specific part of a process which is actually the situation in the present study dealing with homework performances in English as a foreign language education process. In the present study, the teacher faces with an unexpected problem about homework performance in one of her classes and defines the students as participants of the action study to get detailed information about the situation. The present action research requires voluntary participants as there is a need for improving a situation in English homework practices. As a result, the participants were selected by typical case sampling method which is one of purposeful sampling methods in which the study introduces a new situation of implementation.

The research was conducted with students in the same class, three English teachers working in the same school and the researcher who designs and implements English homework in line with the approach of learning communities. The school is a secondary state school located in Bursa and the student-participants of the study were the students studying in the same school in 2018-2019 schoolyear. The number of registered students was 27 but three of them were not-attendant. So, the study was carried out with 24 students who knew each other for three years. As the students are under age, parental approval form was required. Besides, as it is a voluntary study, consent forms were given to the students. Thanks to the small size of the class, it is appropriate for conducting action research because it is possible to get a deep understanding about the faced situation and the ways of improving it. Reasons of choosing this school and class are that the researcher is working there as an English teacher and that she observed some problems in the mentioned class on homework practices and consequently English competency.

The teacher-participants are teaching English at least for five years and all of them are graduated from faculty of foreign language education. The Table 1 presents the characteristics of English teachers as participants.

Table 1
Characteristics of Teachers Participating in the Study

| Participant | Gender | Years of Teaching | Subject | Classes |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Teacher 1 | F | 18 | English | 5th and 8th Grades |
| Teacher 3 | M | 5 | English | 7th and 8th Grades |
| Teacher 4 | F | 8 | English | 5th and 8th Grades |

The curriculum designed by Turkish MoNE is implemented in the classroom, which has 5 hours of English lessons per week. Homework assignments to be performed are also included in the curriculum as a learning method and the program was covered exactly. Students in the classroom have differences in academic achievement and homework performance. The teacher also considers these differences during the study and defines the learning communities for homework practices based on these cases as represented in Appendix O.

3.3. Role of the Researcher

Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) stated that in action research, the teacher can be the researcher of his own process and collect data about the identified problem. Data can be procured through the notes, observations or document reviews held by the practitioner (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this study, the researcher questions whether communities of learners based homework have an impact on homework performance and improved an action plan for the situation. The role of the researcher of the present study is critical as the teacher is both the conductor of the study and the teaching process. Thus, there might be a bias that can affect the objectivity of analyzing the data. To avoid the situation, it is important to keep observation notes and diary in order to get in-depth information. Following the determination of the research questions, the researcher collected data in the related field so that the problem could be defined in detail and obtain appropriate suggestions for the solution. At this point, the researcher benefited from her observation notes, students' homework checklists and student and teacher interviews related to individual homework practices. As a result,

the teacher was not only responsible for collecting data but also she observed the process as researcher.

Besides being an observer, the teacher is also the implementer of newly designed homework practices. Thus, the researcher both determined a problematic situation in the homework practices and also tried to find ideal solutions to improve it. As the teacher redesigned the homework practices in the light of learning communities, the students should be made aware of what LC based homework is and how to follow it in and outside the class before starting the action. At this point, it is important that the researcher informs the students clearly about the new understanding of homework in foreign language classes, which was carried out before the implementation in the present study. In addition, the study might be helpful for teachers in terms of homework practices and preferred models as it proceeds to a concept that might be suitable with the new understanding of FLE.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

In order to make the research more meaningful and to support the findings, the selection of data collection tools is important (Cavkaytar, 2009). Qualitative data were collected in the present study as it aims to gain an understanding of underlying factors of a situation and analyze individuals' experiences about the process. As for source of data, along with observation notes, diary and reflection papers, interviews were conducted so as to reveal the perceptions on the effectiveness of improved homework practices. Written document such as homework checklists and exam results were also utilized to have a deep understanding during data analysis.

In action research, methods of data collection for different types are called triangulation. This method allows viewing the research from multiple perspectives (Johnson, 2015). Different types of data collection tools were used throughout the present study. Data collection tools commonly used in action research are researcher notes, observation reports, participant reflection reports, interviews and

written transcripts of them, audio-video recording documents, researcher diaries, student documents and questionnaires.

Table 2 shows the data collection tools in the conducted study.

Table 2
Data Collection Tools Being Utilized In the Study

| Researcher | Teachers | Students |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Observation | Audio Recordings | Audio Recordings |
| Diary | Semi-structured Interviews | Reflection Reports |
| Homework Checklist | | Pre and Post Interviews |
| | | Exam Results |
| | | Homework Presentations |

Homework Checklists and Exam Results: Products established by students in the learning process or at the end, visual or written sources can be used to reply research questions (Dal, 2012). In some studies, documents such as exam papers, worksheets or even letters might be used as a data. In the present study, homework checklists were first analyzed in order to determine individuals' homework performance. After designing new homework model for EFL class and implementing it in the educational process, the checklists from the first and second semester (Appendix P) were compared at the end of the action to get an idea about the effectiveness of learning communities based homework on performance. This method can be defined as a review of documents in action research. Document analysis ensures convergence and corroboration of other data sources in the study and provides triangulation that enhances credibility (Bowen, 2009).

Semi-Structured Teacher Interviews: The most efficient form of interviewing technique is individual interviews which are directed by the teacher (Alshenqeeti, 2014; Johnson, 2015). As homework is a practice that actually arises from teachers, it is crucial to get an idea about their attitudes towards homework in their classes. In this research, a semi-structured interview (Appendix F) is conducted with English teachers about their homework attitudes and preferences of homework methods in their lessons. Main questions and related sub-questions

were developed in order to get in-depth data about the English teachers' perceptions of homework practices and their preferences.

Semi-structured Student Interviews: In the present study, students are actually the main participants of the process. The researcher decided to conduct an action research after observing a decrease in students' performance in homework practice. Thus, the data provided from the students play a vital role in finding a solution for the problem. The pre-interviews (Appendix G) help to reveal students' feelings about homework practices in English class in the present study as they had the chance to express themselves in a free atmosphere and they shape the answers during the interview according to their ideas.

A semi-structured pre-interview schedule is prepared for the students in order to understand their general perceptions about current English homework practices followed in the lessons as it is underlined being crucial for their homework attitudes in the literature. The interview is conducted with every student before shaping a new model of homework practice based on the students' ideal homework preferences.

Semi-structured Student Focus Group Interviews: Focus group interview can be described as dynamic discussion groups in which people are asked about their perceptions about a particular topic (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). A focus group interview (Appendix I) was used as a post-interview with students in order to get information about the perceptions of newly developed homework practices. In other words, in the post-interview, the students were interviewed about the new homework practices and thus the impact of the adopted homework model in foreign language classes was questioned. The interview aimed to collect data that give the researcher clues about the effectiveness of CoL based homework model in order to compare students' opinions about homework before and after the implementation of the new homework practice. As the interview is conducted with the determined learning communities rather than an individual, the teacher had also the opportunity to see whether the students gain the sense of society and improved their interpersonal skills, which was missing in the classroom previously. Besides

asking the interview questions to the community, the teacher also took notes about the relations and the harmony among individuals in order to see if the sense of community ensured communication and collaboration between students, one of the main factors of acquiring language.

Classroom Observation Notes: In action research, the practitioner also has the opportunity to observe his own practice as he is involved in the process (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). While the students were experiencing learning communities based assignments, the researcher took notes during the lessons, presentations and discussions in the class. These notes were helpful in supporting the results part of the study and promote the credibility of the study. Besides, the researcher got ideas student's communication skills, community awareness and motivation which help to make comments on impacts of learning communities concept.

Audio Recordings: Additionally to observation notes, the answers of the participants were audio recorded by receiving the permission of self and parents. At some points, it can be difficult to write notes while directing the interview. The recordings prevent loss of data and allow the researcher to make in-depth analysis afterwards. Besides, it ensures triangulation to provide credibility of observation notes and teacher's diary. In case the participant does not give permission because of feeling uncomfortable, interview notes are used to keep data permanent.

Researcher's Diary: Researcher diaries serve as an important source for describing each step in the research process and in assembling parts (Kuşat, 2010). In this way, the researcher contributes to the data collection process by recording her observations and comments. Researcher diaries include notes about the problems encountered, the situations experienced in the process, and the reflections of the planned practices.

Student Reflection Reports: Reflection reports can be demanded from the participants to measure how the improvements are perceived in the action process. A semi-structured focus group interview was held after the implementation of CoL based homework practices. Even so, the researcher felt the need to get data

individually about the perception of learning communities based homework in English classes as it might be students who hesitated to share their ideas about homework practices during focus group interview. Moreover, as every community attended the interview together with the members, they might avoid expressing unpleasant experiences about working together with a community. Hence, after the 8-week implementation process, reflection reports (Appendix J) were requested from every student in order to get aware of students' experiences about learning communities and new designed model of homework practices. The teacher did not demand the name of the student in the report so that they express themselves sincerely.

3.5. Learning Communities as Homework Model

The broadest and most inclusive use of learning communities is to describe situations where an array of groups and institutions have united forces to promote systematic societal change and share or jointly own the risks, responsibilities, resources and rewards (Himmelman, 1994, p. 28).

The concept of community is defined in literature in relation with education studies in many ways. Sheffer and Anundsen (1993, p. 31) refer to the definition of community as follows:

Community as a dynamic whole that emerges when a group of people participate in common activities, depend on one another, and make decisions together. In addition, group members identify themselves as part of something larger than the sum of their individual relationships, and are willing to commit themselves for the long term to the group's wellbeing.

The sense of community is mostly related to the belief of loyalty, belonging, spirit, interaction shared goals. McMillan and Chavis (1986) mention four principles required for the sense of community. These principles determined as membership, mutual influence, integration and fulfilment of needs and shared emotional connection are the concepts constituting the community. Membership is a belief that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore feels a right to belong the community. This feeling features the sense of belonging and is one of the necessary principles for learning communities. Mutual influence is a principle developing in a mutual manner. The effect of a member in the

community and the effect of the community on the member are mutual. This increases faithfulness in the community. In learning communities, interaction is an important tool to reach the desired goal. The integration and fulfilment of needs can be interpreted as strengthening the community. In order to achieve this, the needs of the members must be understood and is required to be met by the collaborative practices. As it can be predicted, shared emotional connection develops with creating opportunities to form an interaction, meet the needs and establish a connection among the members. Açıkgöz (1993, p. 6) refers to the learning communities adopted cooperative learning as follows:

It is that the individuals with different abilities, race, gender, social skill level ensure the permanent learning by working together within the framework of a common aim as a group, provide contribution to each other's learning and fulfilling the tasks assigned.

The changes made in education programs to catch the era and have an idea about modern learning methods argue that learning mostly occurs with participation, interaction and cooperation and as a result of this; mutual interaction, cooperation and community awareness are emphasized rather than competitive understanding in learning environment. Romasz, Kantor and Eliac (2004) argued that individuals should realize their social and emotional competence in learning environment. One of the ways to measure this is the learning communities. If required, individuals in the learning communities must show their skills on solidarity, managing individual thoughts and problem solving in a community. It may be possible with their social and emotional competence. Moreover, establishing interpersonal connection enables students to feel valuable and as a result, allows them to be more willing and determined against group-oriented practices in learning communities.

As stated earlier, with the improvements in the field of education, new approaches showed up that appeal to the requirements of modern education understanding. Different from individualization or creating a competitive environment in learning process, learning communities understanding promotes interaction, collaboration and exchange of ideas in every part of the operation. As highly underlined in literature about language teaching, foreign language learning environment requires the sense of being a whole, sharing information and communicating with each

other in order to make the learning authentic and permanent. Learning communities, encouraging the students learn together and reach their goals under favour of the sense of community is an understanding that has become common recently and promoted by constructivism, an approach preferred in FLE in Turkey. Learning communities enhances continuous improvement as the communities are enriched with various ideas about different individuals. It also promotes collective responsibility and students become eager to communicate in order to fulfil their aims together (Bolam, Stoll, Thomas, and Wallace, 2005). As it is both fun and easy to conduct the process in line with learning communities understanding, it strengthens students practice and improves the situations that might result in disappointment. The members of the community become aware of the fact that they are accountable to each other to achieve the shared goal and improve themselves (Hord, 2004). With the improvements in education, authorities search for new understandings that promotes permanent learning and appeals to the needs of students. As a result, new understandings in the field of education should reflect characteristics of society as a learning environment also builds a society itself. Different from the traditional methods in education, learning communities promote collectivity, communication, shared goals or cooperation which is actually the needs of individuals to get adapted to the society (Lieberman & Miller, 2008; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Communities of learning understanding aims to turn the learning process into a collective movement in order to adapt it to the characteristics of today's education understanding.

As it is seen in some studies carried out, while the learning communities make contribution to the student in terms of academic aspect during learning process, it also helps individual discover self-consciousness, be aware of social responsibilities and justice and be accountable to public. Considering the studies on types of homework practice, attitudes towards homework and homework and academic performance, homework practices created based on individual-oriented and competitive traditional approaches are not sufficient in providing a significant difference in learning process according to modern understanding in FLE. Individual-oriented homework seems insufficient for today's modern understanding of education and for meeting the interests and needs of new

generation. As interaction and communication has become importance in the information age, the belief that individual exists for only himself in learning process has decreased. Moreover, considering the language acquisition and English language teaching programs, the effort to show what is learned and to be capable of using the language being learned has led to the need for a new understanding of homework models, as it is also a tool for assessment. Thus, a new homework model is aimed to be designed for FLE class that is based on the characteristics of learning communities. The newly designed homework model requires the learners studying collaboratively with the learners in community and achieving together rather than involve in a competition during language learning process. CoL-based homework model is believed to correspond to modern approaches in language learning which appeal to students.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

In this section, the aim is to provide information about how the data were gathered through data collection instruments and the process of collecting data. At the beginning of the process, the teacher witnessed problems in English homework performances and as homework practices are crucial for academic achievement and language learning, she decided to find a solution for the situation. The Table 3 shows the weeks and dates of the data collection process in the study:

Table 3
Data Collection Procedure of the Present Study

| Weeks: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4-11 | 12 |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| Provincial directorate | ✓ | | | | |
| Approval of Parents | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Teacher semi-structured interviews | | ✓ | | | |
| Student pre-interviews | | | ✓ | | |
| Classroom Observations | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Implementation of Homework Prc. | | | | ✓ | |
| Focus Group Interview | | | | ✓ | |
| Student Reflection Reports | | | | | ✓ |

After reviewing some literature about homework practices and new understandings in homework models, she decided to get more information about the situation.

Before collecting data, the researcher asked for permission from provincial directorate of national education in Bursa to conduct the study. After getting permission (Appendix B) in March, 2019, the researcher informed the school director, teachers and the students about the study and sent parental approval forms to the parents as the students are under age.

As all parents were favorable towards the study, 24 students were defined as participants. The participants who work as English teachers at the aforesaid school were also given a consent form as an interview was also carried out with them in order to get information about their homework perceptions and preferences. All of the colleagues of researcher accepted to participate in the study.

Firstly, semi-structured interview was carried out with the teachers to reveal teachers' perceptions of homework and its place in their own lessons. The interviews took approximately twenty minutes for every teacher. After the teachers, students were also interviewed in order to get information about their opinions on homework applications and their attitudes towards their English assignments. 24 students were interviewed individually and every interview lasted about 20-30 minutes depending on extra questions. After conducting pre-interviews, doing observations and analyzing written documents (i.e., homework checklist and exam results) the teacher came up with a new understanding in education in literature identified as learning communities. Then, she decided to redesign the homework practices based on learning communities in English classes as its characteristics appealed to the preferences of students and the adopted approach in FLE. The students were also informed about the sense of community in learning processes and discussions were conducted together with the classroom whether they could achieve being communities. Afterwards, homework practices in English classes were formed as tasks being completed in communities determined by the teacher for a week and the practice resulted well. After redetermining the learning communities for homework practices in terms of students' academic levels and homework performances (each community involved a low, an intermediate and a high level student), the new model of homework in English classes and the characteristics of practices were introduced to the students.

Throughout the eight weeks of implementation of the developed homework model, the communities were interviewed about their experiences during the process after their presentations. Besides, the researcher took notes and wrote her opinions on the diary at the end of homework presentation of every community. After every lesson for homework presentation session, the teacher arranged the observation notes in order to avoid from confusion and useless information in data analysis.

After the 8-week implementation period of CoL based homework practices was finished completely, the researcher requested reflection reports from every student in which they express their opinions about studying with community, being a part of a community, cooperation in homework completion and redesigned homework model for FLE classes. The written documents such as homework checklist, exam results and students' work were also data in the study. These documents helped to make comparisons between the two semesters. Besides, comparing the homework checklists and the exam grades of the students, the teacher would have an idea about the effects of two models of homework which are traditional based and CoL based in terms of homework performance and academic achievement in English classes. At the end of the process, the teacher thanked the students to be a part of her study and asked their opinions about their experiences. The opinions on learning communities based practices were quite positive in general. Besides, it was obvious that ensuring learning communities in education promoted relationship among students which was one of the problems in classroom and it ensured the sense of community among individuals, which is actually one of the purposes of modern approaches in education programs and promoters of target language competency.

3.7. Data Analysis

Data analysis stages generally consist of analysis, editing and interpretation of the data obtained with the help of various data collection tools. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) stated that the analysis of the data in the action research is performed simultaneously along with the data collection process. Johnson (2003) argues that

clarifying significant tendencies and classifications is more meaningful for the research rather than trying to explain each data collected in qualitative research.

The data of the present study were collected through semi-structured interviews, and focus group student interviews, observations, researcher's diary, students' self reflection reports, homework checklists and exam results of students are also utilized during data analysis. In qualitative data analysis, the important categories, patterns and relationships of the data are discovered first (Check and Schutt, 2012). The data provided by the interviews were analyzed through content analysis in the present study in order to provide a thorough analysis of the data. In content analysis, the content of interview records is analyzed and data coding and categories are created at the same period (Merriam, 2013). With the purpose of putting the data in order, the documentation of the data was followed carefully. Transcriptions of interviews and the observation notes were rearranged and typed accordingly. In order to conduct a systematic description of the data and struct the material, coding frame is a useful technique in content analysis (Schreier, 2012). The content from the transcriptions of data was coded and then themes were identified based on the emerging codes. Being shaped in the light of research questions, emergent themes embodying the data were defined and the analyses of data were conducted based on the themes and codes. The themes and coding frames of the present study derived from teachers and students statements are represented in Appendix K, L, M.

While the data collected by conducting semi-structured interviews were analyzed through content analysis, observations and reflection reports were assayed by descriptive statistics as it allows the researcher to provide a richer picture or enhanced representation of data (Given, 2008). It is important for the data to be clearly described. Direct quotations can also be put to show the views of individuals in a striking manner (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In the method of descriptive analysis, the data is summarized and direct quotations utilized from data collection instruments are interpreted in accordance with the predefined themes in content analysis. The aim of this method is to provide the obtained data to explanatory concepts. As another analysis method in studies, triangulation refers

to the use of multiple data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 2014). The findings are also supported with homework checklists and exam results in graphs so that the validity of the study can be increased by triangulation, which will be mentioned as a part of trustworthiness of the study.

3.8. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of a study is defined as steps inspiring reliability, convincing the reader that the findings are worth to turn into account (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Unlike in quantitative research, qualitative researchers might take a subjective stance and act biased as they deal with social contexts or culture of a society rather than measurable quantities. In order to maintain trustworthiness in a qualitative study, there are some principles that the researcher should pay attention by conducting a study which are defined as credibility, transferability, reliability and objectivity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Credibility is a phenomenon that questions to what extent scientific observations and measurements are authentic (Le Compte and Goetz, 1982). In order to provide credibility in the study, data were supplied with multiple collection procedures and interviews were recorded and transcribed. During the study, interviews, observations, diary notes and reflection papers were provided as data. As a result, it was possible to use triangulation by supporting the findings with homework checklists and exam results in graphs in order to gain a more complete understanding and enhance credibility. Moreover, because of the nature of action research, the researcher was also a part of the study as both the instructor and the researcher. This situation provided to observe the environment of the study in details for the researcher, which is crucial to enhance trustworthiness. Thus, prolonged engagement during the study is also defined as one of the techniques to enable credibility of the study.

As the present study is an action research, generalization of the results are not aimed at the first stage. Due to its characteristics, the result of an action research is

unique to the analyzed case and the environment of the study (Somekh, 2006). Nevertheless, defined activities, designed model of homework and the findings of the study might contribute to similar contexts in order to analyse different settings. The methodology of the study was explained thoroughly and the data were displayed in details in order to provide thick description for the sake of trustworthiness of the study. Besides, in order to help transferability of the study, data were enriched by maintaining quotes from participants and the notes taken from the researcher's diary.

As one of the principles of trustworthiness, reliability of a study depends on its repetability in different settings (Stufflebeam, Madaus & Kellaghan, 2002). From this point, it is possible for the present study to be repeated in different settings by following same circumstances. To set an example, learning communities as a homework model might be applied to different classes in order to see its impact in various settings. Even so, it is not possible to state that the findings will be completely consistent as the results of an action research are individual, as pointed out earlier. Besides, reliability of a study might also be provided by parallel forms reliability. In the present study, the new model of homework was both analysed through focus groups and also reflection reports in order to compare the results.

Objectivity is defined as other criteria for trustworthiness in scientific studies (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It questions whether the findings are shaped according to participants' answers. There are various techniques that enable the objectivity of a study. Audit trail and triangulation are the techniques utilized in the present study. The researcher detailed the analysis of data and interpreted it by using different sources. Besides, quotations from observation notes and diary were shared during the result section in order to display the consistency of the data.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

The participants of the study were students and teachers. As the students were not adults, ethical considerations were considered important in the present study. As a

result, before the study began, approval for conducting the study was taken from the provincial directorate for national education in Bursa. (Appendix B)

Thereafter, the parents were delivered parental approval forms that inform about the study and request their allowance to conduct it together with their children. All the parents responded positively to the study and allowed their children to be participants. The English teachers and students that participated in the study were also given consent forms before the study so as to inform them about the study and ask for their acceptance to conduct interviews with them.

After all the documents were completed, students were made familiar with the concept of learning communities and their opinions were taken into consideration about a new model of homework in English classes. Moreover, before the implementation of new homework model to foreign language classes, a week was held to a pilot study in order to observe the applicability of the designed model of homework practices. The context of the homework was suitable with the class subjects of 8th grades. Besides, in students' reflective forms, no information about the identity was demanded so that the student does not feel drawback in stating opinions.

3.10. Limitations of the Study

As with any research in literature, limitations show up to this study by reason of its design and implementation. One of the restraints of the present study exists as a result of the nature of qualitative research. The findings cannot be generalized to larger populations, as the sample of the sample size of the research formed from a small group of participants. Thus, the research is limited to the determined school and students as it is an action study that aims to overcome a faced problem in a determined environment.

Most of the students were not aware of learning communities in education process. Thus, students might be hesitating to conduct homework practices as communities and working together. In order to reduce their drawbacks, the researcher

introduced the principles of communities and tried to make the students familiar with the sense of community in society by conducting discussions before the implementation. Moreover, a week was spent for a pilot study to experience learning communities based homework practices and to check whether it worked with the determined class.

Another limitation can exist in relation to the lack of an external observer as it might harm the objectivity of the study. As a result, in addition to interviews, the teacher-researcher both took observation notes and also kept a diary in order to enhance the objectivity by comparing every data and strike a balance.

The description of the communities was done by the teacher. This situation might cause problems if there is a conflict between individuals. As a result, there might be some obstacles in communities studying process. In order to reduce the situation, the communities were not abstracted from each other. On the contrary, they were encouraged to work together during completing tasks.

The interviews were managed by the teacher. As a result, the students might hesitate to express their real ideas about the assignments. So as to prevent the situation, the teacher collected student reflection reports about CoL based homework practice and the students didn't have to share their identities on the reports.

The teachers might hesitate to share their own ideas about homework practices and they feel uncomfortable about questioning their preferences on homework models. In order to eliminate this situation, the teacher-researcher conducted the interview sincerely in order to create an ordinary conversation environment.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The main concern of the study was to enhance homework performance by implementing CoL-based homework model in English classes and contribute to the improvement of new homework practices. This chapter presents the results of the study. The data collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, teacher diary and students' reflections are analysed. Written documents such as homework checklists and exam results are used to make comparisons between usual homework model and CoL-based homework model in terms of homework performance of students and their academic achievement in English class.

Hereunder, the results based on the data analysis are presented in four titles covering the research questions and identified codes. The first part reports the perceptions of the characteristics of English homework from the point of students and teachers. The second part provides information about students' definitions of ideal homework in terms of various aspects. Afterwards, the observations of the teacher are represented about the week for discussion of learning communities and pilot study and finally the last part deals with the impact of learning communities-based homework model by analysing students' perceptions, comparing homework checklists and exam results from two semesters.

4.1. Perceptions about the Characteristics of English Homework

In order to get information about the point, the data is collected through pre-interviews with the students and English teachers from the school of subject. First, the data obtained by teachers' interviews about homework are analysed under the themes of *teachers' perceptions* and *homework preferences*. Afterwards, the

students are interviewed about homework practices on their English classes. When the data from the students are analysed, the themes *students' perceptions of homework, using resources in homework practices and perceptions about homework assessment* are obtained.

4.1.1. Perceptions of Teachers

The perceptions of teachers on homework and their homework preferences are included in the study as they are actually the starters of homework practices. When teachers' general perception of homework is examined, it is found out that they define homework as reinforcement for the class, responsibility of students, source of motivation, a pointless activity, promoter of success, and tool of assessment.

Running through the data, it is noticed that teachers actually promote homework in teaching process as all of them referred homework as reinforcement for learning. As the teachers state in the quotes, homework in English classes strengthens learning and provides revising of the lesson.

Dediğim gibi yüzde yüz katkısı var demiyorum ama ödev yöntemi her ders için aslında önemli bir pekiştirici. Pekiştirici derken hem ders tekrarını kasdediyorum hem de öğrenci ödev yaparken derste kafasında tam oturmayan noktaları daha iyi netleştirebiliyor. (Ö1)

I'm not saying that it makes contribution for hundred percent but homework is actually an important reinforcement for every subject. When I define it as reinforcement, I am talking about revision of the class and I think students clarify the points that were not plausible during the class. (T1)

İngilizce dersi çok seilmeyen bir ders olduğu için okulun dışında öğrenciler genellikle ilgilenmiyorlar. Bu yüzden ödev verilince eksi alma korkusuyla en azından işlenen konuyu pekiştiriyorlar. (Ö3)

As English is not enjoyed so much among students, they do not concern about it outside the school. So, if there is homework to be completed, they get the chance to reinforce the class to avoid a negative in checklist. (T3)

Three of the teachers also state that homework enhance responsibility as most of the students are not willing to known for their indifference. Also three of the teachers state that assigned tasks helps the teacher to identify the students about their sense of responsibility, which promotes success according to them.

Şimdi ben açıkçası ödev çok vermiyorum ama ödev verdiğimde bu sorumluluğu alan öğrencinin derslerde ve yazılı sınavlarda daha başarılı olduğunu gözlemliyorum dönem içinde. Bu tür katkıları var ödevin bana göre. (Ö1)

Now, frankly, I don't give a lot of homework, but when I assign homework, I observe that the student who feels responsible for doing it is more successful in the classes and written exams. I think homework promotes motivation and success. (Ö1)

Ödev kesinlikle dil öğreniminde önemli elemanlardan biridir. Ödevler sayesinde öğrenciler sorumluluk bilinci kazanıyor ve dahası ödevler tekrar yapmalarını sağlıyor ki bu da derste başarıyı artırır. (Ö4)

Homework is for sure one of the most important elements in foreign language education. Students gain the sense of responsibility and what's more, homework tasks help them to make revision, which enhances success. (T4)

Teachers also draw attention to motivation in FLE and two of them imply that homework practices, whatever the type is, improves motivation of students as they want to show themselves in the classroom especially when the teacher is strict about the assignments. As long as they continue to care about the task, they are praised, which enhances the motivation towards the class.

Motivasyon eğitim sürecinin en önemli silahlarından biri bence. Özellikle de başarı oranı düşük olan derslerde. Ee İngilizce de bunlardan biri olduğu için öğrencinin hırslandırılması lazım. Ödevleri kontrol ederken ödevleri genelde tamamlayan öğrenciyi derste takdir ediyorum ki böylece ders karşı motive olsun ve diğerleri de onu görünce örnek alsın. (Ö3)

Motivation is one of the significant tools in education, especially in the subjects with lower level of success. Well, as English is one of those subjects, students should be impassioned. I praised the students during assessment who mostly complete their homework. In that way, other students aspire and try to imitate.(T3)

Yani, mesela ödev yapan öğrenciler derste daha istekliler. Hem ödevleri yaptıkları için kendilerini göstermek istiyorlar hem de ödevlerin ders başarısına katkısı olduğunu fark ediyorlar.(Ö2)

Well, for example, students who do homework are more motivated in class. They want to show themselves because they do homework and realize that homework contributes to the academic success. (T2)

One of the participant teachers defines homework as a pointless activity because of his bad experiences about homework practices at his classes and adds that does not mean homework practices are useless in learning. When he is asked about the reason of his statement, he states that it is about his classes behaving irresponsible towards all types of homework practices in English classes.

... ama ben ödevin her sınıf için aynı etkiyi gösterdiğini düşünmüyorum. Mesela benim bu yılki sınıflarım ödev tamamlama konusunda iyi bir performans göstermiyorlar çünkü sorumluluk bilinçleri yok ya da başarılı olmak gibi bir hedefleri de. Yani aslında ödev bazı sınıflar için hiçbir etki göstermiyor. (Ö3)

... but I don't think it is the same for all the students and learning environment. My classes this year for example do not show a performance on homework as they ignore responsibilities or they don't care about being successful. So, homework assignments do not provide any impact in process in some classes.(T3)

Teachers also reflect that homework monitors students' knowledge and competency in English classes. In other words, they adopt it as the tool of assessment. Based on the data, if the students are given tasks about the covered topic, it is possible for the teacher to see at what degree the student minded the lesson and struggle with the task.

...En azından verdiğin ödevleri yapan öğrencinin ödev performansına ve verdiği cevaplara baktığında seviyesini görüyorsun. Bütün sınıfın akademik düzeyi aynı olmuyor. Ödevler sana öğrenciler arasındaki başarı farkını da yansıtır aslında. (Ö1)

...At least when you evaluate the answers given by the students, you have an opinion about the level. The academic level of the whole class is not the same. The homework also reflects the difference in success between students. (T1)

Ödevleri sınıfta gezinerek kontrol ederken bazen birkaç öğrencinin ödevini inceliyorum. Bu şekilde göz atarak bile işlenen konunun ne kadar anlaşıldığını ve öğrencilerin takıldığı noktaları görebiliyorum. Bu sayede bazen anlaşılmadığını düşündüğüm konunun üstünden geçiyorum. (Ö4)

While I check the completed homework by walking around the classroom, I sometimes examine some of them in detail. In that way, I can have an idea about the competency of the covered topic and realize their problems. As a result, I recover the topic if I find it necessary.(T4)

Even the teachers identify homework as an effective tool to obtain information about the function of the lesson and give the opportunity to evaluate students' learning; it is also revealed from the data that they mostly do not assess homework in detail as they think it is time consuming to assess all of them. When they are asked about their way of homework assessment under the question 'How do you assess the assignments?' three of them emphasized that they mostly walk around the classroom and check if the task is completed and they do not evaluate the answers together with the classroom. Moreover, it is also stated that they employ students to keep a checklist for homework.

Ben bazen ödev veriyorum ve verdiğim zamanlarda da ödevlerin tamamlanıp tamamlanmadığını sınıfta gezinerek kontrol ediyorum. Dersimin tamamını nadiren ödev kontrolü için veriyorum. (Ö1)

Ödev kontrolü evet önemli, özellikle öğrencinin hatasını fark etmesi ve aralarında tartışıp anlaması için. Ama zaman konusunda sıkıntı olduğu için ödev kontrolcülerim var, onlar kontrolü yapıyorlar. (Ö4)

Ödev kontrolünü sınıfı dolaşarak yapıyorum. Tamamlayıp tamamlamadıklarına bakıyorum çünkü tek tek geri dönüt vermek için zaman kısıtlı. (Ö2)

Bu biraz alışkanlık meselesi. 15 yılı aşkındır öğretmenlik yapıyorum ve ödevlendirmelerimi genellikle kaynak kitaptan ya da tüm öğrencilerde bulunan bir materyalden verdim. Hem MEB' in kaynağını kullanmak istiyorum hem de herkes için ulaşılabilir. Evet içerik yeterli değil hele ki dil pratiği için hiç etkili değil ama farklı bir ödev uygulaması yürütmek de zaman ve istek gerektiriyor. Yeniliğe biraz kapalı olabilirim bu konuda. (Ö3)

I sometimes give homework to students and at that times I walk around the classroom to see if they are done or not. I rarely conduct an evaluation session for the homework practices. (T1)

Yes, it is important to evaluate the homework, especially for the students in order to realize their mistakes and discuss the answers with each other. But as we have a limited time, I determine two checkers for homework and want them to keep a checklist. (T4)

I walk around the class to see if they completed the homework. I don't have much time to give feedback to all of the students. So, mostly I focus on the completion of it. (Ö2)

I think this is a matter of habit. I have been teaching for over 15 years, and I have always given my assignments from the source book or a material that is accessible for all students like materials by MoNE. Those materials are not enough for language learning but designing homework takes time and requires enthusiasm. I might be not innovative about this issue. (Ö3)

4.1.2. Homework Preferences of Teachers

When the data about teachers' homework preferences in their classes are analysed, individual homework is the common method appeared in the lessons. Although they think that homework promoting cooperation and giving opportunity to interact during completion enhances motivation, realization and the performance, it is reported that all teachers prefer individual homework at their classes in general. Two teachers express that they conduct group tasks but not often because the planning of them as homework takes time for the teacher. The reasons of using individual homework are appeared in data as former habits (f=3) and ease of implementation (f=2) for the teachers.

Grup ödevlerinde bireysel ödevlere göre daha istekli oldukları doğru. Ancak her zaman bu planlamayı gerçekleştiremiyorum. Zaman kaybı yaşanmaması için süreci iyi takip etmek gerekiyor. Sınıfın da birlikte hareket etmesi gerekiyor. Aslında bizim branş için en uygunu uygulama ya da grup odaklı ödevler. Ama bireysel ve takip gerektirmeyen ödevler de daha alışılmış sanırım. Hem öğretmen için çok daha kolay oluyor, ekstra planlama yapılmıyor. Verilen materyaller de aslında bireysel ödevde yönlendiriyor. (Ö1)

It is true that students are more willing to group work than individual. But I do not prefer them as it needs good planning. Besides, the teacher should follow the process well to avoid time wasting, which is possible in interactive assignments. The class should also act together in cooperative works. In fact, the best homework practices for FLE are group works. But I guess individual homework is more common. It is easier as it does not require extra planning as in group tasks. The materials also direct us to individual homework. (T1)

Açık konuşmak gerekirse ben bireysel ödev tercih ediyorum. Yani belli bir sebebi var diyemem. Öyle alışmışız sanırım. Sadece İngilizce branşında değil bence diğer branşlar da hep bireysel ödevler veriyorlardır. Grup ödevleri ya da yeni ödev uygulamaları geliştirmek zaman istiyor biraz. Bizim çocuklar ödevde karşı her durumda ilgisizler zaten. (Ö3)

To be frank, I prefer individual homework. I cannot give a reason for that. I guess we are used to it. I think not only in the field of English education but also in other subjects, the most frequent method is individual homework. Homework in communities or developing new methods takes time. Learners are indifferent to homework practices at every case anyway. (T3)

During the data collection process, teachers' preferences on resources for homework are also questioned in light with the type of homework. When data are evaluated, the book is stated majority as for homework material resource by all the teachers. Even students express that the books are not sufficient enough to cover the entire topic and the content is limited, it seems that the teachers prefer books or a easily reachable resources (i.e., worksheets) as homework. The main reason of this preference becomes prominent as being accessible for every student and practical for the teacher.

Ödevleri MEB' in kitabından veriyorum. Çalışma sayfalarını yapıyorlar ödev olarak. Kitap çok kapsamlı değil ama öğrenciler de daha ayrıntılı ödev yapmazlar zaten İngilizce dersi için. (Ö3)

I assign the students with the tasks from the book given by MoNE. They complete the practice part of the unit as homework. The book is not comprehensive enough but I think student do not complete a more detailed homework for English class. (T3)

Öğrencilere bireysel olarak tamamlayacakları çalışma kağıtları veriyorum bazen. Onları sonra toplayıp kontrol de ediyorum ara sıra. Kitap ödev kaynağı olarak yeterli değil. O yüzden test ve çalışma kağıtları da tercih ediyorum. (Ö4)

I sometimes distribute worksheets that should be completed individually and take their work back and check the answers. I think the book for the class is not sufficient as a source for homework. As a result, I prefer worksheets or multiple choice questions. (T4)

Similar to their preferences on homework types, there is a contradiction with the idea and the manner of practice with regard to the source of homework.

Öğrenciler; internet kullandıkları, etkileşim kurarak tamamladıkları ödevleri seviyorlar aslında. Ödevler bu çerçevede olsa ödevle karşı olumsuz tutumları değişebilir. Ama yine de, plan ve istek. Bu ikisi öğretmende de olmalı ve öğrencilere farklı kaynaklar geliştirmeli. Ben kitabı ve bazen de çalışma kağıtlarını tercih ediyorum çünkü bana daha kolay geliyor. Topluluk ödevleri ya da uygulamayı teşvik eden çalışmalar İngilizce dersi için faydalı ödevler ama zaman kaybı da bizi engelliyor. (Ö3)

In fact, they love the homework that needs to be completed by interaction or using the Net. If their assignments are within this framework, their negative attitudes towards assignment may change. But plan and desire; both of these points should be accepted by the teacher and various sources should be improved. I prefer students' book and worksheets as a source for homework as it is easy to organize. Community-oriented homework or implementations are effective in learning English but the limited time hinders us. (T1)

4.1.3. Perceptions of Students

Focusing on retrieving students' general perceptions on homework in English classes, it is questioned what the term "homework" reminds the students in English classes. Students define homework mostly as responsibility, obligation and duty in general and nearly half of them regard homework as an opportunity for reinforcement.

Yapmam gereken sorumluluğum aklıma geliyor. Fazla sevmediğim bir şey açıkçası ama yapmak zorunda olduğum ve yapmaya çalıştığım bir çalışma. (Ö4)

It is a responsibility that I have to fulfil. I don't really like homework much, but it's a task that I'm trying to complete because I have to. (S4)

Ödev adı üstünde derslerde öğretmenlerin sonraki derse kadar yerine getirmemizi bekledikleri sorumluluk. (Ö8)

Homework is our responsibility that teachers expect us to fulfill for the next lesson. (S8)

Ödev deyince aklıma eve gidince yapmam gereken bir görev geliyor. Eğer o görev yerine getirmezsem kendimi huzursuz hissediyorum. Bu yüzden ödev kavramı beni bazen geriyor. (Ö6)

When I say homework, I think of a task I have to do when I go home. I feel anxious if I don't do that duty. In that case, homework sometimes makes me nervous. (S6)

As in teachers, almost half of the students (f=10) state that thanks to homework practices in English classes, they get the opportunity to recover the previous topic and get aware of their competency.

İngilizce ödevleri olmasa belk de tekrar yapmayacağız ya da önemsemeyeceğiz. Ödevim olunca en azından işlenen konuyu tekrar hatırlıyorum ve anlamadığım yer varsa onu fark ediyorum. (Ö23)

If there wasn't any homework in classes, we might not revise the topic or care about learning English. If I have homework, I remember the last lesson and realize the points I could not understand. (S23)

Ödev işlenen konuyu kavramamız için bir pekiştireç görevi görüyor ama bazen ödev yapmak zor gelebiliyor. Sıkılıyor ve bırakmak istiyorum ama sonra sorumluluğum olduğunu hatırlıyorum. (Ö9)

Homework helps us as a reinforcement to acquire the covered topic but sometimes it is really challenging to complete them. I sometimes get bored and give up but after that, I realize my responsibility. (S9)

When the data about the perceptions of students were put emphasis on, it is obvious that students actually have the sense of responsibility in general. However, while 14 of the students stated that homework is a positively reacted responsibility, a considerable number (f=9) of students associate responsibility with a duty or obligation, causing stress or failure.

İngilizce dersindeki ödevleri yalnız yapamadığım için ödevleri sevmiyorum. Evet, kelime bilgim eksik ve bunun sorumlusu benim ama kendi başıma ödevleri tamamlamam zor oluyor. Bu yüzden de öğretmenin ödev vermesi ve bunu kontrol etmesi ödev kontrolünde eksi almama sebep oluyor. (Ö3)

As I cannot complete the homework on my own, I don't like being assigned in English classes. Yes, I have deficiency in vocabulary and I am the one who is responsible for it. So, it is hard to complete the tasks without help. As a result, I get sometimes negative marks in homework checklist. (S3)

Genel olarak her dersin ödevi bende strese sebep oluyor. Özellikle ödev çok yoğunsa geriliyorum çünkü ödev yapmam gereken bir görev ve yapmayınca da dikkat çektiğimi düşünüyorum. (Ö15)

All homework causes stress on me. Especially if the homework is too complex, I get anxious because homework is a duty of mine and if I don't fulfil it, it draws teacher's attention. (S15)

As stated earlier, teacher is the starter of homework practices. Thus, during the study it is crucial to examine her opinions and observations about the homework issue. Accordingly, the researcher mentions the students' general perceptions about individual homework practices in her diary. The following quotation supports the results obtained from the interviews of students:

'Homework practices are one of the most elements of my lessons as I think it really reinforces the covered topic and the students are learning their responsibilities if they feel the obligation of completing the task. But, there is also a handicap on feeling homework as an obligation. Students who are especially not sufficient enough to carry out the task feel stressful and try to fill their homework with others' answers, which actually goes to waste. In time, it becomes a habit and they become indifferent to homework.'
(Teacher's Diary, April-2019)

On the other hand, some of the students criticize homework practices (f=11) and associate them with feeling anxious and bored when they are asked to introduce homework with their own words. As most of the students are in the opinion that homework is a duty that the student is responsible for, 9 students feel negative towards homework as it reminds them their duties that sabotage their free time. Students especially who are not interested in foreign language learning do not draw attention to homework that are pen and paper work or should be finished with their own knowledge.

İngilizce dersi aslında eğlenceli geçiyor. Size de seviyorum. Ama ben eskiden beri bu derste başarısızım. Bu yüzden de ödev yaparken bilgime güvenmediğim için sıkılıyorum. Çoğu ödev de sınava hazırlandığımız için test çözme üzerine oluyor. Hele o tarz ödevlerde çok sıkılıyorum. (Ö7)

Actually, English class is fun and I like you. But, I am not successful in English for a long time. So, as I don't trust myself, I get bored during completing English homework. Most of the practices are multiple choice questions as we prepare for LGS. Especially that type of homework is quite boring to me. (S7)

Ödev yapmamamın bir nedeni yok aslında. Sadece ödevi unutuyorum ya da aklıma gelse de o an okuldan sonraki zamanımı ona vermek istemiyorum çünkü saatlerimi alacak, İngilizcem kötü olduğu için. (Ö13)

There aren't any reasons about my failure in completing English homework. I just forget it or even I remember, I do not want spend my time with it as it takes my hours because I am not good at English. (S13)

In parallel with the answers provided from students, the researcher highlights that most of the students feel responsible towards homework but they differ in how they manage it.

'While some welcome homework as a helpful practice for their success, also there is a large number of students who feel negative towards it. When I assign them with a task, some of them grouch about its dullness while the others feel anxious about completing it alone. As a result, I advise them to revise the topic before the task. '

(Teacher's Diary-April, 2019)

As for the answers from students and researcher's opinions, it is obvious that they are aware of the importance of homework in English classes as most of them state that homework is reinforcement and it promotes self-responsibility. It can be concluded that the perceptions of students about homework is not negative but their attitudes about completing homework depends on various cases, which can be improved by making some changes in the understanding of homework practices and models followed in classes.

Using Resources in Homework Practices: After analyzing the transcriptions and looking through the data about students' perceptions, they are categorized into different themes as the collected data vary based on homework preferences. Besides, it is crucial for the researcher to get information about various perspectives of homework in order to form new ideas to improve homework practices. Thus, as it is witnessed during data collection that some participants prefer various resources to complete homework, the researcher expands the phenomenon and referring resources for English assignments is analysed in terms of the resources they use and the reasons of using them. After the data is evaluated, the major codes related to the reasons of using resources are defined as *providing convenience of completing homework, enhancing accuracy and saving time*.

Most of the students who indicate that they benefit from a resource during homework completion state the reason as using resources provide convenience for them. Similarly to that point, students (f=13) also claim that if they make use of a resource like vocabulary lists or a person that can help them, homework does not take too much time as it becomes easy to complete.

İngilizce konusunda başarılı olmadığım için ödevlerimi genelde ablamla tamamlıyorum. Eğer danışabilecek biri olmasaydı muhtemelen ödev performansım düşük olurdu çünkü saatlerce yazılı kaynaklara bakmak beni sıkardı. Bu yüzden direct sorabileceğim biri olduğu için şanslıyım. Hem ödev kontrolünde de daha aktif katılım sağlıyorum ablam sayesinde anladığım için. (Ö16)

As I am not successful in English, I do my homework together with my sister. If there weren't anyone I asked for help, I would probably show a low homework performance as written documents is boring to check for hours for me. Thus, I am lucky that I have someone to check with. In that way, I am also active during homework assessment sessions as I am sure about my answers. (S16)

Ödev yaparken internetten sözlüğe falan bakıyorum. Siz zaten kaynak kullanımına izin veriyorsunuz. Bu zaman kazandırıyor ve ödev beni sıkıymıyor çabuk bittiği için. (Ö19)

I check the internet dictionary during homework assignments. You already let us to use different sources. It saves time and as the task finishes earlier, I don't get bored. (S19)

Verdiğiniz kelime listeleri ve notlar özellikle çok faydalı oluyor. İstediğim bilgiye daha kolay ulaşıyorum. Ödevde kaynak kullandığımda aradığım şeyi daha hızlı buluyorum. Böylece başka şeylere zamanım kalıyor. (Ö21)

The vocabulary lists and notes you provide are particularly useful. I can easily get the information I want. I find faster what I'm looking for when I use resources for homework. So I can save time for other things. (S21)

As it is stated by the participant above, using resources in homework practices provides the students confidence about their work. In other words, it was realized in data collection process that students look for a resource in order to enhance the accuracy of their answers so that they feel comfortable during homework evaluation sessions with class. Also it is observed that most of the students are willing to get help from a person as a source to complete the assignment. However, only few of them have the chance to consult to someone.

Eğer kullanılan kaynaklar güvenilir kaynaklarsa, cevapların doğruluğundan emin oluruz. Bu da ödev performansını artırır çünkü eğer yaptığım ödev veya hazırlamamı istediğiniz bir araştırma ödevi doğruysa ödev yapmaya daha çok teşvik eder. (Ö25)

If the sources are reliable, we ensure that the answers given are correct. This improves homework performance because if my homework or a research assignment you want me to prepare is correct, it encourages me to do homework more. (S25)

Kaynaktan kastınız birine sormaksa benim evde öyle bir şansım yok çünkü ailemde kimse İngilizce konusunda bilgili değil. Onun dışında çok fazla kaynak kullanmıyorum çünkü zor geliyor. Tek başıma kaynak karıştırmak sıkıcı. (Ö16)

If you mean asking to someone as a source, I don't have the chance because no one knows English in my family. Except that, I don't use resources often as it is challenging and boring. (S16)

İngilizce ödevinde kaynak kullanınca verdiğim cevaplardan daha emin oluyorum çünkü kaynaklardan kontrol ederek yapınca yanlış ihtimalim azalıyor. Bazen zaman kaybettiriyor ama. O yüzden biriyle beraber yapmak daha iyi olabilirdi. (Ö5)

Using resources in English assignments enables accuracy in the answers and as checking for the resources reduces the possible mistakes. It sometimes causes loss of time. So, the best is to ask for help to someone. (S5)

Similar to the responses from the interview, the researcher observed that if the students are given a homework that directs them to interact with family members or friends, use internet or watch something, their desire of doing the assignment increases.

Even in the classroom, when they are allowed to work together, they feel pleased and the number of students dealing with the task increases.

(Observation Notes-May, 2019)

Apart from the majority of the data, there are also students who indicate that the freedom of using resources encourages them to complete the task as they feel comfortable. Even so, it is stated that resources do not enhance attraction of doing homework. 4 students express that the use of different sources causes confusion. The difference depends on the source that is preferred and the amount of it.

Farklı kaynak kullanmak zaman açısından çok yararlı oluyor. Ödev yapmadan önce çeşitli kaynaklar kullanarak yapacağımı bilmek beni rahatlatıyor. Hem zamanın artacağını biliyorum hem de güven veriyor. (Ö11)

Using different sources is very useful in terms of time. I feel relieved to know that I can do a variety of resources before doing my homework. I know it won't take much time and I feel secure. (S11)

Özellikle öğretmenimizin kullanacağımız kaynağa bizi yönlendirdiği ödevler güzel çünkü o ödevi bitirmek çok zor olmuyor. Ama yine de kaynak kullanıyor olmak ödev yapmayı eğlenceli hale getirmiyor bana göre. (Ö20)

I mostly like homework practices in which our teacher especially directs us to the source being used. Nevertheless, having the chance to use resources does not make homework enjoyable. (S20)

Mümkünse tek kaynak kullanmaya çalışırım. Çünkü bir şeyin cevabını birkaç yerden bulmaya çalışmak bazen kafamı karıştırıyor. Ama bazen diyalog ödevi verdiğinizde birden çok kaynak kullanmak gerekiyor. Eğer danışabileceğim biri varsa o yeterli oluyor ama. (Ö2)

I try to use just one source if possible. Because I get confused trying to find the answer by using various sources. But if I have a task about forming dialogues, I need several resources. But if there is someone I can get help, I don't need anything else. (S2)

The data obtained about student's preferences of homework resource demonstrate that they mostly prefer internet as a helper for homework completion. 18 out of 24 students state that internet is quite helpful in tasks as they have the opportunity to reach the information in seconds. Some of the students indicate that they do homework mostly on themselves without any resource and the rest do it via internet, with family and friends. Besides, more than half of the participants like completing their homework with a person but most of them do not have the opportunity as there is a lack of English competency in their families. This issue is highlighted in teacher's diary as follows:

Students are free about using resources to complete homework for my classes which actually is welcomed by them. They mostly prefer internet as a source and especially students who are good at homework performance have the chance to get help from someone in their families about English tasks. They are more active during evaluation of homework together with the class, probably because of their sureness about their answers. But in general, the families are not competent about helping the students with English tasks.

(Teacher's Diary-May, 2019)

Homework Assessment: In the present study, students state their perceptions about homework assessment, either. The data about homework assessment is evaluated from two aspects: The first one is the method of homework assessment and the other is the impact of it on homework performance of students.

When students are asked their preferences about how to conduct an assessment to check homework, nearly half of the students state that self-checking might be conducted but some of them are not sure about individuals' honesty and self-responsibility.

Ödevlerimizin kontrol edilmesine gerek yok. Herkes sorumluluğunu bilmeli çünkü. Ödev kontrolünü kendimiz yürütebilecek yaşayız ama bazı arkadaşlar bu konuda dürüst değiller. Ödevin cevapları sınıfta toplu olarak kontrol edilirken ödevi yapmış gibi davranıyorlar. (Ö12)

There's no need to check our homework. Everyone should be aware of responsibility. We are at the age of checking our own homework but some people are not honest about it. They behave as if they did their homework during checking the answers together with the class. (S12)

Students (f=8) who supported self-check as an assessment also indicate that if they check their homework on their own during the lesson, they do not feel a fear of making mistakes or being mocked by others. However they believe that if there is not an authority that checks the tasks, students do not pay attention to their responsibility.

Ödevi kendim kontrol ettiğim zaman daha az stres hissediyorum çünkü bizim sınıfta bir şeyi yanlış yaptığında bazı kişiler kırıcı olabiliyor. (Ö6)

I feel less stressed if we do self- checking as homework assessment because if you give a wrong answer in our class, some students might insult you. (S6)

Ödevi kendimiz öğretmen cevapları verirken kontrol etmek güzel ama bazı arkadaşlarımız kontrol bile etmiyorlar ve ödevden faydalanamıyorlar. Ayrıca çoğu da ödevin öğretmen tarafından kontrol edilmeyeceğini bilse yapmaz. (Ö21)

It is nice to check our homework on our own as the teacher announces the answers but some people do not even look over their answers. I think, if they know that the homework will not be checked directly by the teacher, they will not complete it. (S21)

Based on the teacher's notes, the reason why students prefer self-check mostly is highlighted as they feel less anxious while checking their own answers or do not hesitate to make mistakes in front of the class.

I wanted one of the students to read the text she wrote about her interests. She first refused to read it. After I checked the text, she accepted to read. When I asked the reason of it personally after the lesson, she expressed that she didn't want the class made fun of her in case it is wrong as they behave as if they are in a competition, which makes her feel nervous.

(Teacher's Diary-March, 2019)

Apart from self-checking, methods such as peer-correction, objective homework assessors and direct check by teachers are preferred. The most popular type among homework assessments is identified as assessors from students (f=16), which is also the present way of assessment. This way of homework checking is considered technically useful but when it comes to the quality of answers, it depends on the student's common sense.

Ödevlerimize ödev kontrolcileri bakıyor. Bu genelde her derste böyle. Şuana kadar görevlerini kötüye kullandıklarını görmedim ama bazı arkadaşlar ödev dolu görünsün diye rastgele cevaplar da verse artı alıyorlar çünkü kontrolcüler sadece yapıpı yapılmadığına bakıyor. (Ö17)

Two students check up our homework if we have completed it or not. It is actually the same almost in all subjects. I haven't realized a misuse so far but some people complete the task with random answers and even so, they get a plus because homework checkers are only responsible about the completion of homework. (S17)

Ödev kontrolcileri ödevleri kontrol edip listeyi öğretmene teslim ediyorlar. Bence ödevler kontrol edilmeli ama ödevlerin cevaplarına da beraber bakılmalı. Bunu bazen yapıyoruz ama zaman kısıtlı olduğu için her zaman mümkün olmuyor. (Ö4)

Homework checkers just check the homework if it is done and submit the list to the teacher. I think tasks should be checked but their answers should also be evaluated together. We do it sometimes but as the time is limited, it is not possible everytime. (S4)

On the other hand, while some students indicate that direct control of the teacher is the most effective way of assessing homework practices, 12 students admit that it causes anxiety towards the class.

Ödevleri direkt sizin kontrol etmenizi seviyorum. Hem hatalarımı görmüş olurum böylece. Mesela ödevleri toplayabilirsiniz. Evet zaman problemi olabilir çünkü kalabalıgız ama her ödevi değil bazılarını yapmanız bile yeterli olabilir. (Ö1)

I like it if you check our assignments. So, I realize my mistakes. For example, you can sometimes take our homework and check them. Yes, it needs time because we are crowded, but even you do it occasionally, it will be helpful. (S1)

Ödevleri öğretmen kendi kontrol edeceği zaman geriliyorum çünkü İngilizce dersinde başarılı değilim ve o ödevdeki cevaplardan emin olamıyorum. (Ö18)

I feel stressed if I know that the teacher will check the homework herself as I am not good at English classes. So, I don't feel comfortable about my answers on assignment. (S18)

Along with the data provided by students, teacher's notes about homework assessment also underline that most of the students believe that assessment should be done in English classes. Similar to the collected data, there are differences in assessment preferences among students.

Although there is a demand to check the assignments by self, the teacher concluded that it causes problems in completing homework after conducting a retroactive

assessment of three weeks. However, assessing all the students causes time loss and on the other hand, the desire towards completing homework decreases if there isn't any assessment conducted on homework practices.

(Observation Notes-March, 2019)

The teacher also pointed out in her diary that all the students in the classroom like peer-correction as homework assessment.

Today it was time to check a short vocabulary test assigned as homework. I wanted the students to change their homework paper with their deskmates. As I was announcing the answers, I realized that they were quite interested in checking the answers than usual.

(Teacher's Diary-April, 2019)

The effect of homework assessment on performance is identified by students in terms of cognitive and emotional aspect. The common codes for cognitive aspect were defined as students think that homework assessment *enhances the quality of homework context and increases attention of student.*

Ödev kontrolü yapılmısa kimse ödev sorumluluğu hissetmez bence. Aslında ödev kontrolünün yapılması ödevin yapılma oranını artırıyor. Hatta öğretmen ödevi ayrıntılı inceliyor ya da okutuyorsa ödevleri daha dikkatli ve anlayarak yapmaya çalışıyoruz. İçeriğine dikkat ediyoruz. Mesela siz verdiğimiz cevapları sorguluyorsunuz. Ben de bu yüzden ödevde verdiğim cevapları tekrar tekrar okuyorum. (Ö8)

Ödev kontrolü olmazsa yapanların sayısı azalır bence. Hatta sadece artı eksi listesi tutulsa ve siz ödevlere arada göz atmasanız ya da okutmasanız birçoğumuz belki de internette hazır cevapları bulup kitaba yazıp geçer. (Ö19)

Eğer sizin bakmayacağınızı düşündüğüm bir ödevse bazen özensiz yapabiliyorum. Ama sizin de bakacağınız ya da toplayacağınız bir ödevse çok daha dikkat ediyorum ve farklı kaynaklar kullanmaya çalışıyorum. (Ö17)

Nobody feels responsibility about homework without assessment. In fact, doing homework assessment increases the rate of homework completion. In fact, if the teacher examines the answers in detail, we try to do the assignments more carefully and comprehensibly. We pay attention to the quality. For example, you question our answers. That is why I read my answers over and over again. (S8)

If there is no homework check, the number of students who complete their homework will decrease. If only the plus-minus list is filled by the homework checkers and you don't look over the assignments from time to time, many of us will probably get the answers from anywhere and write them down randomly. (S19)

If it's an assignment I don't think you're going to look at, I can sometimes do it carelessly. But if it is a task you will look at or collect, I pay much more attention and try to use different sources and add comments. (S17)

As emotional aspects, 13 students see homework assessment as a *worrying and tedious* situation. The reason for that is mostly defined as feeling anxious (f=7) in reading out the answers in front of the class when the teacher demands because it

causes a sense of guilt towards teacher when the student did not complete the homework.

Bu biraz öğrenciye göre değişiyor bence. Bazı arkadaşlarımız ödev yapmasalar da çekinmiyorlar ve ödevi yapmadım diyebiliyorlar arka arkaya. Ben ödev yapmadığımda kontrol edileceği zaman kendimi kötü hissediyorum. (Ö1)

Ödevin kontrol edilmesi beni ödev yaparken bile etkiliyor. Çoğu ödevi sadece kontrol edileceği için yapıyorum çünkü öğretmenimiz sebebini sorguluyor ve benim bazen bir sebebim olmayabiliyor. (Ö22)

I think that depends on the student. Although some of our friends do not complete homework, they do not hesitate to state that. When I do not complete my homework, I feel bad. (S1)

Being aware that the task will be assessed effects me even doing it. I complete most of the homework because they will be checked. Our teacher questions the reason of not doing homework and I sometimes don't have any answers. (S22)

Moreover, most of the students state that if they know that the homework will be assessed, they feel responsibility of completing it. So, assessing *promotes sense of responsibility* in some students.

Ödevin kontrol edilmesi bazen bende endişeye sebep oluyor çünkü İngilizceyle ilgili danışabileceğim kimse yok ailemde. Ancak yine de ödev kontrol edileceği için üzerimde bir sorumluluk hissediyorum ve bu da ödevi dikkatli yapmamı sağlıyor. Ödev kontrolü kesinlikle faydalı. (Ö4)

Eğer konu eksikim varsa ve o ödevde zorlanıyorsam bazen ödev yapmayabiliyorum. Böyle zamanlarda ödevin kontrol edileceği aklıma geliyor ve bu beni yapmaya teşvik ediyor çünkü sorumsuz olarak tanınmak istemiyorum sizin tarafınızdan. (Ö10)

Homework assessment makes me anxious sometimes because I don't have someone in the family to ask for help. However, as you will check the assignments, I feel responsible to do it and this encourages me to complete the work carefully. I think homework tasks should be checked. (S14)

If I'm short on the subject and have a hard time doing that homework, sometimes I don't complete the task. At such times I remember that homework will be checked and this encourages me to do it as I don't want to be known as an irresponsible person by you. (S10)

The expressions of the researcher also indicate that homework assessment has an impact on homework performance in terms of completion and emphasis of quality.

I give homework to the students to see if they follow the lessons and if they are ready to continue with the next class. If I don't check their work, I observe indifference towards homework in time and get no idea about their improvement. They also feel the need to complete assignments and pay attention to their answers.

(May, 2019-Teacher's Diary)

As it can be concluded from the data, assessment as part of homework actually promotes students to complete the task. On the contrary, there are also opinions

that assessment causes worriness especially when they are evaluated in the class as students who feel incompetent in English classes do not trust to their individual work.

Students' Reflections of Individual Homework: The data about students' reflections on homework practices in English classes are provided by addressing several questions about the present homework model followed in English classes at that time and when students are asked questions about the impacts of individual homework in terms of academic and regular life, it is concluded that the collected data might be divided into two sub-themes as strengths and weaknesses. Uttering on the strengths of the individual homework practices, almost all students emphasize that it provides reinforcement, enhances self-responsibility, and promotes academic success and proving self.

19 students define homework as a tool to enable reinforcing for English classes. Also 9 of the students state if it were not for homework practices in English classes, they would probably not review the class.

Ödevler pekiştirme yöntemiyle hem öğrendiğimiz bilgileri tekrar ettiriyor hem de unutmamı engelliyor. Bunun da başarıyı artırdığını düşünüyorum. (Ö8)

Homework makes us revise the topic by reinforcing and avoids me from forgetting the new learnings, which promotes my success in foreign language. (S8)

Ödev, dersin olmazsa olmazı bence. Ödev verilen dersleri daha çok seviyorum ve konuyu tekrar etmiş oluyorum. Ödev verilmeyen dersleri kendi isteğimle tekrar ettiğimi söyleyemem. (Ö26)

I think homework is a must in learning. I like the classes that teachers assign homework. When I do homework, I have the chance to revise the topics. To be honest, I do not review the subjects if there is not any homework given. (S26)

Ödevi tanımlarken de söylediğim gibi, ödevler sayesinde ingilizce derslerinde özellikle kelimeleri pekiştirmiş oluyorum. (Ö6)

As I inferred by defining homework, thanks to the assignments, I remember the important vocabularies and reinforce them during completing the task. (S6)

11 students underline the effect of the present homework practices as improving success in English classes. In parallel to those statements, some participants claim that if they give importance to tasks assigned by the teacher, they become more competent during the class and in exams.

... ödevler sonuçta derslerde boşuna verilmiyor. Bazen canımız istemese de ya da kendimiz zorlansak da aslında ödevler bizim başarıımızı arttırıyor çünkü konuyla ilgili pratik yapıyoruz. (Ö12)

...ödevin başarıımı arttırdığını söyleyebilirim çünkü sınavlardan önce çok çalışan bir öğrenci değilim. Sınıfta da ödev yapmayan bir öğrenci olarak tanınmak istemediğim için ödevlerimi bir şekilde tamamliyorum ve onlardan edindiğim bilgiler sınavda karşıma çıkabiliyor. (Ö2)

Hem sözlü notu açısından hem de ödevleri yaparken konuyu tekrar ettiğimizden, ödevler başarıımızı etkiliyordur bence. Zaten etkisi olmasa neden ödev diye bir şey olsun ki. Ama doğruyu söylemek gerekirse, bazen sırf görevim olduğu için yapıyorum özellikle sevmediğim tarzda ödevleri. Onların katkısı yoktur bence. (Ö15)

... as homework is not given to no purpose. Even sometimes it is boring and difficult to complete individually, they actually promote our success as we practice the subjects. (S12)

... so I can say that homework provides me to be more successful as I don't study hard before the exams. I don't want to be known for my deficiency in homework completion. So, I generally finish my task and some information that I learned during doing homework sometimes appear in exams. (S2)

In terms of homework performance and revising subjects, I believe assignments have a positive effect on our academic success. If there wasn't any impact, there would not be homework given in the classes. Sometimes I do some homework just because it is my duty and I don't think they have a positive impact on success. (S15)

The data shows that the students generally believe that homework in English classes make them to revise the topic. As a result, some of the students believe they become competent in language learning. Besides, assignments give students opportunity to show their level of success. In other words, homework practices help them to prove themselves in English classes.

Özellikle ödevin bireysel olması kendimi İngilizce dersinde kanıtlamamı sağlıyor. Bu sayede sınıfta iyi bir izlenim bırakabiliyorum. (Ö19)

Özellikle araştırma ödevi verdiğinizde farklı bilgiler ediniyorum ve öğrendiklerimi başka derslerde ya da hayatta kullanabiliyorum. Mesela Londra'nın turistik yerleriyle ilgili bir araştırma ödevi vermiştiniz. Daha sonra İnkılap Tarihi dersinde Londra'yla ilgili bir konu geçti ve derste bildiklerimi sınıfla paylaşmıştım. (Ö1)

İngilizce ödevlerimi yaptığımda, kontrol ederken söz hakkı alarak ve verdiğim cevapları değerlendirerek hem kendime hem de size dersteki başarıyı kanıtlamış oluyorum. (Ö7)

Especially individual homework helps me to prove my success in English to the teacher and class. As a result, I make a good impression in the classroom. (S19)

Especially when you give a research assignment, I get different information and use what I have learned in other courses. For example, you once gave me a task on London's tourist attractions. Later on, in the History of Revolution course, a topic was discussed about London and I shared my own knowledge. (S1)

When I complete my homework, share my answers with the class and evaluate them during homework sessions, I have the chance to prove myself in the class. (S7)

The dialogue that was noted down by the teacher on the diary also corroborates the quotations above:

While I check the homework in the classroom, I often realize that students feel to prove themselves and compete with each other.

Teacher: It is nice to see that you (student 9) have completed your homework.

Student 11: Miss, I always do my homework because I like English so much.

Student 9: That's not about you right now.

(Teacher's Diary-March, 2019)

Another major point in defining the impacts of homework is shown up as enhancing the sense of responsibility of individual (f=16). Similarly, one of the participants state that if they have a task that should be completed, she is first busy with that and plans the time accordingly. Therefore, homework is perceived as a tool that improves planning skills in company with self responsibility.

...Bazı ödevlerin bana bir katkısı olmadığını da düşünsem yapmak zorunda hissediyorum. (Ö3)

Özellikle sizin hazırladığınız ödevler eğlenceli olabiliyor ama bazı ödevleri yapmak için yapıyorum çünkü sorumsuz gözükmek istemiyorum. Bu da günümü ödevlere göre planlamamı sağlıyor. (Ö15)

Ödevlerin olumlu etkisi var üzerimde. Bana öğrenci olarak sorumluluklarımı hatırlatıyor. Ödevi bir sorumluluk olarak gördüğüm için, kendi zamanımı ona göre planlamam lazım. (Ö19)

İngilizce dersini seviyorum ve ödevlerden eksi almak istemiyorum. Ayrıca ödev yapmayan arkadaşlar bana sorumsuz geliyorlar. Bu yüzden özellikle eğer uzun sürecek bir ödevim varsa zamanımı planlıyorum ki ödevimi tamamlayabileyim. (Ö25)

...Even some assignment do not contribute to me, I feel the need to complete it. (S3)

Especially the homework prepared by the teacher can be fun but sometimes I complete homework only for not to seem irresponsible. That teaches me to plan my time according to the task. (S15)

Homework has a positive impact on me. It reminds me that I have responsibilities as a student. As I think homework is a self-responsibility, I should arrange the time. (S19)

I enjoy English classes and I don't want to have a minus grade in homework. Besides, people that do not complete their tasks seems like irresponsible in the class. So, if I especially have a complex homework, I plan my time in order to do my homework precisely. (S25)

When looking through the observation notes, there are also statements of the researcher that supports the data collected by the students pointing out homework practices enhance self responsibility among students and in parallel to that, they learn planning.

A student complained about the homework given the other day as she couldn't watch her favourite series. Afterwards, some students murmured that the homework given from the book was boring. Even so, they stated that they completed it. So, even they don't have the desire of doing it, some students complete homework only because it is a responsibility.

(March, 2019-Teacher's Diary)

Based on the quotations taken from the data, except feeling self responsibility, students often feel responsible towards their teachers and families while doing individual tasks. Especially the students who have a high rate of completing homework hesitate to be known as indifferent to the lesson by the teacher.

İngilizce ödevlerimizi hocamız çok önemsiyor. Bu yüzden eskiden çok fazla ödev yapmayan bir öğrenci olarak, olumsuz bir izlenim yaratmamak için sorumluluğumu yerine getiriyorum.(Ö7)

English homework practices are really important for our teacher. Hence, as a student who was not doing homework most of the time, I fulfil my responsibility to make a good impression. (S7)

Ödevi sevsem de sevmesem de yapmam gerekir çünkü sorumluluğum olduğunu düşünüyorum. Ödev yapmadığım zaman aldığım eksinin sözlü notumu etkilemesinden ve ailemin bunu duymasından çekiniyorum çünkü bana ödev yapmam için her şartı sağlıyorlar. (Ö22)

Even I like the task or not, I think I should complete the homework as it is my responsibility. When I don't do my homework, I get a minus and this effects our performance grades. I don't want my parents to become aware of that as they fulfil all the conditions for me to study. (S22)

When the data about the sense of responsibility are considered deeply, there are also statements that show students feel responsibility towards others rather than self, which actually might trigger negative perceptions about homework practices.

Bence birçoğumuz ödevi sizin gözüne girebilmek için yapıyor. Ödev kontrol listesini takip ettiğiniz için ve düşük not korkusundan bir şekilde o ödevi tamamlıyorlar. Sonuçta o ödevi nereden tamamladığını bilmiyoruz ama yine de yapmış sayılıyor. Bu şekilde yapılan ödevin bence faydası olmuyor. (Ö21)

I think most of us complete homework to win your favour. As there is a checklist that you follow, they hesitate to have a low grade and complete the homework somehow. When no care is given, I don't think that kind of work is useful. (S21)

Ödev yapmadığımda kontrol edilirken benim ödevimin eksik olması ve hocamın bana laf söylemesinden korkuyorum.

I don't like to be in a situation that my teacher asks the reason of not doing homework.

Aileme karşı sorumlu hissederim. İngilizce derslerinde ödevin çok önemli olduğunu biliyorum ve böyle olduğu için toplantılarda ödevi yapmayan öğrencilerin velilerine söyleniyor. Eğer ben de ödevlerimi yapmazsam aileme söyleneceğinden çekiniyorum ve bu yüzden ödevleri en çok ailemi üzmemek için yapıyorum. Çünkü onlar istediğim her şeyi yapıyorlar. (Ö16)

I feel responsible towards my family. I know that homework is very important in English classes, and that is why our parents are informed about our homework performance. If I don't do my homework at all, I'm afraid that my parents hear it. So, I do my homework to avoid upsetting them as they fulfil everything I want. (S16)

Siz bu kadar uğraşırken bana verilen bir ödevi yapmazsam size saygısızlık ettiğimi düşünüyorum. (Ö11)

I think I'm disrespecting you if I don't do a homework assignment while you're trying so hard for us. (S11)

Based upon the data, 9 students stated that they do their homework just because they feel there is an authority they need to answer, which actually shows that they do not get the main point of homework practices. Thus, feeling responsibility might turn into a pressure which should be stated as a weakness as it causes alienation from English classes. Besides feeling pressure, other weaknesses emerged from the data as being competitive, causing anxiety and being useless are mentioned by the students. In addition, if there is no homework given, 4 students indicate that they get rid of parental pressure and feeling anxious about the lesson.

İngilizce konusunda çok başarılı olmadığım için, ödev verildiyse birlikte kontrol edilirken ödevi yapmış olsam bile sessiz kalmayı tercih ediyorum çünkü cevaplarımdan emin olmadığım için bana gülünmesini istemiyorum. (Ö9)

As I am not competitive in English, when there is a homework given and is evaluated with the whole class, I hesitate to share my answers. As I am not sure about my answers, I don't want to be laughed. (S9)

Sınıfta cevapları okumam istenirse derse ilgim azalıyor çünkü ödevimi birinden yardım almadan iyi tamamladığıma inanmıyorum. (Ö22)

If the teacher wants me to read my answers loud, I become indifferent to the lesson because I don't think that I complete my homework properly without getting any help from a person. (S22)

İngilizcem iyi değil. Bu yüzden ödevlerde pek bir şey yapamıyorum. Bazen yapan arkadaşlarımdan yardım alıyorum ama sınıf içinde herkes birbirini rakip gördüğünden, yardımlaşma da pek yok. Söz hakkı almaktan da bu yüzden çekiniyorum. (Ö18)

I am not good at English. So, I cannot complete the tasks properly. Sometimes I get help from friends but there is a rivalry in our class among students and it hinders cooperation. As a result, I hesitate to share my answers. (S18)

Based on the collected data, some students emphasize that some of their classmates match their answers against others which results in a competitive environment. As a result, especially students who feel insufficient about English are becoming alienated to the lesson on homework evaluation, which is actually defined as quite important by the teacher.

We sometimes check the answers of the homework with the whole class to form a more interactive lesson. At those times, I observe that only the students who represent a high performance both in homework and exams take part in evaluation. Others who feel ineligible hesitate to share their answers or some of them behave as if they have completed their work.

(Observation Notes-March, 2019)

Especially students who are showing low performance in completing homework state that they get bored during completing assignments as they don't feel themselves competent in answering the questions. It can be claimed that for some

students, especially showing low-performance in homework, individual assignments are causing anxiety against the lesson and pressure on the student.

When I was looking over to the homework checklist and asked the low- performance students the reason of it, they kept silent or made some excuses and asked if I report it to the parents.

(Teacher's Diary-March, 2019)

4.2. Ideas about Improving Ideal Homework

The data obtained from the students' statements involve information also about their ideas on an ideal homework in English classes as one of the purposes of the present study is to redesign a homework model which is practical. The major codes that emerged from the data analysis are defined as homework practices should *promote interaction, arouse interest, ensure using target language and assist for the exams*. There are also 2 students that did not share ideas about ideal homework and 4 students prefer traditional homework model in English lessons because of various reasons, which will be announced during data analysis.

In order to obtain data, the relationship between the model of homework and the desire to do it is questioned and 18 participants reveal that their desire to complete tasks is directly related to the style of homework. As a response to the question about their preferences on English homework, the students mostly (f=16) promote the idea of interaction in English assignments and commented that they can be supplied through media supported tasks, communication and collaboration during homework completion and assessment or carrying out group works.

İngilizce ödevleri internet üzerinden yazılarak yapılsa ya da kendi aramızda online münazara gibi ödevleri tartışsak bence başarımıza daha çok etkisi olur çünkü artık herkes internette. (Ö26)

If we carry out homework via internet such as chatting or organize online debates and make discussions, it will probably improve our English success as everyone is an internet user. (S26)

Sıkıcı ödevleri sevmiyorum. Mesela kitaptaki ödevler bana sıkıcı ve basit geliyor. Ama mesela EBA' dan gönderdiğiniz ödevler ilgimi çekiyor. Hem izleyerek hem de dinleyerek yapılacak ödevler oluyor bazen. Bence o şekilde daha iyi öğreniyoruz. (Ö7)

I don't like boring tasks. For example, assignments on the book seem boring and easy to me. However, I enjoy homework via EBA, as the tasks are completed by watching and listening. Such kind of homework helps us more in learning. (S7)

Apart from making use of internet in homework practices, the students who support interaction in tasks define ideal homework as assignments which enable them to build communication with a real person. As in quotations below, it is highlighted by most of the participants (f=19) that if homework practices contain collaboration, promote building groups or a community; they would probably complete the tasks more willingly.

Ödevlerin hepsi olsun demiyorum ama bazen ödevleri grup olarak yapabiliriz. Ben İngilizce dersinde topluluk olarak yapılan ödevleri seviyorum çünkü kendi başıma ödev konusunda başarılı değilim. Öyle olunca da kendi başıma yapmak bazen sıkıcı ve zor oluyor. (Ö22)

Verdiğiniz ödev türü, tamamlama isteğimi etkiliyor. Başkalarını dahil ederek yapılan ödevleri daha çok seviyorum çünkü bana daha eğlenceli geliyor. Mesela aile üyelerimize sorular sorarak yapacağımız ödevler. (Ö11)

Bence İngilizce ödevlerinde karşılıklı konuşmalar ve iletişim olmalı. Sonuçta bu bir matematik dersi gibi değil. Bir dil öğreniyoruz ve ben açıkçası en çok diyalog oluşturduğumuz ve beraber sunduğumuz tarz ödevleri falan daha istekli yapıyorum ve öğrendiklerimi unutmuyorum. (Ö23)

İngilizce ödevlerinin iletişim kurmayı desteklemesi gerekiyor bence çünkü dil iletişim kurmaya yarayan bir şey. Test soruları çözerek ve birbirimizle bunları yarıştırmak dil öğrenemeyiz bence. (Ö2)

I don't say that all the homework assignments should be group work but sometimes we can conduct them in groups. In English classes, I like doing tasks together with the community because I am not good at completing homework individually. So, doing homework on my own feels boring and hard. (S22)

The type of assignment you give has an effect on my motivation. I love the homework I need to do together with someone. Assignments that are completed by asking questions to our family members can be given as an example. (S11)

I think English assignments should be interactive and communicative. Language learning is not like Maths, in the end. We experience a foreign language and I mostly enjoy the tasks in which we form dialogues and present together. Besides, I don't forget what I learnt during those tasks. (S23)

English homework should promote interaction as it is a language that is used for the aim of communication. I don't think that we will be able to acquire English by solving multiple choice questions and competing with each other. (S2)

Along with communication, it is also deduced from data that almost all the students (f=17) react positive to help each other for homework. Besides, not only students who perform low homework performance but also students who are good at fulfilling them state that collaboration during homework practices enhance the motivation and cooperation in class, which actually misses among them.

İngilizce ödevlerini yaparken zorlanıyorum ve konuları da tam olarak bilmediğim için kaynakları da tam olarak kullanamıyorum. Daha önce dediğim gibi, İngilizce konusunda kötü olduğum için de, bireysel ödevleri tek başıma yapmak zor ve sıkıcı geliyor. Bu yüzden eğer ben karar verseydim, İngilizce ödevlerinde yardımlaşma ve ödevi beraber tamamlamaya izin verirdim. Bireysel ödevlerde bazen arkadaşlardan yardım aldığım da bir şeyler anlıyorum aslında. O yüzden ödevleri beraber yapmak bana faydalı olurdu. (Ö10)

I have difficulty in doing English homework and as I am not exactly good at the covered subject, I do not have an idea which source to use. As I mentioned, individual tasks are difficult and boring because I am not good at learning English. If I had the chance to form a new homework for English classes, I would let the students to help each other and produce a common work. I sometimes ask for help to my friends during individual homework and actually I understand the task when I get help. Thus, collaboration during homework completion might be useful for me in terms of English classes. (S10)

Sınıfımız iletişim konusunda biraz zayıf. Bu yüzden belli kişiler birbirleriyle yardımlaşıyor. Eğer ödevlerde işbirliği yapmamız gerekirse sınıf içinde etkileşimin de artacağını düşünüyorum. Hem böylece ödev performansı düşük olan arkadaşlar da ödev sorumluluğu edinirler çünkü yardım alabilirler. (Ö13)

Our class is poor in interacting with each other. As a result, there are certain groups who only help each other. If homework makes us to cooperate during the task, I think students will start to make contacts. In that way, our friends who show low performance in completing homework might start to give importance to their responsibilities as they can get help. (S13)

In common with the statements of students about ideal homework promoting collaboration and communication, observations noted down by the researcher also correspond to similar points.

Sometimes in the classroom, I want the students to ask questions to each other about the present topic or we organize vocabulary tournaments in groups. In one of those lessons I realized that students give their best to complete the game or answer the questions asked by the other student. What is surprising is that some of those students do not have any relationship normally.

(Observation Notes-April, 2019)

Besides the statements emphasizing that homework in English classes should be interactive and enable the students communicating with each other during the task, there is a significant amount of participants who identify their ideal homework as being interesting and practical. Consequently, one of the main complaints of students (f=15) is boring and useless tasks.

Ödevlerin sıkıcı olmamasını isterdim. Bazı ödevleri sadece eksi almayayım diye yapıyorum ve anlamsız gelebiliyor bana. Ama bizi konuda sınırlandırmadığınız zaman, mesela müzik gruplarıyla ilgili ödevde kendi hayalimizdeki müzik grubunu oluşturma ödevi gibi, ödevde karşı çok istekli oluyorum. (Ö4)

Benim ödevlerle ilgili en büyük sıkıntım sıkıcı olmaları. Yani ödevlerimiz her derste genelde kağıt ödevleri, test çözüyoruz falan. İngilizce dersinde de açıkçası sevmediğim ödevler oluyor. Özellikle cümleleri düzenleme ya da kitabın alıştırma kısmındaki ödevler. Onları yaparken içim daralıyor. Ama mesela geçen verdiğiniz videolu ödev güzeldi. Hem video sayesinde canlandırabildik kafamızda, hem de ilgi çekici bir konuydu ve o ödevden artı aldım.

...Bize ilkokulda kitabı deftere yazma ya da bir kelimeyi 100 kere yazma ödevi verirdi. Hiçbir işime yaramadı. Zaten böyle İngilizce sevilmez ki. (Ö22)

Ödev eğer gerçekçiye ve sonrasında aklımda kalacak bir etkinlikse o ödevi seviyorum. Mesela geçen dönem 3. Ünite de sevdiğimiz bir yemeğin tarifini kendi video ya da resimlerimizle anlatma ödevinde öğrendiğim kelimeleri hala unutmadım. Ama test ödevleri, kitap ödevleri falan; bunlar bana çok sıkıcı geliyor ve bazen doldurup geçiyorum ya da hiç yapmıyorum çünkü ilgimi çekmeyince nasıl yapmam gerektiğine de kafa yormuyorum. (Ö15)

I wish homework practices were not boring. I finish some homework only not to get a minus on the checklist and seems useless to me. But if you do not limit us, as in the homework in which we created our dream music band, I become quite willing to do it. (S4)

My biggest trouble about homework is that it makes me feel bored. Well, we generally get paper tasks on classes or we solve tests. There are also some assignments in English class that I don't enjoy. Especially reordering sentences or doing practice parts of the book bothers me. However, the video assignment was entertaining. We had the chance to picture it on our minds and it also was an attractive topic to deal with. So, I got a plus for that task.

...In primary school, they gave us the task of writing a book or writing a word 100 times. It didn't enhance my level. So, how would it be possible to like English classes? (S22)

If the homework is practical and a catch activity, I enjoy it. For example, you wanted us to prepare a video or an album of ourselves during preparing our favourite meal. I still remember the vocabulary I learnt then. However excessive multiple choice questions or practices on book; they make me feel bored. As a result, I just fill them randomly or do not complete at all. If the task does not attract my attention, I do not consider how to do it. (S15)

12 participants mention that English homework preferred for classes should be fruitful and attractive. Also depending on the data taken from observation notes, it can be emphasized that the context of homework is one of the important elements in shaping students' reactions.

After that day's lesson was finished, the students were given sentence completion homework related to the covered topic. Student 9, one of the successful students in homework performance, complained about the homework and claimed that such kind of homework practices are like Maths exercises. After a week, he didn't complete the tasks.

(Observation Notes-March, 2019)

Use of target language is also underlined by some of the students (f=7) when they are asked about their ideal homework in English classes. As they seem avoiding from speaking in English during the lessons, it is surprising that they want to use target language actively in homework practices.

Mesela kitap ya da cümleyi düzenleme gibi şeyleri sevmiyorum. İngilizceyi kullandığımız ödevler olduğunda isteğim artıyor. Mesela bir konuyla ilgili şarkı yazma ya da yorum yapma ödevlerini istekli yapıyorum. (Ö1)

I don't like assignments in book or sentence correction. I am interested in homework that promotes using English. For example, I am willing to do tasks like writing songs or commenting on a subject. (S1)

Ne kadar sınıfta çekinsem de, yabancı dili konuşarak öğrenebileceğimi düşünüyorum. Ve bunu yapabileceğim iki yol var. Biri internet üzerinden yabancı arkadaş edinmek diğeri de az çok İngilizce bilen kişilerle pratik yapmak, sınıf arkadaşlarımız gibi mesela. Bu yüzden ödevler İngilizce konuşma olmasa da kullanmaya teşvik ederse bana daha faydalı geliyor. (Ö6)

Even I hesitate in class; I think I can learn English through speaking. I have to choices of providing it. One is having an online friend who is a foreigner and another is doing practice with people who can use English more or less, like our classmates. So, even there is no speaking in homework tasks, there should be a part we use English as a target language. It seems much more useful to me. (S6)

Aile üyelerimizle ya da arkadaşlarımızla konuşmaya teşvik eden ödevleri seviyorum. Yabancı dil konuşmaya çalışmak eğlenceli geliyor bana çünkü bence bu konuda iyiyim. (Ö11)

I really like tasks that enable us to ask questions to our family members or friends. It is fun to communicate in foreign language as I I think I am capable of it. (S11)

The last idea of the students about designing ideal homework for English classes is about exams. Even most of the students prefer methods of homework that promotes communication and interaction, or deals with the attractiveness of the task, some also emphasize that it should involve preparation for the exams. 5 participants express that homework should help them to be prepared for the school and placement exams like LGS.

LGS' de çıkan konulardan ödev verilmelidir bence. Böylece sınavdan önce eksiklerimizi fark edip öğretmenimize veya arkadaşlarımıza sorup eksikliği tamamlayabiliriz. (Ö21)

I think homework should be given from the topics asked in LGS. Thus, before the exam, we can find out what we are missing and ask the teacher or our friends for help. (S21)

Sonuçta bir sınava hazırlanıyoruz. Bu yüzden bence ödevlerimiz daha sınava yönelik olabilir. Ödevler öyle olunca hem okul sınavlarında da çok zorlanmayız ve belli hedefi olan kişilerle olmayanlar ödev performansından anlaşılır. (Ö7)

In the end, we are getting prepared for a placement exam. So, our homework should be shaped based on that. As a result, we will not face with big problems in school exams in that case and the teacher can find out from homework performances whether the students have a purpose about further education. (S7)

Similar to the preferences of students about English homework practices, the teacher also mentioned similar points in her diary:

Today, I collected the homework papers of students and distribute them back randomly. I wanted them to check their friends' homework and do such corrections and feedbacks that are helpful for him/her. Even there were some students who tried to misuse the activity, it was surprisingly fun and after it was finished, most of the students offer me to do it always. I also observed that they can act as a supportive community if they want. I probably repeat that kind of evaluation.

(Teacher's Dairy-April, 2019)

As one of the aims in the present study is to design a homework model that appeals to student needs and interests in order to improve homework performance and as a result, English competency, the researcher collected data about the needs and opinions of the students. Based on the major codes identified during data analysis, the researcher designed a homework model for English classes and in order to see the reactions, she conducted discussions about the new model and experienced it for a week as a pilot study. The coming section shares some data and quotations being obtained before implementation process.

Students' Reflections of the Pilot Study; After analysing data about homework perceptions of teachers, students and ideas about improving homework practices, the researcher searched for a relevant homework model that might be useful in FLE and came up with a modern understanding in literature. Before starting with the action of implementing the new homework model in English classes, the teacher introduced learning communities to the classroom and asked how to attach it with English homework. Following that, the teacher prepared a homework booklet that will be completed in communities in order to observe the adaptation. Observations related to the pilot study week and discussions about learning communities with the class will be reported briefly in order to show how to be decided on learning communities as a homework model.

After collecting data about students' perceptions on present type of homework in English classes and get their opinions about their ideal homework, the researcher concluded that the problem was that the assignments are far from students' preferences and the teacher decided to improve a homework model based on

students' needs and interests. Before the implementation of CoL-based homework in English classes, a pilot study is conducted for a week to see their perceptions of working with friends in communities. For this aim, communities are given a fascicule by the teacher to complete it together with their community. Afterwards, the teacher asked their experiences of studying in communities 'Fun, collaborative, interactive and informative' were the major points of the observation notes and diary of the teacher-researcher describing the practice.

The observations of the teacher were stated as in the quotation below:

Fascicles contain speaking or writing activities improving different skills of English. As they were completed together with the community in collaboration, it was fun to perform the task. Besides, interaction was required to fulfil the homework appropriately, which taught every student being a part of a whole. The students reacted positively to cover the fascicules with a community rather than individually. They stated that working with a community provided them to help each other and learn new things which made the practice more informative when compared to individual homework practices. Only 4 of the students expressed that it would not be possible with the present class to provide sense of community among individuals and 2 of them complained about their community members.

(Observation Notes-March, 2019)

After implementing the new method of homework as a pilot study, I realized that students who do not even greet each other started to spend time together after school to complete their common task. I think this will promote social interaction at class, which is one of the drawbacks.

(Teacher's Diary-May, 2019)

Bence ödevler eğer bu şekilde verilirse İngilizce derslerinde, çok daha fazla şey öğreniriz çünkü ödevi toplulukla yaparken çok fazla şey öğrendim arkadaşlardan ve hiç sıkılmadık ödev yaparken. (Ö18)

If English assignments are changed into that type of homework, I think we will get more information as I learned a lot of things while studying together thanks to my friends and we never got bored. (S18)

Data about doing homework together with a community in pilot study also reflected that it is effective in improving students' sense of responsibility, increasing their confidence, and promoting courage as they stated they don't feel alone in the study and that they share the responsibility.

Ödevin birlikte yapılması aslında sorumluluk duygumu arttırdı ve stresimi azalttı çünkü yapmadığım şeyden sadece ben değil diğer arkadaşlarım da zarar görebilir. Bu sebepten kendimizi daha sorumlu ve aynı zamanda rahat hissediyoruz. (Ö2)

The fact that the fascicles were completed with community actually increased our sense of responsibility because my behaviour towards completing homework does not only concern me but also my friends. For this reason, we felt more responsible. (S2)

4.3. Students' Perceptions about Learning Communities-Based Homework

Action research includes an alternative problem-oriented program (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). As the teacher realized decrease in students' homework performance in English classes, she looked for a solution and after questioning the perceptions of students on homework, she decided to improve homework practices by designing an adequate homework model based on the statements from participants. After reviewing the literature and analysing the data about ideal homework, learning communities understanding were decided to be applicable to design a homework model. Communities were defined by the teacher to fulfil the assignments together, unlike the individual homework, and the new homework model was started to be followed. The communities were shaped by the researcher according to observations, the course-homework performance and the exam grades of the students from the first semester.

After the implementation process, students' general perceptions about the new homework practices were addressed in order to obtain data and data collection was conducted through semi-structured focus group interviews and students' self reflection reports to reveal the perceptions about learning communities-based homework. Analysing reflection reports and the data collected through focus group interview, by considering research questions, themes were identified as *impacts on cognitive development, social development and personal development*. There were also several statements about *weaknesses of learning communities based homework model*. Lastly, in order to get information about the impact of the designed homework model on homework performance and exam results, homework checklists from two semesters and the exam results were compared and respresented in graphs as a data.

4.3.1. Impacts on Cognitive-Academic Development

Looking through the data, positive views on the impacts of learning communities based homework in terms of cognitive development gather around improving homework performance and academic success, providing brainstorming and exchange of knowledge, enhancing use of English, providing permanent learning and recognizing

mistakes. As major codes of data analysis, academic development (f=17) and enhancing homework performance (f=20) are the most common statements of students.

Geçen döneme göre ödev performansım bu dönem arttı çünkü yeni ödev sisteminde ödev yapmama gibi bir şansın yok. Başlarda açıkçası bu bana bir fırsat gibi gelmişti. Başkalarının ödevini yapması... Ama sonralarda kendimi topluluğa dahil hissetmek beni ödevlere karşı isteklendirdi ve arkadaşlarıma katkı sağlamaya başladım. Bu dönem bireysel ödevlerde bile eksim yok. (Ö9)

İngilizce dersinde ödev tarzının değişmesi benim sadece topluluk ödevi performansımı arttırmadı. Ayrıca bireysel olarak da verdiğiniz ödevleri de daha sık yapmaya başladım çünkü sınıfta tembel gözükmek istemiyorum. (Ö13)

Ödev yapmak bana sıkıcı geliyordu ve yapmıyordum bazen. Bu da ödevde eksi almama sebep oluyordu. Kendi başıma ödev yaptığımda ödev konusunda performansım iyi değil çok. Ama biri yardımcı olursa ya da ödev daha eğlenceli bir ödevse yapmak istiyorum. (Ö10)

Dahil olduğumuz topluluklarla ödev yapmak hem ödevlere karşı tutumumu değiştirdi hem de İngilizce dersinde başarılı olabileceğimi gördüm. (Ö26)

My homework performance increased when compared with the last semester as we don't have a chance not to complete our homework thanks to the new homework model. It seemed as a chance. Someone is doing your homework. But later on, I felt that I belong to the community, which encouraged me towards homework. I didn't get a minus even in individual tasks this semester. (S9)

The change in homework style in English classes did not only improved my homework performance in community tasks, but also I started to complete my individual assignments in order not to seem lazy in classroom. (S13)

I felt bored while doing homework and sometimes I didn't complete them, which costed to me a minus on checklist. When I do homework on my own, my performance is low but if someone helps me or if the assignment is fun, I try to do it and it enhances my performance. (S10)

Doing homework with communities changed my attitudes towards homework and I realized I can be successful in English classes. (S26)

In parallel with homework performance, the data represent that fulfilling the tasks together as learning communities increase their grades in exams (f=11).

İngilizce dersinde çok başarılı olmadığımı biliyorum. Bu yüzden de ödev konusunda da eksiklerim olabiliyor. Ödevlere önem versek, sınav sonuçlarımızın da iyi olacağını söylüyorsunuz hep. Ben buna kesinlikle katılıyorum çünkü topluluk ödevlerinden sonra olduğumuz İngilizce sınavında ödev yaparken tartıştığımız konulardan da vardı ve bu sayede daha yüksek bir not aldım. (Ö15)

Sınav sonuçlarım geçen dönemde iyiydi ama bu dönem sınavda sorduğunuz soruyla ilgili toplulukta konuştuğumuz, birbirimize anlattığımız konular olduysa, sınavım daha iyi geçiyor. Bu da bence notlarıma katkı sağlıyor. (Ö8)

Sınav esnasında eskisi gibi rekabet ve gerginlik hissetmediğim için belki de, en son sınavında rahattım ve sonucum geçen dönem notlarıma göre çok daha iyi. (Ö4)

I know that I am not successful at English classes. As a result, I have some deficiencies in homework practices. You always warn us that the tasks are directly related to the exams and hereby, they are important for our grades. I agree with that because in the last exam there were also parts about the topics we discussed in the learning community, which helped me to get a good result. (S15)

My exam grades were already good but this semester, if there are some parts in exams that were covered with the communities, my exam goes better. I mean, learning communities help us to get a high grade. (S8)

As I do not get the feeling of competition or anxiety during exams anymore, I was relaxed in the last exam. Thus, the result is much better than the first semester. (S4)

Also the researcher realized the change especially in homework performance after adopting the new homework model in English classes.

The students who were thinking that they are not capable of learning English are now taking part in activities and ask me questions about the tasks. Besides, when their homework checklists are compared with the former results, there is a considerable increase. This is also the same for individual tasks.

(Observation Notes-May, 2019)

Apart from the statements of students about the relationship between CoL based homework model and homework performance or exam results, there are also graphics representing the comparison of two semesters in terms of homework performance and academic level. The analyses of those data are mentioned in the last part of the result section.

It is claimed that as students study together with their classmates in learning communities, they have the chance to exchange information or allowing for brainstorming about the homework (f=9), which might be defined as one of the positive views for cognitive development in data analysis.

Öğrenme topluluklarında ödev yaparken beraber hareket etmek ve birbirimize danışmak gerekiyor. Bu da bizim birbirimizden öğrendiklerimiz sayesinde başarıımızı artırıyor. (Ö12)

In the community, we should act together and consult with each other. This situation increases our success thanks to the learnings from the community members. (S12)

Benim için bireysel ödevler de bir sorumluluk ve yapılması gerekir ama topluluk odaklı ödevler çok şey öğretiyor bana. Mesela aramızda konuyu tartışmak ve birbirimizle bilgilerimizi paylaşmak hem ödevin doğruluğunu arttırdı hem de birsürü farklı şey öğrendik. Ayrıca bu tarz ödevlerde öğrendiklerimi unutmuyorum hemen. (Ö17)

I think all the assignments should be done because it is our responsibility. But thanks to CoL based assignments, I learn a lot of things with the way brainstorming or exchanging information in the community. That helps to increase the accuracy of the homework. Besides, I do not forget the things that I learn through interaction. (S17)

İngilizce ödevlerini topluluk odaklı yapmak birbirimizle bilgilerimizi paylaşmayı ve ortak bir ödev oluşturmayı öğretti. Ben bu sayede birbirimizden de çok şey öğrenebileceğimizi gördüm. (Ö21)

Completing English homework in learning communities taught me to share our knowledge with each other and design a common task. Thanks to this, I realized that there are lots of things we can learn from each other. (S21)

Apart from the data collected through focus group interview, students also express their own ideas about CoL-based homework in reflective reports. One of the

participants impress that learning communities understanding in homework practices provide discussions among individuals and change of information.

At first, I did not believe that performing learning communities would be possible in our class as we do not have the sense of being a class. However, maybe against the fear of failure in homework practices, we got used to reason about the task together with our community as knowledge grows when shared.

(Student Reflection Report-May, 2019)

Motivation in foreign language learning is a commonly mentioned characteristic in literature by most of the authorities. Similarly, the students minded motivation and 18 out of 24 partipants remarked that along with the adoption of new homework model in English classes, by becoming more motivated to complete the tasks and take part in homework discussions or assessments, they become more competent.

Hiçbir dersi ödev olmadan düşünemiyorum ama önemli olan nasıl ödevler olduğu. Bu dönem ödev yöntemimizin değişmesi çok iyi oldu. Tek başıma ödev yapmak sıkıcı geliyordu. Şimdi beraber bir şeyler yapmak ödev yapma isteğimi artırıyor.

I can't think of any lessons without homework, but the important thing is the design of it. Our new homework practices are useful in learning. I felt boring during completing homework on my own. Now, working with the community promotes my desire to complete homework.

Öğrenme topluluklarında birbirimize yardım etme şansımızın olması motivasyonumu arttırdığı için performansımı da artırıyor. (Ö13)

In learning communities based homework we have the chance to help and motivate each other, which has a positive impact on homework performance. (S13)

Ödev yapma konusunda istekli olmayınca o ödev ne kadar basit de olsa yapmadığım zamanlar oluyordu. Şuan toplulukla ödev yapmak ve sorumluluğu beraber üstlenmek beni rahatlatıyor. Bu da hem derste hem de ödevde başarıyı arttırdı bence. (Ö3)

If I am not willing to complete the homework, there were times I did not do it. However, with the new understanding in homework practices, doing homework in community and sharing the responsibility relieves me. Eventually, I think it enhances my performance in classes and homework. (S3)

Increasing motivation has also been one of the gains of CoL-based homework that is realized and included in researcher's observations.

It was not the day for presentations of learning communities and discussions of homework practices. Nevertheless, students were quite willing to share their answers for individual homework during assessment, which was actually not much possible earlier. I think this is about the motivation that the communities provided each other during studying together. As they react positively towards tasks, they also maintain it for individual homework, either.

(Teacher's Diary-May, 2019)

As stated in previous sections of results, students underline use of target language in homework practices. As a result, the teacher designed the new homework model within this scope and the concept of CoL – based homework in English classes required using target language during all the processes in homework tasks. Hence, 13 students identify that they have the opportunity to make use of English during preparation of task and presentation, which is stated as one of the positive impacts of designed homework model.

Ödevde belirlenen kelimeleri kullanarak bir text ya da diyalog hazırlamak, İngilizceyi pratiğe yönelik kullanmamızı sağlıyor. Bizi yönlendiren kalıp sorular yerine, bir şeyler ortaya çıkardığımız ödevler İngilizceyi istediğimiz gibi kullanıyor. Bu bence dil öğrenmek için test sorularından, boşluk doldurmadan çok daha etkili. (Ö19)

Creating a text or a dialogue by using the determined vocabulary enables us to practice language. Instead of chunks that limits us, tasks that makes us to create something authentic provides using English. I think this is much more effective than multiple choice questions or sentence completion. (S19)

Ben İngilizceyi kullanarak farklı şeyler ortaya çıkarmayı seviyorum çünkü yeteneğim gösterebiliyorum. O yüzden zaten bireysel ödevlerde de araştırma ya da yorumlama ödevi verdiğinizde daha istekli yapıyordum çünkü İngilizce konuşmayı öğrenmek istiyorum ve bu bence ancak dili kullanarak olur. Bu dönemki topluluk ödevi çalışmalarımız da bu yüzden bana daha verimli geliyor.

I like presenting authentic works by using target language in order to show my competency. So, I was more willing in tasks which were research- based or required interpretation also in individual homework practices as I want to improve my English, which is possible only through practicing. As a result, the new model in English homework seems effective to me in using target language.

Belki hatalarımız da oluyor ama, kaç yıldır İngilizce görmeme rağmen İngilizce cümle kurabildiğimi ve biraz üzerinde çalışınca belli bir konu üzerinde konuşabildiğimi ilk kez bu yıl fark ettim. Yeni ödev yönteminin bize hazır bir kağıt vermeyip, ödevi nasıl yapacağımızı biz bırakması, çoğumuzun İngilizceyi kullanmasını sağladı. (Ö2)

There might be mistakes but even I have been covering English lessons for years, I just realized that I can form sentences and speak in English about a determined topic if I do some practice. Learning communities in homework practices provides us utilize the language by leaving us free, rather than formed handouts. (S2)

CoL based homework enhances to use other skills of English language which is actually the best part for me as I want to learn how to use English, not how to fill in blanks.

(Student Reflection Report-May, 2019)

During data analysis, even they are not emphasized as common as the mentioned points, enabling permanent learning and recognizing mistakes with the help of CoL understanding are also identified as cognitive developments as studying with communities make them to reflect on different perspectives and make interpretations, rather than accepting the information without questioning.

Öğrenme topluluklarıyla yaptığımız ödevlerde yaratıcılık ve farklılık oluyor ve bunu yapabilmek için herkes bildiklerini ve fikirlerini paylaşıyor. Ben toplulukla ödev hazırlarken öğrendiğim şeyleri hiç unutmuyorum. Ama bireysel ödevlerde sahip olduğum tek şey kendi bildiklerim ve yeni şeyler öğrenmek de zaman alıyor. (Ö17)

In learning communities based practices, there is authenticity and creativity. In order to enable it, we exchange information and opinions in community. I don't forget the things I learned during working with others. But it was only my knowledge in individual assignments and learning new things take time on my own. (S17)

Ödev tamamlama ve cevaplama konusunda iyi bir öğrenci olduğuma inanıyorum. Elbette ki hatalarım çıkıyor ama bence önemli olan o ödevi özenmek ve emek vermek. Sınıfta kontrol edilirken de eksiklerini anlayabilmek. Eğer böyle olmazsa, ödevin bir amacı kalmaz. (Ö8)

I believe I am a successful student in completing homework and the accuracy of it. Of course I make mistakes, but the thing is to pay attention to the task and to give a labor. If not, practices will be useless. (S8)

Öğrenme toplulukları temelli ödevlerde her aşamayı beraber düşünerek ve kendimiz deneyimleyerek yapıyoruz. Ben bir şeyi izleyerek ya da deneyerek daha iyi öğreniyorum ve unutmuyorum. Topluluk ödevlerinde de her şeyi kendimiz oluşturmamız ve sunmamız daha akılda kalıcı olduğu için başarımlar arttı. (Ö22)

In CoL based homework, we think over all the steps and experience it together during the process. I learn better through watching or acquiring and do not forget easily. In learning communities, as we design the task and present it ourselves which enables permanence. (S22)

As stated earlier, working with learning communities enable the participants to realize their mistakes in a short time as one of the characteristics of learning communities is defined as helping each other by 15 students.

I don't hesitate to make mistakes during the lesson or the tasks as I believe that my friends will help me to correct them.

(Student Reflection Reports-May, 2019)

The data collected through students' reflection papers also support that CoL-based homework model influence homework performance and consequently academic success positively, as the members do not hesitate to share knowledge with each other. As communication needs at least two sides, communities provide the students the opportunity for it.

I like the new way of homework practices. As we study together, we discuss how to prepare the assignment in a best way and exchange ideas about how to use the given words. In that way, we deal with the target language and it enhances the academic success by providing new information.

(Student Reflection Report-May, 2019)

4.3.2. Impacts on Development of Social Skills

Apart from academic performance and cognitive development, the data present that CoL-based homework practices contribute to social development attendantly. Improving communication skills, enhancing collaboration, promoting collected responsibility, empowering the sense of community and team spirit are the major outcomes pointed out by the students during data collection process. As common statement, 20 students emphasized that thanks to enabling learning communities in fulfilling homework practices, individuals become more communicative in society.

Sunumdan sonra diğer topluluklarla beraber yapılan çalışmayı değerlendirmek ve onların da çalışmalarını dinlemek bizim gibi bir sınıfa saygı çerçevesinde de konuşulabileceğini gösterdi. Bunun için bile öğrenme toplulukları faydalı oldu diyebilirim. (Ö23)

Evaluating the presentation together with all the communities and becoming aware of their work proved our class that it is possible to discuss within mutual respect. Even for this, it is useful to conduct CoL-based homework model. (S23)

Bizim sınıfımızda iletişim eksikliği var genel olarak. Bu yüzden topluluk odaklı ödevlerin çok ilerleyeceğini düşünmemiştim ama öyle olmadı. Özellikle toplulukları sizin belirlemeniz farklı kişilerin birbiriyle iletişim kurmasını sağladı. (Ö4)

There was miscommunication in our class. As a result, I didn't believe that CoL based assignments would continue but it worked. Especially your determination of the communities enabled that people interact with each other who have never contacted before. (S4)

Biliyorsunuz sınıfımızda belli gruplaşmalar var ve bazı kişiler birbirleriyle selamlaşmazlar bile. Topluluk ödevleri sayesinde en azından İngilizce derslerinde, sunum esnasında ya da ödevleri tamamlarken iletişim kuruyoruz ve böylece bir sınıf oluşturduğumuzun farkına varıyoruz. (Ö18)

You know there is grouping in our class and some students don't even greet each other. With the new model in homework practice, we have a contact with each other during presentations or completing assignments. It helps us to realize that we are forming a society by attending the same class. (S18)

Similarly, almost in all reflection papers participants infer that by implementing the designed homework model for English classes provides interaction among students as it makes the class study together.

I am new at the school this year and as I am not a sociable person in general, the change in my life made the situation worse. Unexpectedly, thanks to creating learning communities for English assignments, I have the opportunity to communicate with my classmates, as we have to complete the task together with the community. This situation provided us to get in contact with each other not only for completing homework but also making friendship with.

(Student's Reflection Report-May, 2019)

The increase in communication and conducting cooperative tasks has also led to the development of communities' discipline and enhances collaboration among

participants. According to 12 students, not only providing cooperation but also eliminating competition and rival in the class reveal the idea of helping each other.

Yeni ödev sistemi benim için çok faydalı oldu açıkçası çünkü ben ödevi kendim yapmakta zorlanıyorum, özellikle de yazma ödevleri. Bireysel çalışma yerine topluluk olarak bir şeyler yapınca hem ödev başarımlarım arttı hem de sınıf içinde dayanışma oluştu. Eskiden yardım etmeyeceğini düşündüğüm arkadaşlara artık her ders için gidip soru sorabiliyorum. (Ö18)

The new homework system is really helpful for me because I had difficulties in doing homework, especially writing tasks. Rather than individually, working together with a community provided both increase in my homework performance and cooperation among us. I know ask for help even to the people who I thought they would not help me before. (S18)

Bana sınıftakiler hep bencil gelirdi. Herkesin birbirini rakip görmesi de yardımlaşmayı engelliyordu bence. Oluşturulan ödev topluluklarında bireysel bilgi kendi başına bir işe yaramadığı için paylaşmayı ve iyi bir ödev hazırlamak için yardımlaşmayı sağladı en azından. (Ö20)

My classmates seemed selfish to me. That all the individuals see each other as opponents blocked collaboration. As working individually is useless in learning communities based tasks, it provided sharing and helping each other at least. (S20)

I see my students help each other not only during completing English homework but also studying for an exam of any class. Cooperation was not in the foreground in the class as they were feeling competitive towards their friends. With the learning communities understanding in English homework, students become more sensitive and friendly.

(Observation Notes, May, 2019)

Decreased competition and enabling collaboration also contribute to the sense of community among students. The concept that best describes this situation is the expression of the "feeling whole" which is stated by 5 students.

Siz de fark etmişsinizdir, ödev kontrollerinde ben çok söz hakkı almıyordum normalde çünkü hata yapmaktan korkuyordum. Bizim sınıfta genel olarak sınıf ruhu olmadığı için rekabet var ve bireysel ödevlerde bu daha çok çünkü gözünüze girmek ve kendilerini kanıtlamak için bir yol görüyorlar. Ama İngilizce ödevlerinin her hafta bir kısmının toplulukla yapılması bu durumu azalttı ve yardımlaşmaya başladık. Zaten topluluk başka şekilde verimli çalışamazdı. (Ö2)

You also might realize, I was not active during homework evaluation sessions with the whole class as I hesitate to make mistakes. There is a competitive environment in classroom about assignments, which is more common in individual work as they consider it a way to win your favour and prove their knowledge. However, the fact that we carry out some CoL-based homework every week changed the situation and now we help each other. LC would not already continue properly in a different way. (S2)

... 8. Sınıfta topluluk olmayı benimsedik bence. Sınıfça kendimizi bir amaç için bir arada hissediyoruz. Birbirimizin bilgilerinden faydalanmak artık hepimiz için normal bir durum. (Ö25)

.. now in 8th grade, we internalized the sense of being a community. We gather around a common purpose as a team. In communities, we learn from each others' knowledge, which turned into an ordinary issue for us. (S25)

Sınıfça ve grupça bir bütün olarak hissetme duygusu güzel bence. Toplulukla ödev yaparken yarıştıymışım gibi hissetmiyorum, bireysel ödevlerin aksine. Bu his bende baskı oluşturuyordu. (Ö20)

I think the sense of feeling a whole as a class is nice. I don't feel in a competition which causes pressure on me while doing homework, unlike individual homework. (S20)

It is also expressed that cooperation among the students during completion, presentation and discussion of the tasks require the sense of community to enable team spirit as a class.

Topluluk ödevleriyle İngilizceyi daha çok sevdim çünkü ödevi yardımlaşarak beraber yapıyor olmak ve toplulukların arasında da rekabet olmaması beni rahatlattı. Böyle olunca boşlamak yerine daha isteyerek tamamladım ödevleri çünkü bunun en büyük sebebi bence sınıf ruhu oluşması. Kendi başıma olduğumda konu tekrarı ve kaynaklara bakmak beni sıkıyordu. Şimdi ihtiyacımız olan tek şey birbirimiziz.

With CoL based assignments, I liked English classes more because completing assignments with cooperation and there was no competition among communities relieved me. As a result, I became more willing to do tasks thanks to feeling the spirit of being a class. During individual tasks, I was bored with doing revisions and searching for resources. Now, we only need each other to fulfil them.

The data obtained from the dairy also indicate that besides academic improvement, CoL-based homework in English classes promote students' sense of community at the same time.

As I compare the results of exams, the difference between the first and second term cannot be denied. I also observe that students meet and study together for the exams. Thus, it is obvious that they got the sense of sharing a purpose as a class which proves they become aware of the fact that they actually create a community whose purposes are common and they can be achieved together with ease.

(Teacher's Diary-June, 2019)

Lastly, when looking through the data to define the impacts of redesigned homework model in various aspects, it is also deduced that feeling a part of the learning community enhances collective responsibility of the students (f=13).

Ödevleri toplulukla yapmak üzerimdeki baskayı azaltırken bir yandan da sorumluluk hissimi arttırdı. Eskiden ödevi yapan da yapmayan da bendim ama şimdi bir topluluğun sorumluluğunu taşıyorum. (Ö18)

Completing the assignments with community decreases the pressure on me while increasing the sense of responsibility. Formerly, I was responsible for my own homework but now I undertake also the community.

Data obtained from the reflection paper of a student mainly summarizes the relationship between getting collective responsibility and CoL-based homework model.

To be honest, I was not a bright student in completing tasks generally. When I didn't do my homework, I was not feeling uncomfortable so much as it was my responsibility and it affected only my success. As learning communities required

keeping company, I felt responsible about contributing to the common aim of the class. As a result, even I was not giving importance to my own responsibilities, the feeling of being a community led to collective responsibility as it was not only me who would be affected by a low homework performance.

(Reflection Report-May, 2019)

4.3.3. Impacts on Personal Development

The data also include statements about the impacts of CoL based homework in terms of personal aspect. Participants generally underline that discussions and presentations required during homework sessions and evaluating the works together with the whole class promoted personal development. Based on the expressions of the students, it is identified that new homework model for English tasks contribute to personal development in terms of reducing shyness (f=18), improving self-expression (f=12) in community and gaining self-confidence (f=9).

Sunum yapmak heyecanlandırdı beni. Çünkü toplulukta daha önce hiç konuşma yapmadım. Bir de sunumu İngilizce yapmamız gerekiyordu. Hiç yapamam zannetmişim ama çok heyecanlansam da bir şekilde görevimi yaptım Kendime güvenim geldi bu sayede. (Ö5)

Presentations made me feel excited because I had never talked to a community before. Besides, we had to present it in English. I never thought I could, but even if I was very nervous I did it. Thanks to this, I gained self-confidence. (S5)

Eskisi kadar içe kapanık biri değilim ve fikirlerimi çekinmeden paylaşıyorum sınıfta. Konuşma cesareti geldi. (Ö13)

I am not a self-closed person anymore and I can share my opinions with people without feeling hesitation. I got the courage for talking. (S13)

Başkasına bir şeyler anlatınca anlattığım konuyu daha iyi anladığımı ve unutmadığımı da fark ettim. Topluluk olarak ödev çalışması hakkında fikir belirtmek de hem cesaretimi arttırdı hem de utangaçlığım azaldığı için bireysel ödevlerde bile artık söz hakkı alırken çekinmiyorum. Yanlış olsa da sınıf eskisi kadar tepki göstermiyor çünkü topluluk olmak birbirini desteklemek demek ve biz bir sınıfız. (Ö26)

When I teach something to a person, I realized that I understand the subject better and do not forget it. Expressing opinions as a community encouraged me towards the class and my shyness decreased. So, I do not hesitate to participate in evaluating individual homework. Even my answer is wrong; the class does not react negatively because forming a community means encouraging each other as we are a community as a class. (S26)

Besides promoting self-expression, it is identified that learning communities also provide discussion among students about the task. After the presentation, communities ask questions about the presented work, comment on it and also share

their work with the class if wanted. The teacher expressed her observations about the session as follows:

It is really proud to see my students sharing their ideas about the homework and I sometimes get really surprised when I see some students defending their task who never took part in the lessons before.

(Teacher's Observation Notes-May, 2019)

4.3.4. Weaknesses of Learning Communities-Based Homework

As is the case with positive impacts of CoL based homework, there are also statements about weaknesses of learning communities in homework practices. Students' negative reflections on the designed homework model emerged from the collected data as feeling worried and incompetent about homework presentations (f=19) and having problems in arranging community meetings (f=10) and feeling worried about the community members (f=8) as the major point of students.

Based on the collected data, as a part of CoL-based assignments, presentations influence students in various ways based on social and personal development. In contrast, before doing presentation, the students feel worried and were hesitating to express themselves especially in English. Besides, presenting the work that they completed with the community members caused anxiety at first. The dialogue noted by the teacher also supports the point:

Teacher: I think you have understood our new method of homework practice.

Student: Teacher, isn't that possible to eliminate presentations? I don't think I can do it. I can't even read English texts.

Teacher: As this is our way of assessment of homework, no way.

Students: You can do it by collecting our tasks.

Teacher: But I want to see that you are a part of the community.

Buluşmak için falan zaman ayarlamak gibi problemler oluyor. Ya da 2 kişi o gün çalışmak istiyor ama 1 kişi istemiyor. Biz bu durumu önceden gün ve saat planlayarak aştık. (Ö11)

Sometimes there are problems about arranging meeting. As an example, two members want to study that day but the other do not accept. We solved the situation by planning beforehand. (S11)

Grup çalışmasının tek olumsuz yanı bence buluşma zorluğu. Ailelerimiz yapılan çalışmayla ilgili bilgilendirildikleri için problem olmuyor ama bazen üyeler zaman ayarlayamıyor.

The only challenge in CoL based assignments are planning meeting. As our families are aware of the process, the problem is not about them. It is about the members that sometimes cannot arrange the time.

As stated above, one of the discrepancies about CoL based homework is the dissatisfaction of the students about communities. Even there are some problems about the fact, it is also reduced in time as they got used to each other and focused on the main purpose of the task.

Önce tabii hocamız toplulukları ilan ettiğinde biraz sıkıntılar oldu sınıfta. Sonrasında hocamız grupları belli bir düzene göre oluşturduğunu ve değiştiremeyeceğini söyleyince daha fazla konuyu uzatmadı kimse. Hala dahil olduğu topluluğu sevmeyenler var. Bu da verimli çalışmalarını engelliyor. (Ö7)

When our teacher announced the communities, there were problems in the classroom. Then, when our teacher said that there will be no changes in communities, nobody insisted on the issue. There are still people who are not pleased with their communities, which hinders studying effectively. (S7)

Hocamız bize yeni ödev uygulamasından bahsedince başta toplulukları kendimiz mi oluşturacağız diye düşünmüştüm. Sonra hocamızın belirlediğini öğrenince üzüldüm çünkü sınıfta herkesin ayrı bir arkadaş ortamı var ve anlaşmazlıklar oluyor. (Ö20)

When our teacher mentioned the new homework method for English classes, I thought about how to build a community. Then I felt sad to hear that our teacher decided the communities because there is grouping in our class and also conflicts between people. (S20)

4.3.5. Learning Communities-Based Homework Performance of Students

In order to support the data from interviews and student reports about impacts of CoL-based homework on homework performance, observation notes taken during discussions and presentations are also utilized to get information about communities' performance. Determining the ultimate conclusions of the study, the statements are summarized in Appendix N by making comparisons between the two models of homework practices. In order to get a deep understanding about the impacts of CoL-based homework practices in English class, the teacher also analysed the data provided by observation notes and presentations and interpreted the findings about students' performance in learning communities based tasks. Based on the major themes and codes determined by analysing observations of the teacher, a brief comparison can be identified as while individual-based assignments evoke competition, CoL-based assignments promote sharing and collaboration between individuals. In addition, individual homework cause anxiety on some students as its main aim is to prove self competency in homework practices. On the other hand, CoL-based tasks are identified as enhancing motivation and self confidence on students as it gives the chance to feel

encouragement during the practice which helps the students to be competent in community tasks.

As students have the chance to get help from each other during homework practices, their performance on tasks has increased. Now, as I observe the presentations of communities, I can say that students seem more motivated about completing their tasks when they study together rather than survive individually.

(Teacher's Diary, May, 2019)

The data emerged from the reflection reports of students also supports the findings about homework performance:

Your new type of homework practices were quite effective for me because it was really fun and helpful to conduct the tasks with a community without getting stressed or feeling like competing with my classmates. I already was a good student in completing homework but this semester I did my homework willingly and without any deficiency.

(Student Reflection Report-May, 2019)

4.3.6. Analysis of Homework Checklists and Exam Results

As the action study aims mainly to improve the English homework performance and academic success, the researcher also analysed the results of individual works in order to get idea about the students' individual achievement. Looking over the graphs about individual homework performance and exam results, while most of the students show a striking increase in homework performance, some of them slightly increase the rate which might be caused of not fulfilling the responsibilities and requirements of working with a learning community. As students are involved in a community while practicing tasks based on new homework model, they do not want to represent a poor image in individual homework practices to the members of community. As a result, learning communities also promote the performance in individual tasks. Similar to the increasing performance in homework, exam results also increased gradually, in parallel with the statements claiming that homework performance has an impact on academic success.

Comparison of Homework Checklist and Exam Results: Laslty, in order to obtain data about CoL-based assignments on homework performance and academic

success, apart from the tasks completed as communities; students are also given individual tasks periodically in English classes. The graph below compares the results of students’ homework performances from two semesters. Analysing the data, it can be stated that most of the students show a striking increase in homework performance. (Students 14, 24 and 27 were habitually absent).

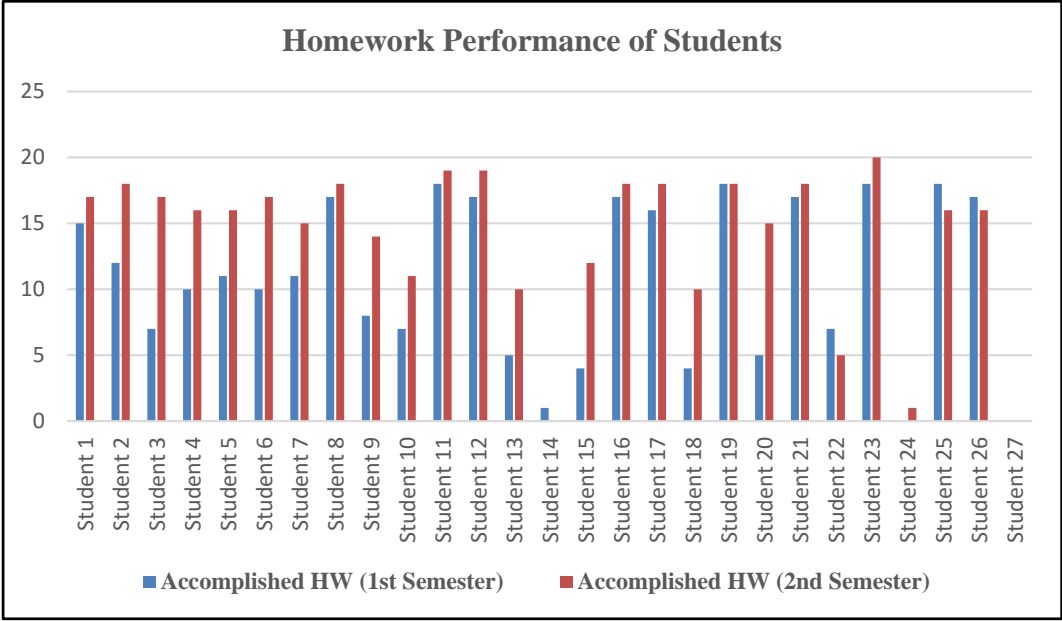


Figure 5. Students’ HW Performance Values from the two Semesters

Based on the reflections of students about new homework model in English classes, the data about the impacts of learning communities in terms of exam results are also analysed and the findings are supported with the graph comparing the exam grades of the students from the two semesters in order to find out if there is a significant difference between. Similar to the data about students’ homework performance, the avarages of exam results of two semesters are also represented in graph, which shows that CoL-based homework increased the success of students on English exams.

Therewith, the data derived from the diary claims that by means of the implementation of the new homework model in FLE classes, the grades of students were increased gradually in terms of class performance and exam results.

English is seen as one of the difficult classes in secondary school among students. As a result, students were hopeless about the exams and felt alone about getting ready for the exam. Now, most probably in reaction to learning communities, they got used to study together rather than feel in a rivalry. This provided satisfactory results in exams.

(Teacher's Diary-June, 2019)

Similar to the quotation from the diary, the data from the reflection report also state that learning community understanding has a positive impact not only in homework performance but also in exam results in general.

To tell the truth, as I was not studying for English exams for hours, I did not get pleasant results. This semester, we both have individual homework and community-based homework and I complete both of them willingly as I feel somehow more responsible than before. Besides, I have the chance to revise the topics and learn new things during completion of homework with the community and discussion of the tasks together with the class, which helps me to remember the topics during exams.

(Student Reflection Report-May, 2019)

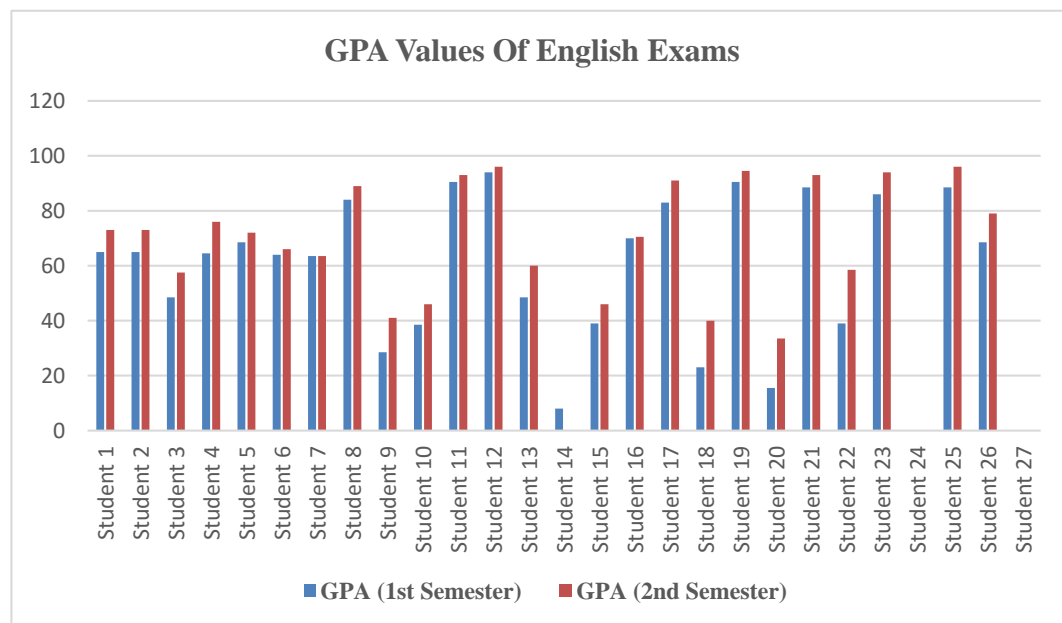


Figure 6. GPA Values of English Exams from two Semesters

4.3.7. Summary of the Findings

In order to interpret the findings of the study, the themes and codes were identified by analysing the data and they were triangulated with observation notes and the diary of the teacher-researcher to validate the findings. The major themes derived from the data in parallel with the research questions were determined as

perceptions of homework, ideal homework practices and preferences on homework models in FLE and the impacts of the new homework model in English classes. By looking at findings, the teachers perceive homework as reinforcement, responsibility of students, promoter of success and tool for assessment in general. There are also statements that define homework practices as a pointless activity. From the perspectives of the students, assignments are their obligation, duty and responsibility. Besides, it is a tool for reinforcement of the class. There are also students who define homework as a cause of anxiety and a boring activity.

Students' definitions of ideal homework come under common statements as enabling interaction and use of target language, arouse interest and collaboration and assisting for exams. All the data about the perceptions of homework practices and ideas about ideal homework being collected through interviews were verified by classroom observation notes of the researcher. The findings of homework perceptions of students and teachers were compared with the ideas about improving homework practices and based on the information, it was clear that the ideal homework model is quite different from the adopted homework model in English classes. Besides, as the teacher-researcher has observed underperformance in English homework in accordance with exam results, she decided to redesign the homework model based on collected data about ideal homework and after searching the literature; she came up with learning communities in education, a new understanding in education which is suited to the needs of the students.

As it can be concluded from the major codes triangulated with the teacher's observation notes and diary, students are interested in assignments that enhances interaction, communication and cooperation as main characteristics. Hence, homework practices are designed the way that encourage communities of learners and practice. With the redesigned homework model based on learning communities, tasks were conducted with the community and all the communities are allowed to study together without feeling in a race as they were not graded individually. During the implementation of the new model, the researcher continued to do observations and the communities were also interviewed in order to get data about their experiences. Students also express their personal ideas about

CoL-based homework on reflection reports. The major themes emerged from the data about the designed homework model are its impacts on cognitive (academic), social and personal development. In addition, there are also findings on the weaknesses of learning communities based homework model in English classes. The identified major codes were also verified by students' reflection reports and observation notes of the researcher. Lastly, the comparisons of homework performances of students and their exam results from two semesters were also presented in graphics in order to find out the impacts of homework practices.

Eventually, the results of the study demonstrate that CoL-based homework model contributes positively to homework performance and academic success in English classes from the perspectives of the students and the teacher-researcher. The comparison of the themes and major codes between individual-based homework and CoL-based homework are represented in Appendix N to obtain a general idea about the data analysis process.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study has been conducted to improve the homework performances of 8th graders in English classes by designing a new homework model based on learning communities understanding. To fulfil the aim, action research is identified as research design and the data collected from participants are analysed for the sake of answering the research questions based on themes and codes which are determined in data analysis process. This chapter discusses the main themes of the study in relation to the relevant research in literature. Afterwards, the following section presents implications for further practices in education and lastly further research.

5.1. Discussion

As content analysis was carried out in the study, the data were analysed based upon the identified themes and codes presented in Appendix J. The findings were also triangulated through multiple data sources (i.e., observation notes, diary and reflection reports) to develop a comprehensive understanding about the case. In this section, the findings are discussed in parallel with the research questions respectively together with addressing to related literature.

5.1.1. Perceptions on English Homework Practices

As language acquisition has become one of the prominent issues of MoNE, language education programs and their components started to be analysed in terms of their functions in learning environment (Çınar, Teyfur and Teyfur, 2006; Damar, Esim & Korkmaz, 2017). Thus, homework is one of the prominent matters

in educational studies and authorities continue to study on the phenomenon. Similar to other subjects, homework is defined as one of the effective learning methods in FLE (Nunan and Richards, 2015; Coutts, 2004; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002) and most of the educators enforce it on their classes. Homework concept has been discussed in literature in various perspectives but the most common issue is individuals' attitudes and their stance towards homework practices because it is highly believed that it has a direct effect on homework performance and quality of the work (Wiesenthal et al., 1997; İnceoğlu, 2004).

The findings of the present study indicate similar patterns with the literature in terms of homework definition and perceptions of individuals who got involved in the process. In the former studies conducted with the teachers, it was claimed that the teachers' approaches to the concept and status of homework might have an impact on the students' perceptions and consequently performances on homework practice (Eilam, 2001; Connors, 1992; Farrow et al., 1999). The present study aims to improve homework performance in English classes and ensures continuity of it. Thus, the perceptions of teachers and students on English homework practices are questioned in the study in order to get a broad point of view and compare the findings with the former studies about attitudes and perceptions towards homework practices in learning process.

To begin with the perceptions of homework practices from the perspectives of the teachers and students in the study, parallel results are obtained with the related literature underlining the importance of individual perceptions on homework performance and academic success (Akin, 1998; Collier, 2007; Cooper et al., 2006). Similar to the studies in the literature (Cooper, 2001; Walberg et al., 1985, Doyle and Barber, 1990) the present study indicate that English teachers emphasize homework favourable for their classes in terms of reinforcement, self-responsibility, academic success and assessment of the class. Similarly, students adopt homework positively as a duty, an obligation or responsibility. The findings also show that not only teachers but also students state that assignments enable reinforcing for the previous classes. On the other hand, similar to a number of related literature stating that students define homework as a source of stress

(Kouzma and Kennedy, 2002; Kaplan, 2006), the data of the present study also show that homework might cause anxiety and stress on students depending on various aspects, which will be identified in this section later on.

Considering the literature about academic success and homework, there are various studies that underline the importance of homework in foreign language learning. In parallel, teachers emphasize that assignments promote learners in acquiring of new information in various ways (Ulutaş and Dinçer, 2003; Köse, 2013, Açıkgöz, 1993). Teachers' general perceptions about homework are similar to each other as all of them started by defining homework as reinforcement for their lessons and expressed that they give homework to the students for the sake of revising the covered topics in order to prevent the students from forgetting. Besides, they believe that homework promotes language learning as it provides time to study English outside the class and the students might realize their deficiencies. They point out that students who give importance to homework performance experience more success on learning English than the ones who are indifferent to the tasks. So, it can be concluded that teachers perceive assignments as promoters of success on their lessons. In line with the literature (Eilam, 2001; Ulutaş and Dinçer, 2003), in the present study, the teachers promote homework practices on their lessons as it motivates the students and consequently enhances their academic achievement. They claim that students who are able to see that they can complete the task with the newly acquired language feel courage about the class and it keeps their motivation high.

Teachers indicate that homework can be considered as a tool for reinforcement as it gives opportunity to revise the former classes and ensures permanence of the knowledge. When interpreting the findings from students, a considerable amount of them also underline homework as reinforcement. In this respect, the findings of the action study coincide with the related literature defining assignment applications as a way of reinforcing newly acquired knowledge and ensuring permanence for students (Babadoğan, 1990; Gürlevik, 2006; Şahin & Altınay, 2008; Wallinger, 2000; Warton, 2001). The students overemphasized that homework practices provide them secure the new information which is parallel

with the study conducted by Özben (2006) on the second level students revealing that repetitions and activities done owing to homework practices make learning permanent and increase academic achievement. There are also studies being encountered that there is no relation between academic achievement and homework applications (Kriesberg, 1996; Müjjs & Reynolds, 2001) while other state that it depends on the grade level of students (Cooper, 1989, Açıkgöz, 2003). Similarly, even there are participants denying the importance of homework on academic performance, when the data are analysed in deep, it is clear that these statements arouse depending different reasons as preferred homework model or attitude towards the class, which are the reasons of failure in English homework performance.

Moreover, homework is preferred as a tool for assessment by the teachers. As pointed out earlier, it is believed that without checking the accuracy of answers in assignments; it is not possible to have an idea about achievement in language learning (Keith, 1982; Chen and Ehrenberg, 1993). Parallel to that point, three of the teachers expressed that assignments are the most practical tools to evaluate the students' level of acquiring the new information. They also have the opportunity to foresee the process and plan the coming classes based on the homework performances of the learners. The assignments also give clues about their own teaching as they have the chance to collect the completed task and to become aware of the most problematic points that students faced in assignments. When they were asked about their way of homework assessment, it was reported that they mostly do direct assessment by walking around the class or the students read their answers aloud in the classroom during homework evaluation, which represents common points with study conducted by North and Pillay (2002) aiming to find out English teachers preferences about characteristics of homework and claim that homework is a useful tool for teachers in assessing students.

Accordingly, when the students expressed their thoughts about English homework, a remarkable amount complained about assessing homework directly as it is one of the reasons of feeling anxious about homework practices. Most of the students who get underwhelming results in homework performance underline their stress

during homework evaluation as they do not feel confident and sure about their answers, which bring about anxiety and ignorance towards the assignments and washout consequently, as Cumhur and Baydar (2017) revealed in the study on cooperative homework model, stating that anxiety affects homework negatively. As a result, the characteristics of homework practices should be shaped based on modern understandings in education rather than follow accustomed techniques (Çınar, Teyfur and Teyfur, 2006). Eventually, the present study clearly reveal that teachers perceive homework as a tool for assessment but their way of assessing the tasks causes anxiety and stress on students that result in underperformance as stated in literature (Wallinger, 2008).

In parallel with the related studies (Demirel, 1989; Cooper et al., 2006; Akin, 1998; Babadoğan, 1990; Hughes et al., 2002, Walberg et al., 1985; Kapıkıran & Kıran, 1999), both teachers and students pointed out that homework improves the sense of responsibility of students as it holds students responsible to do extra study either willingly or unwillingly outside the course and increase their skills to comprehend the knowledge (Hughes et al., 2002; Connors, 1992). In other words, when the teacher assigns the students with a task, they feel the need to complete it in order not to leave a bad impression on teacher, especially if the homework is checked. As a result, if the teacher not only sets homework but also see over the completed tasks, the students feel much more responsibility on themselves. They also get the idea that homework practices are important for their own sake of learning if the teacher attaches importance on their work. Apart from responsibility, almost all the students also define homework as their duty or obligation, which is shaped either positive or negative based on students' reflections about English homework practices. Most of the students feel the need to complete the homework that is given as they feel uncomfortable when they enter the lesson without doing it. In that point, the viewpoint of the student to the term 'duty' is quite important to determine. While some of the students feel responsible about the duties and therefore mostly complete the task in order to feel relieved, the others expressed those duties results in anxiety and stress for them. It is also observed that students who adopt homework as responsibility show high performance when compared to the students who feel under stress when they were

given individual assignments. Hence, it is clear that their perceptions affect the performance in homework. Interpreting the reasons of anxiety or stress, the students mostly attribute it to the characteristics of the followed homework model in English classes. The findings were consistent with the related literature, claiming that the model of homework plays a crucial role in students' reactions (Trautwein et al., 2006; Rowell and Hong, 2002) and has been stated that every characteristics and process of homework is shaped based on the model such as use of resource, assessment type or the content of the task (Kaplan, 2006).

As it is determined in various studies, homework tasks might cause anxiety or stress on students which results in decrease in homework performance or indifference against the class (Kouzma and Kennedy, 2002). The study conducted by Galloway and Pope (2007) shows that homework can negatively affect students' attitudes depending on the adopted model of assignment. Similarly, in the present study, one of the perceptions of students about individual-based homework was causing stress and anxiety on students as it takes sometimes too much time which results in boredom on students, or they feel worried about their answers during assessment as they do not feel competent in English class.

Comparably, there are also negative perceptions of teachers about defining homework practices in the present study. Teachers mostly emphasized that homework is useful in FLE in terms of various points mentioned before. On the other hand, there are also a few statements that present homework as a pointless activity depending on the indifference of the students towards the tasks. In contrast to the perceptions of participants (students and teachers) claiming that homework is pointless in learning English, various authorities on language teaching emphasize that even very little homework has a positive impact on students (Cooper, 2001), if it is compatible with the modern approaches in learning. The key role in perceptions about homework is pointed out in literature as teachers' preferences on various aspects (Farrow et al., 1999; Slavin, 1987; Güneyli and Demirel, 2006; Patall et al., 2008) like homework model or type of evaluation. The point to be considered in the present study might be the homework concept preferred by the teacher and its coherence with students' interests. Especially in

the secondary school level, attitudes of student against assignment vary according to content of given assignment with different interests and skills (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001). Again, it has been stated that the assignments given within the framework of traditional approaches have led to negative attitude against assignment (Kaplan, 2006; Corno, 2000). As a result, it is concluded that teachers' preferences about homework models on their lessons are directly affecting the students' attitude towards homework. Hence, it is suggested to follow modern understandings in education while implementing tasks in and outside the class (Rowell and Hong, 2002). For this reason, the present study also questioned the homework model preferences of English teachers and all the teachers identified that they prefer traditional models of homework which is similar to the results of the study demonstrating a vast majority of teachers do not search for different assignment models using progressive education methods even they do not observe any additional impact of individual homework model on learning (Haznedar, 2010). In contrast with the study claiming that teachers are indifferent to homework models coherent with modern approaches (North and Pillay, 2002) the teachers in the present study seem to be aware of various homework models that ensure motivation and enhances students' homework performance. The reason of following accustomed understandings in learning process and homework models is expressed as past habits and easiness of planning and implication of homework, which actually cannot be accepted as valid reasons to eliminate other understandings of homework effective in learning process as homework is followed mainly for the sake of students' improvement. As a result, homework practices and characteristics of preferred homework model should be shaped based on students needs in order to develop homework performance and accordingly, academic success in FLE.

From the perceptions of students on assignments, it is obvious that they are aware about the significance of homework for academic success and adopt it as a part of education process. A great amount of the participants regard assignments as enabling reinforcement and promoting self-responsibility which are actually important factors in succeeding language (Sallee and Rigler, 2008). In contrast, the data obtained from homework checklists and teacher's notes indicate that there is a

decline in completing assignments. Based on these points, designing a new homework model that eliminates the negative perceptions of students and corresponds to the modern approaches in FLE is considered as a solution for the situation, in light with the related literature underlining that homework practices improve the skills of learning continuously and develop other skills if it is consistent with students' interests and modern education (Güleç, 2014; Yapıcı, 1995; Lenehan et al., 1994; Xu, 2009; Slavin, 1987).

5.1.2. Student Ideas about Ideal Homework

In parallel with the findings of related studies (Collier, 2007; Cooper, 2001; Hizmetçi and İflazoğlu, 2006; Tan and Erdoğan, 2004), it is revealed that both teachers and students accept the importance of homework practices in English classes. However, there are problems about teachers' preferences on homework models that probably result in decline in completing homework among students as they do not get along with their preferences. In contrast with the study claiming that teachers are unaware of new understandings in homework (North and Pillay, 2002), even they know the fact that assignments promoting interaction and cooperation are welcomed warmly by the students as emphasized in former studies (Hong and Milgram, 1999; Taş, 2013; Köseoğlu, 2016), the teachers continue with individual-based homework because of habits and easiness in planning. On the other hand, it is identified in the study that traditional models of homework cause lack of motivation on students as most of the students complained about feeling uncomfortable and anxious at times of practice and assessment as it was also underlined in the former studies in literature (Kaplan, 2006; Açıkgöz, 1993; Corno, 2000). The perceptions of students were effective in realizing the situation about homework practices in the present study. Accordingly, even most of the students support that homework is required in English classes for various reasons discussed formerly, they do not always have the will to complete tasks as it was realized that they feel anxious and uncomfortable because of the competitive characteristics of individual homework practices. Especially students who feel inadequate in English perceive homework as a source of anxiety in the class. As a result, it is identified by the researcher that new understandings about homework

models should be improved to reduce the negative attitude towards English tasks, because the adopted homework model affects performance and accordingly, the academic success which is one of the common issues being discussed by authorities (Coutts, 2004; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002; Trautwein, et al., 2006).

Various studies have been conducted about homework types and modern understanding in homework preferences arguing that as homework is a crucial method in learning, it should be attached importance in the process in terms of practicing, designing or preferred model because most of the research conducted on homework emphasize that the style of task matters both for students' attitude and the performance on homework completion (Cheng et al., 2008; Hizmetçi, 2007; Rozier, 2003; Köseoğlu, 2016). Similar to related literature, it was also observed that homework performance indicates parallel results with the exam results of students. After analysing the data and interpreting the results about perceptions of homework by students, it was pointed out that there is a need for improvement in English homework in terms of preferred model and its characteristics. Based upon the literature claiming that the model of preferred homework plays a crucial role in students' performance (Trautwein et al., 2006; Rowell and Hong, 2002;) and stating that traditional homework models cause negative attitude against completing the tasks (Kaplan, 2006), the researcher gathered information about students' ideal model of assignments in order to create a suitable model of homework practices in English classes to improve homework performance. Findings showed that the most demanded characteristics about ideal homework were identified as promoting interaction, arousing interest, using target language. Students also claimed that homework should assist getting ready for the exams.

When the students were asked to define their ideal homework, they complained about tasks being boring and stated that they like homework practices that are entertaining and attractive. Thus, the findings about ideal homework are parallel to former studies that argue the importance of characteristics of homework and improvement of favourable homework practices in order to gain students' interest and accordingly enhance homework performance in English classes. In parallel

with the literature (Hughes et al., 2002; Yapıcı, 1995; Lenehan et al., 1994; Xu, 2009) emphasizing learners' preferences should be attached priority in homework practices, the students in the present study also underline that they welcome the tasks in English classes which appeal to their interests. From this point, if the assignment is full of theoretic questions and contains typical types of individual exercises, the students get bored and lose the desire to complete it. Thus, in order to improve homework performance in English classes, the tasks should be attractive and appealing for the new generation.

One of the opinions about ideal homework for students was determined as tasks should promote interaction during homework practice. Most of the students identified their ideal assignments as tasks that allow them to interact with each other. The main reason for this preference is mostly described as that language needs to be practiced in order to acquire it efficiently, as it was also supported by the studies about language learning (Demirel, 1989; Akin, 1998; Krashen & Terrel, 1983). The students believe that with interaction, also cooperation comes up among the learners. So, especially the students who do not trust themselves about English competency have the tendency to study with someone in order to complete the assignment. It is determined that assignments provide much more contribution for achievement when they promote cooperation compared with individual or competition-based assignments (Slavin, 1987). The tendency in acting with a community and fulfilling tasks within cooperation has always been present in the societies where humans live together (Johnson and Johnson, 1999). The students in the study feel more motivated while undertaking the responsibilities collectively similar with related literature (Johnson and Johnson, 1999; Güneşli & Demirel, 2006; Van Voorhis, 2011; Patall et al., 2008). Based on the opinions of students, cooperation ensures motivation among students, which was described formerly as one of the important factors in language learning that is accompanied by the preferred learning method (Dörnyei, 1994; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995). Similarly in the study, when a student completes the homework with the help of an individual, he/she feels confident about the task and becomes more willing to take part during practice. Moreover, students state that they might learn from each other's knowledge when there is an interaction and cooperation in the

study environment which decreases the feeling of competition among individuals that brings along anxiety and rivalry in the classroom. Hence, student-participants in the present study described one of the characteristics of ideal homework for English classes as paving the way for interaction among individuals. On the other hand they did not believe that it could be ensured in their classroom because of the competitive spirit among individuals.

Existence of communication in language learning process is mentioned by the authorities as one of the requested achievements almost in all of the studies about FLE (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Castle, 2004; Güneş, 2012). Along with interactive and cooperative assignments, the students also mentioned their desire about existence of communication in homework practices. Considering the expectations about FLE, as interaction and communication has become more of an issue in the information age especially for the new generation (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Fritz, Möllenberg & Chen, 2002; Altıntaş, 2000) the belief that individual exists only for himself and competes with other learners during the process are expected to decrease with the new approaches in learning. In fact, as pointed out in literature, the humanity has the tendency to have contact with others since early ages as a result of cooperation or completion of a duty (Bochner & Jones, 2003). As a result, the students become more interested in interactive assignments that allow them to communicate with each other and cooperate about the tasks that should be completed in homework practice rather than surviving individually. In line with those common points being suggested on various studies that learners promote working together (Slavin, 1987; Johnson and Johnson, 1999; Corno, 2000; Rozier, 2003) the students referred to in group-activities or peer tasks as an ideal English homework that requires communication among individuals and also promotes helping each other and reducing the probability of making mistakes.

Students get motivated when they have the opportunity to make use of different resources for their homework assignments (Zelyüt, 2017). Use of resources in homework practices and assessment of the tasks were also demanded as being cooperative and interactive by the students. Consequently, the students expressed that they prefer consulting an individual for homework rather than other resources

like the net, word lists or books. But only a few of them have the opportunity as there aren't any family members that can help them with English assignments. One of the important points in homework performance in English classes is related to homework assessment system (Wallinger, 2000; Keith, 1982; Chen and Ehrenberg, 1993). Considering the assessment of homework in the classroom, it was revealed that students support evaluating homework practices in order to find out the performance in English classes but the point is how the assessment is carried out. Most of the students expressed that they feel nervous when the teacher does direct assessment in the class or she wants them to read the answers aloud. The reason of the situation is expressed as having hesitations about their answers or there might students who did not complete the task. Hence, students offered interactive ways of assessments like intra-group control or holding discussions together with the class in order to evaluate the task. As it can be deduced from the results, the students feel necessity about assessment of homework assignments but if the assessment is conducted in a communicative way through feedback, discussions or group control, they feel more comfortable and willing to take part in the evaluation of answers as they do not feel alone and feel the courage of others.

Considered as one of the effective ways of permanent learning (Ekin, 1997), the students also emphasize that they are interested in homework providing them to use the target language, which was actually unexpected by the researcher because the students behaved timid during the lessons. It is also estimated that homework models providing cooperation and working all together may eliminate the hesitation of students about English. As language is a tool emerging as a result of interaction and used for this purpose, directing individual to communicate and focusing on use of language in homework are of great importance in English competency (Wallinger, 2008; Damar, Esim & Korkmaz, 2017). Moreover, as communicating worldwide and being aware of all the parts of the world became possible thanks to the improvements in technology, the students are actually are keen on utilizing the target language to catch up with the things they are interested in. They are mostly interested with the practical part of English and they got bored with the tasks when there is no active usage of language. That causes indifference

towards homework practices and accordingly results problems in homework performance in English classes.

Different from the aforementioned points, some of the students also stated that assignments should include tasks that assist for the preparation of placement exams. The reason of that might be the education system in Turkey that makes the students become competent and test their competency with multiple choice questions. The fact about placement tests actually contradicts adopted teaching approach for language learning as it is provided by most of the authorities that FLE should relieve anxiety, promote interaction and make students use language mutually, rather than prove their own knowledge to others and keep it only for themselves (Güneyli and Demirel, 2006, Çelikten et al., 2005). As being one of the elements of language education process, homework practices should also be appropriate for learners' social and cultural conditions and give them opportunity to share their knowledge with other learners by interaction (MoNE, 2018).

As it can be concluded from the students' perceptions of an ideal homework, in parallel with related literature (Açıkgöz, 1993; Johnson and Johnson, 1999; Romsdahl and Hill, 2012) English assignments should be interactive practices that promote cooperation and communication among students. As a result, they indicated that they feel motivated when they study together with a group or society and have the opportunity to use English as a tool for communication rather than forming sentences or memorising vocabularies and deal with them individually. Moreover, making use of target language showed up as one of the common ideas about ideal homework practices. This could be followed by watching online videos or preparing dialogues collectively with a friend. Classroom observations and homework checklists also support students' opinions about ideal homework definition for English classes which will be interpreted later on. When the teacher gives an assignment that should be completed through interaction with family members or friends, the rate of homework completing increases that week. Similarly, the students are more willing to take part in homework evaluation if the task was desired to complete together with a friend.

Based on the ideas about redesigning homework practices in English as a foreign language classes, it is pointed out that the common homework model is far from the ideal homework of students. Thus, the researcher searched for the new perspectives to turn the scales about homework performance in English classes. As the characteristics of CoL understanding match with the ideas of students' ideal homework, it is estimated that promoting learning communities in homework practice might enhance homework performances and accordingly academic success of students.

5.1.3. The Impacts of Learning Communities-Based Homework in EFL Classes

After the definition of ideal homework practices by the students of English class, a literature review was conducted in order to arrange a new homework model that prioritizes communication and cooperation among individuals and reduces the feeling of becoming isolated and consequently anxiety towards the lesson. In line with the related studies and review of literature, practices correspond to modern understandings in education were realized crucial and therewith it was foreseen that learning method and elements in process might be deployed favourable (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998; Güneyli and Demirel, 2006; Papandreu 1991; Muijs and Reynolds, 2001). Analysing the answers and searching through the related literature, the researcher came up a number of studies about learning approaches and related homework models improving homework performances (Rozier, 2003; Eccles, 1983; Johnson and Johnson, 1999; Güneyli & Demirel, 2006; Van Voorhis, 2011; Patall et al., 2008). Considering the statements of students about ideal homework, designing a new model based on learning communities is envisaged as having an impact on homework performance in English classes. CoL understanding came to be known with the new improvements in education and mostly adopted to developments of professions or organizations in society (Bell, 2005; Willits & Brennan, 2016; Hord, 2004). When the impacts of CoL-based homework practices were analysed based on students' reflections and documents presenting homework performance, the new homework model proved significant results in terms of academic (cognitive), personal and social developments of

students when compared with former homework model being practiced in English classes.

When considering academic development, the students state that with the understanding of creating communities in homework practices, their performances on completing tasks and their academic success has increased. It is revealed that with the help of CoL-based homework, students got higher grades in exams in accordance with homework performances which represent parallel results with the related literature (Kuh, G. et al., 2005). Moreover, the findings are consistent with the results of similar studies claiming that developing learning methods that appeal to students' point of view increases the academic performance of individuals (Palloff and Pratt, 1999; Rovai and Lucking, 2000; Willits and Brennan, 2016; Dörnyei, 1994; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995). According to the students' perceptions, the new homework model encouraged them to exchange their knowledge with the community rather than keep it for themselves, which enhanced brainstorming about the task and helps them to learn from each other. As it was underlined in literature (Özben, 2006; Sallee and Rigler, 2008; Spitzberg and Thorndike, 1992) sharing information and studying together in a society provides permanent learning and reduces the possibility of repeating mistakes, which was also pointed out by the student-participants. Most of the students were satisfied with CoL-based homework model as they believed that thanks to acting with a community, they have the chance to recognize their mistakes and exchange information which enhances the academic success of every individual. Besides, the feeling of being a part of a society caused the students to feel the responsibility to contribute to the task, which enhances their homework performance as the tasks are required to be completed for the sake of the community and the individual implicitly, as a principle of learning communities (Boyer, 1990; Bell, 2005; Wenger et al., 2002).

Along with academic development, there were also improvements in personal and social aspects as they became aware of unity and gain sense of society (Saban, 2005; Senemoğlu, 1997; Corno, 2000). As expressed formerly, CoL has been defined as one of the current perspectives in education and it emphasizes acting together because as societies are interconnected in today's appreciation,

individuals in a process should also be considered as being dependent to each other during a progress (Aydın, 2002; Harasim et al., 1995; Yavuz, 2016). Besides, modern understandings in education aimed to improve society rather than focus only on individual, which results in one for all, all for one awareness (Çelikten et al., 2005). In parallel with the statements from the literature, students emphasize that CoL-based homework practices represent a positive impact in terms of social development. In learning communities-based homework practices, completing the task is a process that occurs by forming ideas and defending them, focusing on problem and exchanging ideas with the other individuals, aiming at problem solving and active participation. As it is believed in learning communities that everyone should give shoulder to the tasks, students' collective responsibility enhances. During the practice of new homework model, it was observed that the communities and individuals became attached to each other and adopted the feeling of building a society together. After designing homework practices based on CoL and implementing them in English classes, it was not only stated by the students that it enhances collaboration among individuals, promotes collective responsibility of them and empowers their sense of community, but also the observations of researcher pointed out that learning communities resulted in a significant improvement in terms of social consciousness of individuals. Thanks to enabling communities in fulfilling homework practices, students become aware of being a part of a society and adopting common goals collectively, as one of the principles of building a learning community. In order to be a part of the community, they made an effort to communicate, which was actually one of the purposes of modern learning approaches in FLE, defined as an effective way of acquiring language (Rohde, 1996; Fritz, Möllenberg & Chen, 2002; Crystal, 1996). Hence, according to the findings, as communication is one of the principles of becoming a community, the competitive environment that caused anxiety and reluctance especially on the students who feel insufficient in language learning gave place to an interactive and collaborative environment that prioritizes the benefit of community at first place, as it was also emphasized being crucial in related literature promoting interpersonal communication in language learning and preferred elements (Altıntaş, 2000; Council of Europe, 2001; Saraswathi, 2004; Truchot, 2002; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

As identified one of the upsides for CoL based homework practices in the present study, another significant difference was identified under the heading of personal development after examining the findings from students. In line with the literature that suggest studying together with a group improves self confidence and as a result, individuals start to express themselves in a society and become socialized (Marlowe and Page, 1998; Ulutaş and Dinçer, 2003), the students stated that with the acceptance of belonging to a community, their self-confidence increased as they did not feel alone in the process. Also, as it has been proven by authorities that the learning communities increase the intellectual communication between student and teacher, make individual be aware of himself and his environment and strengthen the ability of critical thinking (Butler and Dawkins, 2007; Mitchell and Sackney, 2011), the participants in the present study pointed out that with being a part of a community, they become conscious about their own being in a collective environment. Besides, as the tasks that are completed with the community were presented in the classroom, even there were some hesitations at the beginning of the practice, their shyness reduced and they got used to express themselves as one of the members of a community. Apart from these, students also stated that the accuracy level of their homework and their knowledge increased with the help of discussions and exchanging information during homework completion and presentations, which coincides with the related literature stating that acting collaboratively enhances individual's self-confidence (Reinhardt & Zander 2011).

Finally, there were also students who underlined some weaknesses about learning communities based homework practices in English classes. Even they were not common for most of the students, they faced with some problems about presentatitons and arranging the meetings for the community members. As stated earlier, presentatitons were mostly defined as having positive impact on individuals especially in terms of personal development. In contrast, there were also students who felt worried about doing presentations together with the community during homework evaluations. Another point that caused some problems in CoL based homework completion was about the dissatisfaction of the students in terms of determined community members by the teacher or the times for meetings to complete the task with their friends. When compared with

traditional homework model, it is clearly revealed that the drawbacks of learning communities based assignments are quite less. Thus, students were pleased with the redesigned model of homework based on CoL understanding and when compared with common homework model, it provided a significant difference in the academic, social and personal development of students.

Considering the statements of students and comparing the results from two semesters in terms of homework performance and exams, it was concluded that homework model has a crucial role in attitudes of individuals towards tasks and their homework performances. As it is clearly demonstrated that traditional homework types result in negative situations in homework practices, new assignments should be designed that appeal to students' perspectives and modern understandings adopted to strengthen FLE. Moreover, as homework is defined mostly as an integral part of learning process in literature, its place and characteristics should be identified clearly in the curriculum designed for English classes in order to prevent inconsistent practices of homework.

5.2. Implications

The implications for further practice and research are handled in the coming part based on the limitations and encountered situations through the study.

5.2.1. Implications for Further Practice

The aim of the current study was to improve homework performances by designing a new homework model based on learning communities understanding as its characteristics correspond to modern approaches in FLE and students needs. The section presents several implications for practice in the context of FLE and curriculum.

Firstly, as it is revealed by authorities in literature, the climate and characteristics of learning environment affect learners' attitudes towards the class and academic performance accordingly. Similarly, the elements of process are shaped based on

these aspects. As a result, providing learning environments that are welcomed by students and designing appealing assignments should be given more importance in order to get desired results.

The study starts with detailed information about homework assignments in EFL classes and community of learners understanding in education. The study can be used as a guide by teachers of English facing problems with the completion of homework. CoL-based homework model and the activities followed during the process can be transferred into different levels in school settings. As the studies are rare in this area in Turkey, this study can ensure an example of homework model in EFL classes, implementation process and the reactions of the students.

Nevertheless, the teacher should be aware of the difficulties about the follow-up in CoL based homework practices. The teachers should be watchful during the implementation of homework assignments as there can be students who do not attend the community in meeting sessions or cannot take the pace in community.

Moreover, the teacher should watch the presentations with care and take notes in order to see the students' activeness during the session and warn if there is an unpredictable situation. Lastly, the physical conditions of the class should be suitable for CoL based homework process as presentations and holding discussions are integral parts of the process. So, there should be a smart board or a computer as there are authentic materials like videos or audios represented during presentations and large classroom to place the communities together in order to exchange ideas.

The findings of the present action research provide further implications for the curriculum planners, too. The assignments should be placed in the curriculum for FLE with a clear definition and homework practices should be redesigned according to the modern understandings in teaching-learning process. The teacher training programs should be reorganised including ideal homework models in English classes for students. By considering those issues, it is highly possible that homework practices provide expected results in English classes.

5.2.2. Implications for Further Research

The present study is an action research offering improvements on homework practices to the class where the study was conducted. Studying the improvement of homework assignments for 8th graders in English classes provides the curriculum developers as well as the teachers with essential insight on how to design a new homework model that promotes academic performance of students.

Begin with, as the school was a secondary school and the teacher-researcher tried to improve homework performances in FLE classes, this study can only transferred to English classes in secondary school settings. Even so, a similar study can be conducted in various subject fields. Furthermore, it can be repeated with a whole school and more teachers can reflect on their homework preferences at classes and improve their homework model based on learning communities understanding.

Besides, an experimental study can be conducted by creating a control group to observe the contributions of CoL based assignments to homework performance and academic achievement. It can also help to decide whether traditional or modern approaches are effective on homework performance and consequently on academic success and provides determining effective homework models in foreign language classes.

As there was a limitation about the timing because of a determined lesson plan for English lessons, the teacher decided on one lesson in a week to conduct homework presentations and discussions among communities about their tasks. In order to include more discussions and get information about the impact of learning communities on homework performance, the hour might be increased.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARASTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 79 59
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

Sayı: 28620816 / 695

03 OCAK 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

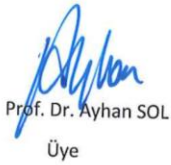
Sayın Prof. Dr. Ali YILDIRIM

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Eslem AYIK ŞORA'nın "Öğrenme Grubu Odaklı Ödev: 8 sınıf İngilizce dersinde ödev uygulamalarının analizi, yeniden düzenlenmesi ve değerlendirilmesine yönelik bir eylem araştırması" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2018-EGT-207 protokol numarası ile araştırma yapması onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımla bilgilerinize sunarım.


Prof. Dr. Tülin GENÇOZ

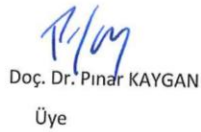
Başkan


Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL
Üye

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR
Üye


Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI (4.)
Üye


Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
Üye


Doç. Dr. Pinar KAYGAN
Üye


Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
Üye

B. APPROVAL FROM PROVINCIAL DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION



T.C.
BURSA VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 86896125-605.01-E.4796058
Konu : Eslem AYIK ŞORA'nın Araştırma İzni

06.03.2019

MÜDÜRLÜK MAKAMINA

İlgi : Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın Araştırma, Yarışma ve Sosyal Etkinlik İzinleri konulu 22/08/2017 tarihli ve 2017/25 sayılı Genelgesi.

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim programı yüksek lisans öğrencisi Eslem AYIK ŞORA'nın "Öğrenme Grubu Odaklı Ödev: 8. Sınıf İngilizce Derslerinde Ödev Uygulamalarının Analizi, Yeniden Düzenlenmesi ve Değerlendirilmesine Yönelik Bir Eylem Araştırması" konulu araştırma isteği Eslem AYIK ŞORA'nın 28/02/2019 tarihli ve 4405901 sayılı yazısı ile bildirilmektedir.

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim programı yüksek lisans öğrencisi Eslem AYIK ŞORA'nın "Öğrenme Grubu Odaklı Ödev: 8. Sınıf İngilizce Derslerinde Ödev Uygulamalarının Analizi, Yeniden Düzenlenmesi ve Değerlendirilmesine Yönelik Bir Eylem Araştırması" konulu araştırmasını Yıldırım ilçesi Semiha Mustafa Özer Ortaokulu'nda uygulama yapma isteği ilimizde oluşturulan "Araştırma Değerlendirme Komisyonu" tarafından incelenerek değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma ile ilgili çalışmanın okul/kurumlardaki eğitim öğretim faaliyetleri aksatılmadan, araştırma formlarının ahl okul müdürlüklerince görülerek ve gönüllülük esası ile okul müdürlüklerinin gözetim ve sorumluluğunda ilgi Genelge çerçevesinde uygulanması ayrıca araştırma sonuçlarının Müdürlüğümüz ile paylaşılması komisyonumuzca uygun görülmektedir.

Makamlarınızca da uygun görülmesi halinde olurlarınıza arz ederim.

Ekrem KOZ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdür Yardımcısı

OLUR
06.03.2019

Sabahattin DÜLGER
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürü

Adres : Hocaşan Mh. İlkbahar Cad. No:38
(Yeni Hükümet Konağı A Blok) 16050/Osmangazi/BURSA
Telefon No:(0224) 445 16 00 Fax: 445 18 10
E-posta: arge16@meb.gov.tr İnternet Adresi: http://bursa.meb.gov.tr

Bilgi İçin : Leyla DİKİCİ
VHKİ
(0224) 215 25 39

Bu evrak güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır. <https://evraksorgu.meb.gov.tr> adresinden 9cc2-c3a9-3e3a-80f7-573a kodu ile teyit edilebilir

C. PARENTAL APPROVAL FORM

Veli Onay Mektubu

Sayın Veliler,

Ben Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim programı Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Eslem AYIK ŞORA. Prof. Dr. Cennet ENGİN DEMİR danışmanlığındaki yüksek lisans tezim kapsamında bir araştırma yürütmekteyim. Çalışmanın amacı, öğrenme grubu odaklı İngilizce ödevlerinin öğrenme-öğretme ve ödev performansına etkisini belirlemektir. Bu amaca ulaşmak için çocuklarınızın dönem içerisinde ve sonunda ödev algılarını, öğrenme stillerini ve öğrenme grubu odaklı ödev modeli ile ilgili duygu ve düşüncelerini belirlemek amacıyla bazı kısa soruları cevaplamaları, görüşme veya değerlendirmeler (yazılı/sözlü) yapmalarına ihtiyaç duymaktayım.

Katılmasına izin verdiğiniz takdirde çocuğunuz Yabancı Dil (İngilizce) dersini aldığı 2018 yılı güz ve 2019 yılı bahar dönemi boyunca farklılaştırılmış (bireysel ve öğrenme grubu odaklı) ödev etkinliklerine katılım gösterecektir. Yöntemin ve çocuğunuzun cevaplayacağı soruların onun psikolojik gelişimine olumsuz etkisi olmayacağından emin olabilirsiniz. Çocuğunuzun değerlendirmeleri ve cevapları kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve elde edilen cevaplar sadece bilimsel araştırma amacıyla kullanılacaktır. Bu formu imzaladıktan sonra çocuğunuz katılımcılıktan ayrılma hakkına sahiptir. Araştırma sonuçlarının özeti tarafımızdan sizlere ulaştırılacaktır. Çocuğunuzun araştırmaya katılmasına izin vererek sağlayacağımız bilgiler ödev uygulamalarına ilişkin yöntemlerinin geliştirilmesi ve ödev verimliliğinin artırılmasını etkileyen faktörlerin saptanmasına önemli bir katkıda bulunacaktır. Araştırmayla ilgili sorularınızı aşağıdaki e-posta adresini veya telefon numarasını kullanarak bana yöneltebilirsiniz.

Saygılarımla, Eslem AYIK ŞORA
Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi/ ODTÜ, Ankara.
e-posta: eşlem.ayik@metu.edu.tr

Lütfen bu araştırmaya katılmak konusundaki tercihinizi aşağıdaki seçeneklerden size en uygun gelenin altına imzanızı atarak belirtiniz ve bu formu geri gönderiniz.

A) Bu araştırmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak çocuğum'nın da katılımcı olmasına izin veriyorum. Çocuğumun çalışmayı istediği zaman yarıda kesip bırakabileceğini biliyorum ve verdiği bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı olarak kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Veli Adı-Soyadı:

İmza:

B) Bu çalışmaya çocuğum'nın katılımcı olmasına izin vermiyorum.

Veli Adı-Soyadı:

İmza:

D. TEACHER CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim programı Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Eslem AYIK ŞORA tarafından Prof. Dr. Cennet ENGİN DEMİR danışmanlığındaki yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form, sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, öğrenme topluluğu odaklı İngilizce ödev modelinin öğrenme sürecine ve ödev performansına etkisini belirlemektir.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz takdirde, Yabancı Dil (İngilizce) dersini verdiğiniz 2018 yılı güz ve 2019 yılı bahar dönemi boyunca ödev etkinlikleri ve bu etkinliklere katılım durumuyla ilgili gözlemlerinizi paylaşacaksınız. Sizin de gözlemlerinizi hareketle, uygulanmak istenen farklılaştırılmış ödev etkinliklerinin İngilizce dersine ve ödev performansı durumuna etkilerini karşılaştırarak ödev kavramının derslerimiz için daha verimli bir yöntem olarak kullanabilmenin yollarını araştıracağız. Bu farklılaştırmanın sonuçlarını değerlendirebilmek ve uygulamaya koyabilmek için derslerinizde ödevin yeri ve önemi, öğrencilerinizin ödevlere tepkileri ve tutumları ve farklı ödev modelleriyle ilgili düşüncelerinizi belirlemek amacıyla bazı kısa soruları cevaplamanız, değerlendirmeler yapmanız istenecektir. Görüşmeler daha sonra içerik analizi ile değerlendirilmek üzere kayıt altına alınacaktır.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Araştırma genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular veya uygulamalar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplamayı yarıda bırakıp çalışmadan ayrılmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda araştırmacıya çalışmadan çıkmak istediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Araştırma sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Eğitim Bilimleri bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Prof. Dr. Cennet ENGİN DEMİR (e-posta: cennet@metu.edu.tr) ya da yüksek lisans öğrencisi Eslem AYIK ŞORA (e-posta: eslem.ayik@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

İsim- Soyisim:

Tarih:

İmza:

E. STUDENT CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

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Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

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Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

İsim- Soyisim:

Tarih:

İmza:

F. SEMI- STRUCTURED TEACHER INTERVIEW

Araştırma Sorusu: 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersinde ödev uygulamalarına ilişkin öğretmen ve öğrenci algıları nelerdir?

Okul: [REDACTED] Ortaokulu

Tarih ve Saat: _____

GİRİŞ

Merhaba, ben Eslem AYIK ŞORA. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim programı Yüksek Lisans öğrencisiyim 8. sınıf İngilizce dersinde uygulanan ödev modelinin analizi, öğrenme toplulukları yaklaşımına göre yeniden düzenlenmesi ve değerlendirilmesine yönelik bir araştırma yapıyorum ve sizinle bu konuda görüşmek istiyorum. Bu konudaki düşüncelerinizi, gerçekleştirdiğiniz uygulamalarınızı, gözlemlerinizi ve önerilerinizi benimle paylaşmanız durumunda 8. sınıf İngilizce dersinde ödev uygulamalarına ilişkin öğretmen ve öğrencilerin algıları ve farklılaştırılmış ödev yaklaşım ve modellerinin etkilerinin açıklanmasına katkıda bulunmuş olacaksınız. Görüşmedeki ifadelerinizin tümü gizli tutulacaktır. Katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.

- ✓ Görüşme sürecinde vereceğiniz cevapların tümü gizli tutulacaktır. Bu bilgilere araştırmacı dışında herhangi biri ulaşamaz. Araştırma sonuçlarında bireylerin ismi kullanılmayacak, araştırmacı tarafından gizlenecektir.
- ✓ Görüşme sorularına geçmeden önce aklınıza takılan ya da sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir nokta var mı?
- ✓ Görüşmeyi izniniz dâhilinde kaydetmek istiyorum. Mümkün müdür?
- ✓ Görüşmemiz en az yarım saat kadar sürecektir. İzninizle sorulara geçiyorum.

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Ödev deyince aklınıza gelen ifadeler nelerdir? Ödev dersleriniz için ne ifade etmektedir?
2. İngilizce ödevlerinin, öğrencilerinize katkı sağladığını düşünüyor musunuz? Cevabınız evetse ne tür katkılar sağladığını gözlemlediniz?
3. Verdiğiniz ödevlerin, öğrencilerin derse karşı motivasyonunda ne gibi sonuçlara yol açtığını gözlemlediniz?
 - Motive olma konusunda ödev konusunun etkisi olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?

- Motive olma konusunda farklı yaklaşımların etkisi neler olabilir?
4. Öğrencilerin ödev performanslarını arttırmaları için yaptığınız çalışmalar nelerdir?
- Yaptığınız çalışmalar ne gibi sonuçlar ortaya çıkardı?
 - Yaptığınız çalışmanın süreklilik durumu nasıldır?
5. Verdiğiniz ödevlerin ne tür ödevler olduğunu tanımlayabilir misiniz?
- Bu türü/ türleri seçmenizin sebebi nedir?
 - Dersinizde bireysel ödevler ve grup uygulama ödevlerini karşılaştırdığınızda çoğunlukla hangisini tercih edersiniz? Sebebiyle açıklar mısınız? Branşınızın her iki yaklaşım açısından esnekliği nasıldır?
6. Ödevlendirme yaparken ne gibi özellikleri göz önünde bulundurursunuz? (öğrenci, okul, sınıf, konu)
- Bu özellikler, ödevlendirme konusunda ne gibi farklılıklara yol açtı?
7. Ödev verirken kaynak olarak ne kullanıyorsunuz? (ders kitabı, ekstra kaynak ise belirtiniz)
- Kullandığınız kaynağı seçmenizin sebebi nedir?
 - Farklı kaynaklardan verdiğiniz ödevleri karşılaştırdığınızda sonuçlar arasındaki denge nasıldır?
8. Ödev performansı konusunda ne tür problemler yaşıyorsunuz? (Ör: Kaynak problemi, Başkasının yapması, konu eksikliği, niteliksiz cevaplar)
- Karşılaştığınız problemlerle ilgili ne tür çözüm yöntemleri uyguladınız?
9. Düzenli olarak ödevini tamamlayan öğrencilerin oranı ortalama nedir?
- Bu sonucun sebepleri neler olabilir?
10. Verilen ödevlerin verimli bir şekilde tamamlanmamasının sebebi sizce neler olabilir?
- Verimli tamamlanması için nasıl değişiklikler yapılabilir?
 - Çeşitli ödev yaklaşımlarıyla ilgili neler biliyorsunuz?
11. İngilizce Öğretim programında ödevlerin önemi sizce nedir?
- Öğretim programınızda ödevlere yer verilmesi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
12. Sizce ideal bir ödev nasıl olmalıdır. Kısaca açıklar mısınız?
- 13. Ödev uygulamalarıyla ilgili önerileriniz nelerdir?**

G. SEMI- STRUCTURED STUDENT PRE- INTERVIEW

Öğrenci Ön Görüşme Formu

Araştırma Sorusu:

- 1) 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersinde ödev uygulamalarına ilişkin öğretmen ve öğrencilerin algıları nelerdir?
- 2) Öğrenciler ideal İngilizce ödevlerini nasıl tanımlamaktadır?

Okul: [REDACTED] Ortaokulu

Tarih ve Saat: _____

GİRİŞ: Merhaba, adım Eslem AYIK ŞORA ve [REDACTED] Ortaokulunda İngilizce Öğretmeni olarak görev yapıyorum. Yüksek Lisans Tezim kapsamında 8. Sınıf İngilizce Dersi ödev uygulamaları ve grup odaklı yaklaşımın ödev uygulamalarına etkisi ile ilgili bir çalışma yürütmekteyim. Bu görüşmenin amacı, 8. Sınıf İngilizce ödev uygulamalarına ilişkin öğrencilerin algılarını incelemektir. Araştırmada elde edilecek sonuçların, öncelikle 8. Sınıf İngilizce Dersi ödev algısının değişmesine, 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersi ödev performansının artırılmasına ve grup odaklı yaklaşımın geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunacağına inanıyorum.

- ✓ Görüşme sürecinde vereceğiniz cevapların tümü gizli tutulacaktır. Bu bilgilere araştırmacı dışında herhangi biri ulaşamaz. Araştırma sonuçlarında bireylerin ismi kullanılmayacak, araştırmacı tarafından gizlenecektir.
- ✓ Görüşme sorularına geçmeden önce aklınıza takılan ya da sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir nokta var mı?
- ✓ Görüşmeyi izniniz dâhilinde kaydetmek istiyorum. Mümkün müdür?
- ✓ Görüşmemiz en az yarım saat kadar sürecektir. İzninizle sorulara geçiyorum.

Eslem AYIK ŞORA- Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi/ Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim

ARAŞTIRMA SORULARI

1. ‘Ödev’ kelimesi sana ne ifade ediyor? Birkaç kelimeyle tanımlar mısın?
 - Ödevin ders için ne gibi bir önemi olduğunu düşünüyorsun?
 - Ödevlerin hayatında ne gibi etkileri oluyor?

2. İngilizce ödevlerini yaparken ne tür kaynaklardan yararlanırsın?
 - Bu kaynaklar ödevini tamamlamanda ne tür kolaylıklar sağlar?
 - Çeşitli kaynaklar kullanmak ödev performansını ne oranda etkiler?
 - Farklı kaynaklar kullanmak ödev karşı tutumunu nasıl etkiler?
 - Ödev tamamlarken kimlerden yardım istersin?
3. Derste öğrendiklerin ve ders kitabındaki bilgiler, verilen ödevini tek başına tamamlaman için yeterli oluyor mu?
 - Ders kitabındaki ödev bölümleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?
 - Ödevlerini bireysel olarak tamamlamanda öğrendiklerinin ve kitabının yeterli olma oranı nedir?
4. Verilen ödevleri tamamlaman ne kadar sürüyor? Bu süre sence fazla mı? Neden?
 - Ödev tamamlama sürene etki eden durumlar nelerdir?
5. Ödevlerinin kontrolünün nasıl yapılmasını istersin? Neden?
 - Ödev kontrolü yapılması ödev yapma performansını nasıl etkiler?
6. Tamamladığın ödevi arkadaşlarınla karşılaştırır mısın ya da cevaplarını paylaşıp mısın?
 - Bu durum derse ve ödev tamamlamaya karşı isteğini nasıl etkiler?
7. İngilizce ödevlerinin okul başarısına etkisi nedir?
 - Derste ödev kavramı olmamasının sence ne tür etkileri olur?
8. İngilizce ödevlerinin sana okul dışındaki faydaları neler olabilir?
 - Bireysel ödevlerin sana etkileri nelerdir? (akademik, motivasyon, rekabet, verimlilik)
9. Ne tür İngilizce ödevlerini seviyorsun?
 - Ödev yapma isteğin verilen ödev türüne göre değişiyor mu? Örnek verebilir misin?
10. İngilizce ödevlerini neden yapıyorsun? Sebeplerini sıralayabilir misin?
 - Ödevini tamamlamadığında kendini kime karşı sorumlu hissediyorsun?
 - Verilen ödevlerin bireysel olması seni ödev yapmaya teşvik ediyor mu?
 - Ödevlerin grup odaklı olsaydı, ödev tamamlama sorumluluğunu nasıl etkilerdi?
11. Ödev yapmaya başlamadan önce, konu tekrarı yapar mısın? Nedenini açıklar mısın?
 - Konu tekrarını kimlerle yaparsın?
 - Konu tekrarı için yararlandığın kaynak kim/ nedir?
12. İngilizce ödevleri nasıl olsun isterdin?
 - Yaptığın ödev tanımının uygulanabilirliği hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?
13. İngilizce öğretmeni olsaydın ödev konusundaki tutumun nasıl olurdu?
 - Ödev değerlendirme kriterin neler olurdu?
 - Neden ödev verirdin?
 - Neden ödev vermezdin?

H. TEACHERS' OBSERVATION FORM

Ders Gözlem Formu

Sınıf: 8/

Tarih ve Saat:

Amaç: Bu gözlemin amacı, grup odaklı ödev uygulamalarının İngilizce dersine etkisini, öğrencilerin tamamladıkları ödevlerini öğrenme topluluğulya beraber sunarken sergiledikleri tavırlar ve oluşturulan toplulukların birbirleriyle iletişim şeklini gözlemlemek ve öğrenme topluluklarının ödev ve derse yansısıyla ilgili bilgi edinmektir.

Araştırma Sorusu: 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersinde öğrenme grubu odaklı anlayışa göre düzenlenen ödev modelinin İngilizce öğrenme sürecine etkileri nelerdir?

Veri Toplama:

Ortaokul 8. Sınıf düzeyinde İngilizce dersinde uygulanan grup odaklı ödev faaliyetlerinin öğrenciler arasında nasıl karşılandığı, sınıf içinde etkileşime ve işbirliğine dair neler kattığını keşfetmek için, 8 hafta boyunca öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödevlerin sunulduğu ders saatlerinde, öğrenme topluluklarının sınıf içinde yansımalarına dair gözlem yapılacaktır. Uygulayıcı tarafından notlar alınacak, gerektiğinde ses kayıt cihazı kullanılacaktır.

Gözlem Notları:

I. SEMI- STRUCTURED STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Araştırma Soruları:

- 3- 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersinde öğrenme grubu odaklı anlayışa göre düzenlenen ödev modelinin İngilizce öğrenme sürecine etkileri nelerdir?

Okul: [REDACTED] Ortaokulu

Tarih ve Saat: _____

GİRİŞ

Merhaba, adım Eslem AYIK ŞORA ve [REDACTED] Ortaokulunda İngilizce Öğretmeni olarak görev yapıyorum. Yüksek Lisans Tezim kapsamında 8. Sınıf İngilizce Dersi ödev uygulamaları ve öğrenme toplulukları odaklı yaklaşımın öğrencinin ödev ve akademik performansına etkisi ile ilgili bir çalışma yürütmekteyim. Bu görüşmenin amacı, bu yaklaşımı İngilizce Dersi ödevlerinde uygulamalı olarak gerçekleştiren 8. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin tecrübelerini öğrenmek ve yaklaşımla ilgili düşüncelerini almaktır. Araştırmada elde edilecek sonuçların, öncelikle 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersi ödev performansının artırılmasına ve öğrenme toplulukları anlayışının geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunacağına inanıyorum.

- ✓ Görüşme öğrenme topluluğunuzdaki bireylerle beraber interaktif olarak yapılacaktır.
- ✓ Görüşme sürecinde vereceğiniz cevapların tümü gizli tutulacaktır. Bu bilgilere araştırmacı dışında herhangi biri ulaşamaz. Araştırma sonuçlarında bireylerin ismi kullanılmayacak, araştırmacı tarafından gizlenecektir.
- ✓ Görüşme sorularına geçmeden önce aklınıza takılan ya da sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir nokta var mı?
- ✓ Görüşmeyi izniniz dâhilinde kaydetmek istiyorum. Mümkün müdür?
- ✓ Görüşmemiz en az yarım saat kadar sürecektir. İzninizle sorulara geçiyorum.

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Ödev kelimesi sana ne ifade ediyor?
 - Ödev konusunda nasıl bir öğrenci olduğunu düşünüyorsun?
 - İngilizce ödevin olduğunda nasıl hissediyorsun?

2. İngilizce dersi ve ödev ilişkisi hakkındaki neler söyleyebilirsin?
 - Verilen ödevlerin ders başarınızla nasıl bir ilgisi vardır?
 - Birey odaklı İngilizce ödevlerinin İngilizce dersine katkıları nelerdi?
3. Öğrenme toplulukları sana ne ifade ediyor?
 - Topluluk olma bilincin sınıfınızda nasıl karşılandı? Artı ve eksileri neler oldu?
4. Öğrenme topluluğuna dahil olmak seni ödev yapman konusunda nasıl etkiliyor?
 - Ödevlerin topluluk odaklı anlayışa göre yapılmasının ödev performansındaki etkisi nelerdir?
 - Öğretmeninizin ödev modelini değiştirmesindeki amaç ne olabilir?
5. Ortak çalışma gerçekleştirdiğiniz zamanlarda neler yaptığınızdan bahsedebilir misin?
 - Bu süreçte uyguladığınız plan neydi?
 - Aranızdaki dengeyi nasıl sağladınız? İş bölümünüzde ne tür yollar izlediniz?
 - Oluşan engellerle nasıl başa çıktınız? (yer, zaman, konu eksikliği, grup içi anlaşmazlık vs.)
 - Grup üyelerini topluluk olma bilinci konusunda nasıl değerlendiriyorsun?
6. Katılımcısı olduğunuz öğrenme toplulukları hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
 - Olumlu ve olumsuz yönlerine tecrübelerinden örnekler verebilir misin?
 - Öğrenme topluluklarının ödev uygulamalarında kullanılmasıyla ilgili düşüncelerin nelerdir?
 - Bu ödev modeli, 8. Sınıf öğrencilerinin derse karşı tutumunu nasıl etkiler?
 - Öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödevlerin bireylerarası ve sınıf içi etkileri neler oldu?
7. Ödev sunum çalışması hakkında düşüncelerin nelerdir?
8. İngilizce derslerindeki ödev modeli ilgili yapılan değişiklikleri düşündüğünde, birey odaklı ödevle öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödev arasındaki farklar nedir?
 - Hangi yöntemde ödev yapma oranının arttı? Neden?
 - Hangi yöntemde ödev tamamlama isteğinin arttı? Neden?
 - Hangi ödev modelini tercih edersin?
9. Uygulanan ödev modeliyle ilgili değiştirmek ya da eklemek istediğin şeyler neler olurdu?

J. STUDENT SELF- REFLECTION REPORT

Öğrenci Yansıtma Raporu

Merhaba,

Bu raporda ödev topluluğundan arkadaşlarınızla beraber sorumlu olduğun ödevi tamamlama ve sunumu ile ilgili tecrübelerini, düşüncelerini, sevdiğin ya da sevmediğin yönleri, sana neler kattığını ve bunların haricinde de paylaşmak istediklerini ifade etmeni istiyorum. Yazdıkların hiçbir şekilde ders notunu ya da sunum ve ödev uygulama performans değerlendirmeni etkilemeyecektir. Kimliğinle ilgili herhangi bir bilgi talep edilmemektedir.

Teşekkürler.

K: TABLE OF CODES EMERGED FROM TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Major Codes for ‘Homework Perceptions’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Perceptions of Teachers | Reinforcement |
| | St’s responsibility |
| | source of motivation |
| | Pointless |
| | promoter of success |
| | tool of assessment |

Major Codes for ‘Homework Preferences’ Theme

| Themes | Codes |
|--|-----------------------|
| Homework Preferences of English Teachers | individual homework |
| | group work- peer work |

L. TABLE OF CODES EMERGED FROM SEMI- STRUCTURED STUDENT INTERVIEWS

Major Codes for ‘Homework Perception’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Perceptions of Students | Obligation |
| | Duty |
| | Reinforcement |
| | Responsibility |
| | Anxiety |
| | boring activity |

Major Codes for ‘Resources for Homework Completion’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Resources for Homework Completion | Internet |
| | other documents |
| | no resource |
| | family members |

Major Codes for ‘Reasons of Using Resources’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Reasons of Using Resources | provide convenience |
| | enhance accuracy |
| | saving time |

Major Codes for ‘Individual Homework: ‘Students’ Reflection’ Theme

| Themes | Codes |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Strengths of Individual Homework | reinforcement |
| | enhance self-responsibility |
| | prove self |
| | promote success |
| Weaknesses of Individual Homework | anxiety- pressure |
| | competitive |
| | cause alienation |
| | useless- boring |

Major Codes for ‘Improving Ideal Homework’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|--|--|
| Ideas about Ideal Homework for EFL Classes | arouse interest |
| | promote interaction (communication- collaboration) |
| | Ensure using target language |
| | assist for the exams |

**M. TABLE OF CODES EMERGED FROM SEMI- STRUCTURED FOCUS
GROUP AND REFLECTION REPORTS OF STUDENTS**

Major Codes for ‘Impacts on Cognitive- Academic Development’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|--|------------------------------|
| Impacts on Cognitive- Academic Development | increase academic success |
| | enhance homework performance |
| | provide brainstorming |
| | exchange of information |
| | enhance use of English |
| | recognize mistakes |
| | provide permanent learning |

Major Codes for ‘Impacts on Social Development’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Impacts on Social Development | improve communication skills |
| | enhance collaboration |
| | promote collected responsibility |
| | empower the sense of community and team spirit |

Major Codes for ‘Impacts on Personal Development’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Impacts on Personal Development | reduce shyness |
| | improve self- expression |
| | gain self- confidence |

Major Codes for ‘Weaknesses of Learning Communities- Based Homework Model’ Theme

| Theme | Codes |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Weaknesses of LC- Based Homework Model | feel worried about community members |
| | problems in arranging meetings |
| | feel incompetent about presentations |

N. COMPARISON OF TWO MODELS OF ENGLISH HOMEWORK PRACTICES

| Themes | Codes | Themes | Codes |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Strengths of Individual HW. | reinforcement | CoL: Impacts on Academic Performance | increase academic success |
| | enhance self- responsibility | | enhance homework performance |
| | prove self | | provide brainstorming |
| | promote success | | exchange of information |
| | | | enhance use of English |
| Weaknesses of Individual HW. | anxiety- pressure | CoL: Impacts on Social Development | recognize mistakes |
| | | | permanent learning |
| | boring | | improve communication skills |
| | cause alienation | | enhance collaboration |
| | useless- boring | CoL: Impacts on Personal Development | promote collected responsibility |
| | | | empower the sense of community and team spirit |
| | | | reduce shyness |
| | | Weaknesses of CoL- Based Homework | improve self- expression |
| | | | gain self- confidence |
| | | | feel worried about community members |
| | | | problems in arranging meetings |
| | | | feel incompetent about presentations |

O. IDENTIFYING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The communities of learners for English homework practices were identified based on exam results of the students and their general standing in English classes. The students 14, 24 and 27 were permanently absent students. As a result, they were not counted in communities.

Table of Identified Learning Communities for English Homework Practices

| Community | Performance of Students (Exams- Observations) | | |
|-----------|---|----------|------|
| | Low | Moderate | High |
| A | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| B | 9 | 2 | 11 |
| C | 10 | 4 | 12 |
| D | 13 | 5 | 17 |
| E | 15 | 6 | 19 |
| F | 18 | 7 | 21 |
| G | 20 | 16 | 23 |
| H | 22 | 26 | 25 |

P. ENGLISH HOMEWORK CHECKLISTS FROM TWO SEMESTERS

2018- 2019 School Year- English Homework Checklist for 1st Semester

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | + | + | + | + | + | M | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | - | M | + | + | + | ? | + |
| S2 | + | + | ? | M | + | + | + | + | - | - | + | + | - | + | + | ? | - | + | + | M |
| S3 | + | + | - | - | M | ? | - | - | + | - | M | - | + | ? | + | + | - | - | + | ? |
| S4 | ? | + | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | - | ? | M | + | - | + | - | + | M | - | + |
| S5 | - | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | - | - | M | + | + | + | - | ? | + | - | + | ? |
| S6 | + | + | - | - | - | + | + | + | ? | + | M | + | - | - | + | + | ? | M | + | ? |
| S7 | + | - | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | - | + | ? | - | + | + | - | - | + | + | + |
| S8 | M | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | ? | + | + | + | + |
| S9 | + | + | - | - | ? | - | + | + | - | - | M | + | - | M | + | + | ? | - | + | ? |
| S10 | ? | ? | + | + | - | - | - | - | + | ? | - | + | ? | M | + | - | - | + | + | - |
| S11 | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S12 | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | ? | + | + | + |
| S13 | ? | ? | - | - | + | + | - | - | - | + | M | - | M | + | + | - | - | ? | ? | M |
| S14 | ? | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ? | - | - | ? | M | - | - | ? | - |
| S15 | - | - | + | ? | - | - | + | + | ? | - | - | ? | - | + | - | M | - | ? | M | - |
| S16 | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | ? | M | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S17 | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | ? | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + |
| S18 | ? | + | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | M | - | - | - | - | ? | - | ? | ? | + | + |
| S19 | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S20 | + | + | - | - | M | ? | - | M | + | - | - | + | + | - | - | ? | - | - | - | ? |
| S21 | + | + | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + |
| S22 | + | + | - | - | ? | M | + | + | + | - | - | - | ? | - | - | + | - | + | M | - |
| S23 | + | + | - | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S24 | ? | - | - | - | - | + | - | - | ? | ? | M | - | - | - | ? | ? | - | - | - | ? |
| S25 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S26 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | - | + | + | + | ? |
| S27 | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? |

2018- 2019 School Year- English Homework Checklist for 2nd Semester

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + |
| S2 | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | M | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S3 | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | M | + | + | - | + | + | + | + |
| S4 | + | + | ? | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | ? | + |
| S5 | ? | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | M | + |
| S6 | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | ? |
| S7 | + | + | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | M | + | + | + |
| S8 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + |
| S9 | ? | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | - | - | + | ? |
| S10 | + | - | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | - | + | M | ? | + | - | - | + | ? |
| S11 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | M | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S12 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + |
| S13 | + | ? | ? | M | + | - | - | ? | ? | + | + | + | - | - | ? | ? | M | + | + | ? |
| S14 | ? | ? | - | M | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| S15 | + | + | ? | + | - | + | + | + | - | + | - | + | + | + | ? | M | + | - | + | ? |
| S16 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? |
| S17 | ? | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | M | + |
| S18 | + | + | - | + | + | - | - | - | + | ? | + | - | + | + | + | ? | M | + | - | ? |
| S19 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? |
| S20 | + | + | + | - | ? | M | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | - | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S21 | - | + | + | + | + | + | ? | M | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + |
| S22 | + | + | ? | - | - | M | ? | - | - | + | ? | M | - | - | - | - | ? | + | + | - |
| S23 | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| S24 | M | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | M | + | + | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | - |
| S25 | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | + | - | M | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + |
| S26 | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | + | - | + | + | + | + | + | ? | + | + | + | ? |
| S27 | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | - | ? | ? | ? | M | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | - |

HW. Completed: + No HW. Completed: - No Material: M Absent: ?

Q. ENGLISH EXAM RESULTS FROM TWO SEMESTERS

| | <i>Results from 1st Semester</i> | | <i>Results from 2nd Semester</i> | |
|------------|---|-----|---|-----|
| Student 1 | 62 | 68 | 70 | 76 |
| Student 2 | 60 | 70 | 66 | 80 |
| Student 3 | 42 | 55 | 52 | 63 |
| Student 4 | 59 | 70 | 70 | 82 |
| Student 5 | 62 | 75 | 69 | 75 |
| Student 6 | 68 | 60 | 62 | 70 |
| Student 7 | 70 | 57 | 68 | 59 |
| Student 8 | 86 | 82 | 88 | 90 |
| Student 9 | 22 | 35 | 30 | 52 |
| Student 10 | 31 | 46 | 30 | 62 |
| Student 11 | 86 | 92 | 86 | 100 |
| Student 12 | 88 | 100 | 92 | 100 |
| Student 13 | 45 | 52 | 52 | 68 |
| Student 14 | 16 | NA | NA | NA |
| Student 15 | 23 | 55 | 32 | 60 |
| Student 16 | 64 | 76 | 55 | 86 |
| Student 17 | 80 | 86 | 90 | 92 |
| Student 18 | 12 | 34 | 34 | 46 |
| Student 19 | 98 | 83 | 100 | 89 |
| Student 20 | 22 | 09 | 25 | 42 |
| Student 21 | 82 | 95 | 90 | 96 |
| Student 22 | 57 | 21 | 45 | 72 |
| Student 23 | 90 | 82 | 88 | 100 |
| Student 24 | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Student 25 | 97 | 80 | 95 | 97 |
| Student 26 | 75 | 62 | 72 | 86 |
| Student 27 | NA | NA | NA | NA |

R. HOMEWORK SAMPLE FROM COMMUNITY D

4. Hafta Kelimeleri: put through, donate, headmaster, calling, available, take a memo, one moment, text

HELP PEOPLE IN NEED

Secretary: Municipality Building. How can I help you?

George: Hello. Could I talk to headmaster, please?

Secretary: Who is that, please?

George: It is George Mills from Osmangazi.

Secretary: Okay Mr. Mills. What is the problem?

George: I haven't got problem. I want **donate** clothes for children.

Secretary: I see. Could you please say your phone number? I cannot **put through** because **headmaster** is not available now.

George: 0546

Secretary: **One moment, I take a memo.** Slow, please.

George: 0546

Secretary: Thank you. We will send you a **text** message. Then, you should call again.

George: Okay, thank you.

Secretary: You are welcome, have a nice day.

Questions:

- 1- What do you think about George?
- 2- How can the conversation continue? Write a short example.
- 3- Do you help people in need? Give example.
- 4- What is municipality? Why it is important?
- 5- What else can we use for the underlined word?

S. TURKISH SUMMARY/ TRKE ZET

DEV UYGULAMALARINDA RENME TOPLULUKLARI: 8. SINIF İNGİLİZCE DERSİNE YNELİK BİR EYLEM ARAŞTIRMASI

GİRİŞ

Gnmzde, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce gittike nem kazanmakta ve eitim alanındaki otoriteler yabancı dili geliřtirmek adına alıřmalar yrtmektedir. Bu sebeple, Dnyanın ortak dili olarak kabul edilen (Kachru, 1992) İngilizce dilinin retim srecinde yenilik ve geliřmelere ayrıca nem verilmelidir (Knig, 1990).

Dil renimi srecinde gerekli ařamalar gzlem, analiz ve harekete gemek olarak ifade edilmektedir (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). Sz edilen ařamaları eitim srecine etkin bir biimde dâhil etmek iin retmenler tarafından eřitli yntem ve metotlar kullanılmaktadır. dev uygulamaları da renciyi harekete geirmek ve arařtırmaya yneltmek iin en sık kullanılan metotlardan biridir ve nceki bilgileri anlamlandırıp yeni bilgiler edinmekte etkili bir aratır (Arends, 1991; Tan & Erdoan, 2004). Ancak İngilizce dersi ve uygulanan retim programında dev uygulamalarıyla ilgili modern eitim anlayıřıyla iliřkilendirilmiř belirli bir yaklařım ya da model belirlenmemiřtir. Bu durum dev uygulamalarının etkili bir řekilde kullanmasının nne gemekte ve yapılan alıřmalardan istenilen verim alınamamaktadır (Wiesenthal et al., 1997).

Arařtırmanın Amacı ve nemi

Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce birok alanda yařanan geliřmelerle birlikte nem kazandıka lkemizde de İngilizce eitimi ve srece dâhil olan bileřenler gzden geirilmekte ve geliřtirilmektedir. Etkin bir renme metodu olarak ifade edilen dev uygulamaları da bu kapsamda nemli bir yere sahiptir. Yrtlen bu eylem

araştırması ile öncelikle belirlenen ortamda İngilizce derslerinde gözlemlenen ödev performansında karşılaşılan problemlerin çözülmesi hedeflenmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce öğretimi sürecine dâhil olan öğretmen ve öğrencilerin ödev algılarını ve tercih ettikleri ödev modelini analiz etmek; elde edilen bulguların ödev performansı ile ilişkisini incelemek ve bunların sonucunda İngilizce dersinde ödev performansını arttırmaya yönelik olarak öğrenme toplulukları temelli bir ödev modeli geliştirmek ve uygulamaktır. Bu araştırmanın en temel amacı ise, geliştirilen ödev modelinin ödev performansına etkisini elde edilen bulgulara göre analiz etmek ve İngilizce öğretim programında uygulanabilecek etkili ödev modelleri konusunda düzenleme ve yönlendirme sağlamaktır. Bu kapsamda ‘‘ İngilizce öğrenme sürecinde Öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödev modelinin öğrenciler açısından etkileri nelerdir’’ sorusuna cevap verilecektir.

LİTERATÜR TARAMASI

Avrupa Konseyi tarafından (2001), yabancı dilin iletişimde bir araç olduğu, ortak bir dilin farklı dillere sahip olan bireylerin arasında gerçekleşecek etkinliklerin, iletişimin kolaylaştırılmasında ve insanlar arasındaki işbirliği kavramını geliştirerek önyargıların yok edilmesinde, dil eğitimi alanında ulusal eğitim politikaları takip edilerek her alanda başarının yakalanmasında önemli bir rol üstelendiği belirtilmiştir. Toplumlararası iletişimi sağlamak için ortak bir dil edinmek, küreselleşen dünyada bir zorunluluk haline gelmiştir. İngilizce dili günümüzde bir köprü dil olarak tanımlanmakta ve iletişim dili olarak geniş bir alanı kapsamaktadır (Kachru, 1996). Bu sebeple devletler, İngilizce dil eğitiminde kaliteyi arttırmak için yeni politikalar ve öğretim programları geliştirmeyi ön planda tutmaktadır (Altıntaş, 2000). Etkileşim, karşılıklı gerçekleşen ve ortak bir dil ile daha sağlıklı ilerleyen bir olgudur. Bu sebeple, dil eğitiminde kaliteyi arttırmak için öğrenme sürecine dâhil olan metot ve yöntemlerin etkileşim olgusuna göre düzenlenmesi ve gerektiğinde geliştirilmesi önemlidir.

Birey odaklı geleneksel yaklaşımlar yerine, bireylerin ihtiyaçlarını gözetken, çağı yakalayan ve teorik bilginin ötesine geçen dil eğitiminin yeniden şekillenmesi bazı

gereksinimleri ortaya çıkarmıştır (Saraswathi, 2004). Bu durum, ülkemizde de yabancı dil eğitimi alanında gelişmelerin önünü açmış ve 2006'da yayınlanan “Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yabancı Dil Eğitimi ve Öğretimi Yönetmeliği” ile İngilizce eğitimi kalıcı olarak yerini almıştır. Bununla birlikte, yabancı dil öğretim programlarında da yöntem ve metot bakımından yeniliklere gidilmiş, modern eğitim yaklaşımları benimsenmeye çalışılmıştır. Gelişen yeni yaklaşımlar ve öğrenme yöntemleriyle birlikte öğretim programları da güncellenmiş ve bunun sonucunda süreçte takip edilen uygulamalar ve teknikler de değişime uğramaya başlamıştır (Güleç, 2014). En eski ve etkili öğrenme yöntemlerinden biri olarak kabul edilen ödevlendirme yöntemi de, eğitimde modern anlayışa göre geliştirilmesi gereken kavramlardan biridir (Cooper, 2011; Tan & Erdoğan, 2004). Ödev uygulamalarının eğitim- öğretim süreçlerinde aktif rol oynaması, bu alanda araştırma yapılma ihtiyacı doğurmuştur. Alandaki çalışmalar daha çok ödevin akademik anlamda etkisi (Akın, 1998; Cooper, 2006; Collier, 2007) ve eğitim sürecindeki bireylerin ödevle karşı tutumuyla (Connors, 1992; Eilam, 2001; Singh et al., 2002; Cooper et al., 1999) ilgili sürdürülmüş ve araştırmalar daha çok bu açılardan şekillenmiştir. Özellikle ülkemizde İngilizce ödev uygulamaları ve modeliyle ilgili yeterli bir kaynağa rastlanmasa da, ödev kavramı, Türk Eğitim Sisteminde kendine bir yer edinmiştir ve öğrenme sürecinde yararlanılan bir öğrenme metodu haline gelmiştir. Ödev uygulamalarının süreçteki yeri düşünüldüğünde planlı ve bilinçli oluşturulmasının öğrenme üzerinde etkisi olacağı söylenebilir.

Eğitim programlarında yaşanan gelişmelerle beraber, davranışçı yaklaşıma tepki olarak doğan yapılandırmacılık, Türk eğitim politikalarında 2006 yılından itibaren yer edinmeye başlamıştır (Çınar, Teyfur ve Teyfur, 2006). Yapılandırmacı yaklaşım, öğrenci merkezli bir eğitim sürecini benimser. Öğrencilerin öğrenme sürecinde aktif katılımını destekleyen yapılandırmacılık, öğrencilerin farklı şekillerde öğrenme yaşantısı geçirmesi gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Buna göre, bilgi edinme sürecinde araştıran, sorgulayan ve inceleme yapan birey, karşılaştığı sorunlar karşısında çözüm yolu bulabilmelidir (Aydın, 2002). Yapılandırmacı yaklaşımın benimsendiği eğitim sistemlerinde, sürecin parçası olan her şey, kabul edilen yaklaşıma göre planlanmalıdır. Ödev uygulamaları da eğitim sürecinin

ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğundan, benimsenen yaklaşıma göre planlanması gereken uygulamaların başındadır. Yapılandırmacı yaklaşımın ilkeleri dikkate alındığında, ödevlerde sadece birey yerine aktif katılımı da destekleyecek topluluk odaklı, geleneksel yöntemler yerine modern eğitim anlayışına dayanan yöntemleri desteklediği söylenebilir. Ödev uygulamalarının yapılandırmacı yaklaşıma göre düzenlenmesi için, verilen ödev çalışmasında çağa uygun, iletişim kurmayı ve süreçte aktif bulunmayı gerektiren, bilgiyi saklamak yerine, toplulukla beraber edinilen bilgiden faydalanmayı ve daha fazlasını üretebilmeyi teşvik eden ödevler düzenlenmeli ve uygulanmalıdır. Günümüzde ödevle ilgili çalışmalara bakıldığında, eğitim programlarında yapılandırmacılık yaklaşımı vurgulansa da, yürütülen ödevlerde geleneksel yaklaşımın varlığı fark edilmektedir. Özellikle yabancı dil dersleri için etkili bir öğrenme metodu olan ödevler süreçte aktif olmayı ve yaparak yaşayarak öğrenmeyi desteklerse, dil edinimini kolaylaştıran ve öğrenmeyi kalıcı hale getiren esaslar da düşünüldüğünde, gerek ödev performansı gerekse İngilizce derslerinde akademik başarının artacağı literatürde birçok çalışmada öngörülmektedir (Gündüz, 2005; North & Pillay, 2002; Rozier, 2003; Şahin, 2014).

Öğrenme toplulukları kavramı, yapılandırmacı yaklaşımın desteklediği, eğitimde yeni anlayışlardan biridir. Okul ve üniversitelerde takip edilen eğitim programlarının çağın gereksinimlerini karşılamadığı ve hedeflere ulaşılmasının zaman aldığı ifade edilmiştir. Bunun üzerine, Amerikan Eğitim Konseyi, birey odaklı yaklaşımlardan farklı olarak, görev paylaşımı ve ortak değerlerin öğrenmeyi, kişisel gelişimi, sosyal sorumluluğu ve bireylerarası saygıyı geliştirdiği bir öğrenme ortamı oluşturmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu noktada, topluluk kavramı ve öğrenme topluluklarıyla ilgili alan yazında ulaşılabilen ilk prensipler oluşturulmuştur (Spitzberg ve Thorndike, 1992). Boyer (1990), öğrenme topluluklarını şekillendirmeye ilgili yürüttüğü çalışmada altı prensip belirlemiştir. Buna göre öğrenme topluluklarında bireyler öğrenmeyi güçlendirmek için birlikte hareket eder. Öğrenme topluluklarında ifade özgürlüğü korunur ve bireyler topluluğa karşı sorumluluklarını kabul eder ve her şeyden önce topluluğun yararına hareket eder. Bireyler arası hassasiyet gözetilir ve her üyenin mutluluğu desteklenir. Öğrenme toplulukları bireylerin birbirine destek olmasının teşvik

edildiği oluřumlardır. Romsdahl ve Hill (2012) öğrenme topluluklarında işbirliğinin bireylerde araştırma becerilerini geliřtirdiđi ve bunun da kiřilik geliřimi ve sosyal geliřmeye katkı sađladığını ifade etmiřlerdir. Ayrıca öğrenme topluluklarında işbirliğinin bireyde bađlılık hissini ortaya çıkardıđı, bunun da öğrenme sürecini olumlu etkilediđi vurgulanmaktadır (Huerta, 2017).

Yapılan çalışmalar, öğrenme topluluklarının günümüz eğitim anlayışına uygun öğrenme ortamları oluřturduđunu ve bireylerin de öğrenmeye daha hazır hale gelmesine yardımcı olduđunu vurgulamaktadır. Öğrenme topluluklarına, yabancı dil eğitimi alanında sosyal- yapılandırmacı yaklaşımın da benimsenmesiyle daha çok önem verilebileceđi söylenebilir. Eğitim sürecine dâhil tüm elemanlar, bu modele göre yeniden düzenlendiğinde, eğitimde hedeflenen noktalara ulařılmasına destek olabileceđi öngörülebilir. Özellikle yabancı dil eğitiminin etkileřimle ve öğrenme ortamında gerçekeřtirilecek iletiřimle pekiřtirilebileceđi düşünöldüğünde, İngilizce eğitimi sürecinde takip edilen öğrenme metotları öğrenme toplulukları anlayışına göre düzenlendiğinde daha etkili olabilir.

İngilizce dersi ödev uygulamalarıyla ilgili yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde ödevin genel anlamda akademik başarıya etkisi ve ödevle kařı tutumlar ele alınmış, özellikle İngilizce öğretiminde ödevin modern yaklaşımlara göre düzenlenmesi ve etkin olabilecek ödev modelleri ile ilgili çalışmalara rastlanmamıştır. Ayrıca öğrenme toplulukları alan yazında daha çok profesyonel öğrenme toplulukları ve sınıf ortamında topluluk bilinci oluřturma açısından incelenmiş (Gillies & Boyle, 2010; Hung & Yuen, 2010; Ilgaz, 2008; Lear, 2007; Smith, 2008; Summers & Svinicki, 2007; Uysal, 2009), öğrenme topluluklarını ödev uygulamalarıyla bađdařtıran bir çalışma yürütölmemiřtir.

YÖNTEM

Bu arařtırmada nitel bir arařtırma türü olan eylem arařtırması deseni kullanılmıştır. Eylem arařtırması günlük hayatta süreç içinde karřılařılan problemlere çözüm bulmak için yürütölen sistematik bir çalışmadır (Stringer, 2007). Dođal ortamı olduđu gibi gözlemlemeye olanak tanıyan ve özellikle eğitim alanında öğretimin

niteliğini iyileştirmek için gerçek sınıf veya okul durumunu inceleyen eylem araştırması, öğretmen araştırması olarak da adlandırılır (Ferrance, 2000; Schmuck 1997).

Eylem araştırması süreci genel olarak problemin tespiti ve bir çözüm önerisiyle başlar. Sonrasında ise çözüme yönelik uygulamalar planlı bir şekilde yerine getirilir (Anagün, 2008). Eğitim- öğretim alanındaki eylem araştırmalarında eğitimciler aynı zamanda çalışmanın yürütücüsü olabilir ve sürece doğrudan ya da işbirliğiyle dahil olabilir. Eylem araştırmalarında amaç eylemleri sorgulamak ve ortaya çıkan durumu geliştirmeye çalışmaktır. Diğer bir deyişle eylem araştırmalarında amaç sadece davranışları anlamlandırmak değil aynı zamanda bir değişim gerçekleştirmektir (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Bu sebeple, araştırmacının ayrıca sürecin doğrudan bir elemanı olması süreçle ilgili gözlem yapabilmesine ve karşılaştığı sorunu derinlemesine anlamasına olanak tanır. Eylem araştırması özellikle eğitim alanında öğretmenlerin mesleki öğrenmelerini arttırmakta ve bununla beraber öğrencilerin de öğrenme kalitesini geliştirmektedir (Glanz; 1999; Sagor, 2003).

Örneklem

Nitel araştırmalardan farklı olarak, nitel araştırmalarda bulunan ilişkilerin genellenmesi uygun görülmemektedir. Başka bir deyişle, nitel araştırmalar indirgeyici değildir (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2016). Söz konusu eylem araştırmasında belirli bir süreçle ilgili karşılaşılan bir problemin çözümü amaçlandığından, belirlenecek katılımcılar için tek kriter, söz konusu sürece dahil olan elemanlardan biri olmaktır. Patton (2014) amaçlı örneklemenin araştırmacıya zengin bilgiye sahip olduğunu düşündüğü durumları derinlemesine çalışmasına olanak verdiğini vurgulamıştır.

Araştırmada nitel araştırma geleneği içinde ortaya çıkmış amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden tipik durum örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Tipik durum örneklemesinde örneklem araştırma problemiyle ilgili olarak evrende yer alan çok sayıdaki durumdan tipik olan biriyle oluşturulur. Araştırmacı, konuyla ilgili ön

bilgisi olan kişilerle iş birliği yaparak durumlar hakkında ön bilgi toplar ve çalışacağı duruma karar verir (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Tipik durum örneklemesinde en fazla bulguyu sağlayacak ve karşılaşılan durumun çözülmesinde katkısı olacak bir örneklem belirlenir (Patton, 2001).

Bu araştırmada da araştırmacı önceki bilgi gözlem ve deneyimlerinden yola çıkarak araştırmanın amacına uygun olacak şekilde bir yargı belirler. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinde, araştırmacı evren hakkında bilgi sahibi olmalı ve süreçte bulunmalıdır. Bu çalışmada da araştırmacı aynı zamanda problemle karşılaşılan evrende öğretmen olarak bulunmaktadır. Bu sayede sınıfta gözlem yapabilmekte ve sürece aktif olarak katılabilmektedir. Söz konusu çalışmanın katılımcıları aynı okulda çalışan 4 İngilizce öğretmeni ve aynı sınıfta eğitim gören 24 sekizinci sınıf öğrencisidir. Öğretmenleri iş tecrübeleri 4 yıl ile 16 yıl arasında değişmektedir. Öğrenciler ise 2 yıldır aynı sınıfta eğitim görmektedir.

Veri Toplama Aracı

Bu eylem araştırmasında öncelikle 4 İngilizce öğretmeni ile ödev algıları ve tercih ettikleri ödev yöntemleri üzerine yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir (Ek F). Sonrasında ise 24 öğrenciyle İngilizce dersi ödev algıları ve ideal ödev tanımlarıyla ilgili yarı yapılandırılmış bir ön görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir (Ek G). Bu aşama veri toplama sürecinin ilk aşamasıdır. Elde edilen bulgulardan hareketle gözlemlenen probleme bir çözüm önerisi sunulmuş ve eylem hayata geçirilmiştir. İkinci aşamada ise gerçekleştirilen eylemin karşılaşılan durum üzerindeki etkisini anlamak amacıyla 24 öğrenciyle yarı yapılandırılmış grup odak görüşmeleri yürütülmüş ve ayrıca her bir öğrenciden uygulanan çözümle ilgili yansıtıcı rapor istenmiştir. Aynı zamanda süreçte elde edilen dokümanlar ve araştırmacı gözlem notları da veri olarak kullanılmıştır.

Veri Toplama Süreci

Veri toplamak için öncelikle Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Konuları Etik Kurulundan (Ek A) onay alındı ve araştırmaya konu olan okulda çalışma yürütebilmek için bağlı olduğu İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'nün izni talep edildi. Daha sonra söz konusu okulda çalışan 4 öğretmenle iletişime geçildi ve çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılmaları istendi. Aynı zamanda çalışmaya dâhil edilecek 24 öğrencinin velilerine izin belgesi ulaştırıldı ve öğrencilerin çalışmaya katılımı talep edildi (Ek C). Katılımcılar, verilerin gizliliği konusunda bilgilendirildi. Görüşmeler yüz yüze ve bireysel olarak yapıldı. Aynı zamanda ikinci aşamadaki grup odak görüşmeleri, süreçte belirlenen öğrenme topluluklarıyla gerçekleştirildi. Görüşmelerin her biri ortalama yarım saat sürdü ve yazılı notlar alındı. Katılımcıların izinlerine bağlı olarak görüşmeler kaydedildi.

Veri Analizi

Eylem araştırmalarında verilerin çözümlenmesi veri toplama süreciyle eş zamanlı gerçekleştirilebilir (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Bu çalışmada elde edilen verileri analiz etmek için görüşmeleri yorumlamak amacıyla temel olarak içerik analizi kullanılmış, betimsel analiz ve doküman incelemesiyle de desteklenmiştir. Betimsel analizde özetlenen veriler, içerik analiziyle beraber daha derinlemesine incelenir ve öncesinde fark edilemeyen temalar bunun sonucunda ortaya çıkabilir. Çalışma bir nitel araştırma olduğundan toplanan her verinin anlatılmaya çalışılması yerine, veri içinde anlamlı eğilim ve sınıflandırmalar saptanıp bunlar derinlemesine analiz edilmiştir. Yürütülen çalışmada amaç ortaya çıkan durumun sadece nedenini saptamak değil aynı zamanda bir karşılaşılan ödev performans problemine bir çözüm bulmaktır. Bu sebeple, elde edilen her veri ayrıntılı şekilde değerlendirilmeli ve yorumlanmalıdır. Ayrıca söz konusu araştırmada süreç belli bir süre deneyimlenmeli ve yürütülen eylem planının etkisi gözlemlenmelidir. İçerik analizi uzun bir zaman kesitinde meydana gelen süreçleri incelemeye olanak tanır (Babbie, 2007). Bu sayede gerektiğinde araştırmanın yeniden şekillendirilmesi mümkün olur. Bu çalışmada ana veri toplama aracı yapılan görüşmelerdir. Verileri sistematik bir şekilde analiz etmek ve veri kaybını önlemek adına notlar alınmış ve kayıt yapılmıştır. Bu veriler daha sonra sistematik bir şekilde düzenlenmiş ve oluşturulan kodlar ve temalarla analiz edilmiştir.

BULGULAR

Bu bölümde, çalışmanın bulguları üç ana başlığa bağlı olarak sunulacak ve sonrasında tartışılacaktır. Bunlardan ilki İngilizce algılarıyla ilgili bulgulardır. Devamında, öğrencilerin ideal ödev tanımlarıyla ilgili bulgular analiz edilerek tartışılacaktır. Söz konusu çalışma bir eylem araştırması olduğundan, karşılaşılan bir soruna çözüm yöntemi geliştirilmiş ve süreçte uygulanıp etkileri değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada da İngilizce dersleri için öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödev modeli geliştirilmiş ve uygulanmıştır. Bölümün son başlığında da düzenlenen ödev modelinin etkilerine dair öğrencilerden elde edilen bulgular verilecek ve tartışılacaktır. İlk görüşmelerle ilgili yürütülen içerik analizi sonucunda İngilizce derslerinde öğretmenlerin ödev algıları ve tercih ettikleri ödev modeliyle, öğrencilerin ödev algılarıyla ve İngilizce dersi ideal ödev tanımı ana temalar olarak belirlenmiştir. Eylem planının uygulanmasından sonra ise gerçekleştirilen son görüşmeler ve incelenen yansıtma raporlarıyla elde edilen bulgular ise öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödevin sosyal, akademik ve kişisel gelişime katkıları ve öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödevlerin zayıf yönleri temaları altında tartışılacaktır.

İngilizce ödeviyle ilgili algıların ve ödevle karşı tutumun bireyler arasında farklılık gösterdiği açıktır. Bu farklılığın çeşitli sebepleri de bulgularla ortaya konmuştur. Görüşmelerle elde edilen veriler, görüşmelerden, yansıtma raporlarından ve gözlem notlarından alınan alıntılarla beraber analiz edilerek tartışılmış ve elde edilen bulgular, araştırma sorularına paralel olarak raporlanmıştır. Ayrıca yazılı dokümanlardan da elde edilen bulgulara göre yürütülen eylem planının etkililiği analiz edilmiş ve karşılaştırmalı grafiklerle sergilenmiştir.

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Ödev Algıları

Çalışmaya katılan İngilizce öğretmenleriyle yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda elde edilen bulgularla öğretmenlerin ödevleri nasıl tanımladıkları ve ifade ettikleri sorgulanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin hepsi ödevleri bir sorumluluk olarak tanımlarken, aynı zamanda ödevlerin bir motivasyon kaynağı olabileceği de ifade edildi. Ödevlerin öğretmenler tarafından bir değerlendirme aracı olarak da algılandığını gösteren bulgular, katılımcı öğretmenlerden bazılarının da ödev uygulamalarını amaçsız ve etkisiz olarak tanımladığını işaret etti. Öğretmenlerin hepsi ödevi sorumluluk ve motivasyon kaynağı olarak tanımlasa da, ödevlerle ilgili tanımlar sınıf ve öğrenciye göre de değişmektedir.

Öğretmenlerin Ödev Tercihleri

Katılımcı öğretmenlerden elde edilen bulgulara dayanarak, ödevin İngilizce dersi için önemli bir öğrenme metodu olarak görüldüğü açıktır. Ancak, araştırmaya dahil olan öğretmenlerin dördünün de tercih ettiği ödevlendirme modeli bireyselliği ve geleneksel yaklaşımı ön planda tutan ödevlerdir. Öğretmenlerin İngilizce ödevleriyle ilgili problemlerin farkında olmasına ve öğrencilerin farklı ödev yöntemlerine ilgi duyduklarını ifade etmesine karşın yine de geleneksel, birey odaklı ve rekabetçi ödevleri tercih ettiği görülmektedir. Bu da öğretmenlerin modern yaklaşımlarla örtüşen ödev modelleri ve bunların süreçte uygulanmasıyla ilgili bilinçlendirilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Öğrencilerin İngilizce Dersi Ödev Algıları

Öğrencilere İngilizce dersleri için ödev kelimesinin kendilerine ne ifade ettiği sorgulandığında çeşitli bulgular elde edilmiştir. Öğrencilerin çoğu, öğretmenlere paralel olarak ödevi sorumluluk olarak tanımlamışlar, ayrıca ödevlerin İngilizce dersini pekiştirmek için bir araç olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca ödevler öğrenciler tarafından bir görev ya da zorunluluk olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu tanımın öğrenci tarafından ne şekilde algılandığı da öğrencinin ödevle karşı bakış açısını şekillendirdiği görülmüştür. Bazı öğrencilerde ödevin görev olarak görülmesi

öğrenciye sorumluluk bilinci kazandırırken, bazılarında ise görev ve zorunluluk tanımları ödev karşı gerginlik ve stres yaratmış, bunun da ödev performansına olumsuz yansıdığına dair bulgular elde edilmiştir. Özellikle öğrenci görüşmelerinden elde edilen bulgular ödev performanslarıyla karşılaştırıldığında da bu sonuç ortaya çıkmaktadır. Aynı zamanda ödev yaparken kullanılan kaynaklar ve ödevin değerlendirilme şekliyle ilgili bulgular analiz edildiğinde öğrencilerin ödev yaparken kaynak kullanmayı tercih ettiği, özellikle danışabilecek bir bireyin olduğu durumlarda ödev karşı daha istekli olduklarına dair ifadeler elde edilmiştir. Ödevin değerlendirme şekline göre de öğrencilerin ödev karşı tutumu ve algıları şekillenmektedir.

Öğrencilerin İngilizce Dersi İdeal Ödev Tanımları

Öğrencilerin İngilizce dersinde nasıl ödevler tercih ettikleri sorulduğunda ve ideal İngilizce ödevini tanımlamaları istendiğinde genel olarak birbirine benzer bulgulara ulaşılmıştır. Öğrenciler, İngilizce derslerinde ödevlerin bireylerarası etkileşimi ve iletişimi desteklemesi, bununla birlikte dayanışma ve yardımlaşmaya da izin verilmesi gerektiğini vurgulamışlardır. Ayrıca ödevlerin ilgi çekici olması da ideal ödev tanımıyla ilgili elde edilen bulgulardandır. Katılımcılardan bir bölümü de ödevlerin sınavlara yardımcı olması gerektiğini ifade etmişlerdir. Gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular kodlanarak analiz edilmiş ve yapılan ideal ödev tanımların da yola çıkarak, İngilizce derslerinde tercih edilen ödevlerin, öğrencilerin ideal ödev tanımından oldukça farklı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu sebeple, İngilizce dersi ödev uygulamaları, ödev içeriği ve benimsenen model açısından yeniden düzenlenmelidir.

Öğrenme Toplulukları Odaklı Ödev Modelinin Etkileri- Öğrenci Görüşleri

Öğrencilerin İngilizce dersleri için düzenlenen ödev modelinin etkileriyle ilgili görüşlerinden elde edilen bulgular dört ana tema altında incelenmiştir. Buna göre, ödevlerde öğrenme toplulukları anlayışının akademik- bilişsel açıdan, sosyal açıdan ve bireysel açıdan etkilerini analiz etmek amacıyla, odak grup görüşmeleri ve öğrenci yansıtma raporlarından elde edilen bulgular incelenmiştir. İngilizce

derslerinde alışılmış ödev anlayışından farklı olarak, öğrenme topluluklarını esas alan ödev modeli öğrencilerin sınav sonuçlarını olumlu etkilemiş, ayrıca toplulukla çalışarak bilgi paylaşımı sağlamış ve bu da kalıcı öğrenmeyi desteklemiştir. Ayrıca edinilen bulgulardan yola çıkarak, öğrenciler bireylerarası iletişimin ve yardımlaşmanın arttığını ve bunun da sosyalleşmeyi sağladığını ifade etmişlerdir. Toplulukla öğrenme anlayışı, bireyin kendini ait hissetmesini sağlar ve bu da sosyal bilinci güçlendirir. Kişilik gelişimine de olumlu etkisi olduğuna dair veriler elde edilmiştir. Buna göre yapılan görüşmelerden ve raporlardan yola çıkarak, yeni ödev modelinin çekingenliği azalttığı, toplumda kendini ifade etmeyi ve özgüven kazanmayı teşvik ettiği söylenebilir. Ayrıca, düzenlenen ödev modelinin, ödev performansını arttırdığı da yapılan karşılaştırmalarla ortaya konulmuştur.

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Söz konusu çalışma, 8. Sınıf İngilizce dersinde ödev performansını arttırmak için öğrenme toplulukları odaklı yeni bir ödev modeli geliştirmeyi ve bu modeli uygulayıp etkilerini ortaya koymayı hedeflemiştir. Nunan ve Richards (2015) tarafından yürütülen çalışmada da ifade edildiği gibi, ödev yöntemi, İngilizce dil öğretiminde en etkili metotlardan biri olarak ifade edilmektedir. Yürütülen bu çalışmada da, hem öğretmen hem de öğrenciler ödevin yabancı dil öğrenme sürecinde ödevlerin motivasyonu arttırdığını ve bir pekiştirici görevi gördüğünü ifade etmiştir. Bu da, İngilizce ödevlerinin varlığıyla ilgili tutumların genel olarak olumlu olduğunu göstermiştir.

Öğretmenlerin tercih ettikleri ödevlere bakıldığında geleneksel, alışılmış ödevleri tercih ettikleri ve bunun da öğrencilerin ödevle karşı tutumlarını etkilediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Öğretmenler, İngilizce ödevlerini daha çok ders kitabından veya çalışma kağıdı olarak verdiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin bireysel ve rekabetçi ödev modellerinin öğrenci tarafından olumsuz karşılanmasını bilmelerine karşın yine de alışılmış ödev modelini tercih etmelerinin sebebi ayrı bir planlama ve uğraş gerektirmemesidir. Eliam (2001) ve Farrow et al., (1999), öğretmenlerin ödevle ilgili tutumlarının öğrencinin ödev algılarını etkilediğini vurgulamıştır. Yürütülen çalışmada da öğrencilerin genel olarak ödev kavramını

tanımlarken olumlu ifadeler kullandığı, ancak öğretmenin tercih ettiği ödev türüne ve modeline göre ödevle karşı tutumları ve ödev performanslarının farklılık gösterdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Bu sebeple, öğretmenlerin ödev konusunda modern eğitim yaklaşımları ve öğrencinin ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurması gerektiği ve buna göre bir ödev modeli benimsemesi gerektiği söylenebilir.

Collier (2007), Cooper and Valentine (2001) ve Tan & Erdoğan (2004), ödev tutumlarıyla ilgili yürüttükleri çalışmalarda, hem öğretmenlerin hem de öğrencilerin ödevin etkili bir öğrenme metodu olarak ifade ettiğini vurgulamaktadır. Ödevlerle ilgili yaşanan sorunların, ödev algılarından çok ödev tercihleriyle ilgili olduğu (Hizmetçi & Ofazoğlu, 2006) yürütülen araştırmada da ortaya konmuştur. Öğretmenlerin derslerinde tercih ettikleri ödevlerin nitelikleri ve öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları ve ideal ödev tanımları karşılaştırıldığında, farklılıklar göze çarpmaktadır.

Buradan yola çıkarak, araştırmacı ödev performansını geliştirmek amacıyla yeni bir ödev modeli geliştirmeye karar vermiş ancak bunun için öğrencilerden ideal İngilizce ödevleriyle ilgili düşüncelerini analiz etmiştir. Öğrenciler, İngilizce dersinde olmasını istedikleri ödevleri iletişim ve etkileşimi destekleyen, yardımlaşmanın da mümkün olduğu, İngilizce kullanımını teşvik eden ödevler olarak tanımlamışlardır. Buna göre Kaplan (2006) tarafından da ifade edildiği gibi, geleneksel ödev yöntemleri ödevle karşı olumsuz tutuma sebep olurken, öğrencilerin ilgi ve ihtiyaçlarına göre şekillenen ödevler öğrenme sürecinde istendik sonuçlar ortaya koymaktadır.

Öğrencilerin ideal İngilizce ödevi tanımından yola çıkarak düzenlenen ödev modeli, öğrenme toplulukları anlayışıyla oluşturulmuştur. Uygulanan ödev modeli, akademik, sosyal ve kişisel açıdan anlamlı farklılıklar ortaya koymuştur. Elde edilen veriler yorumlandığında, öğrenme toplulukları anlayışı öğrencilerin ödev performansı ve akademik başarısını arttırmıştır. Bu sonuç, literatürde öğrencinin ilgilerine hitap eden ödevlerin olumlu karşılandığını vurgulayan çalışmalarla da desteklenmektedir (Kuh vd., 2005). Çalışmanın asıl amacı olan İngilizce dersinde ödev performansını arttırmaya yönelik bir ödev modeli geliştirmenin dışında,

ortaya çıkan ödev modeli, bireylerde rekabet hissi yerine sosyal bilinci geliştirmiş, aynı zamanda bireylerin özgüven kazanmasına ve topluluk içinde kendini ifade edebilmesine olanak tanımıştır.

İki eğitim- öğretim döneminin ödev kontrol sonuçları ve sınav notları karşılaştırıldığında, takip edilen ödev modelinin öğrenme sürecine etkisi olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmaktadır. Bu sebeple, tercih edilen ödev modelinin modern eğitim yaklaşımlarına uygun olması ve öğrencilerin ideal ödev anlayışıyla örtüşmesi ödev performansını ve akademik başarıyı arttıracaktır. Ayrıca, tutarsızlıkların önüne geçebilmek adına, önemli bir öğrenme metodu olarak ifade edilen ödevlerin yeri ve önemi, hangi yaklaşım ve modeli benimseyerek uygulanacağı da İngilizce dersi eğitim programında yer almalıdır. Böylece, ödevler, öğrenme sürecinde istenilen sonuçlar sağlayacaktır (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011; Reinhardt vd., 2009).

Çalışmanın Sınırlıkları, Katkıları ve Öneriler

Her çalışmada olduğu gibi, bu çalışmada da bazı kısıtlılıklar ortaya çıkmıştır. Kullanılan yöntemden kaynaklı olarak, çalışmanın örneklemini küçük bir grup oluşturmaktadır. Bu sebeple ortaya çıkan sonuçlarla genelleme yapılamaz. Ayrıca, çalışma bir eylem araştırması olduğundan, önlem alınmış da olsa, sonuçlar araştırmacının bakış açısını yansıtabilir. Bunlarla birlikte, yürütülen görüşmelerde katılımcılar gerçek düşüncelerini ifade etmekten çekindikleri için verilen cevaplar tam olarak düşüncelerini yansıtmayabilir.

Araştırmanın katkılarına gelince, bu çalışma öğrenme sürecine dâhil olan tüm uygulamaların modern yaklaşım ve öğrencilerin ilgileri ışığında şekillenmesi gerektiğini göstermiştir. Söz konusu çalışma, ödev uygulamalarıyla ilgili sorun yaşayan İngilizce öğretmenleri için de bir rehber olarak kullanılabilir. Bu sayede öğretmen öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödevlerin nasıl oluşturulabileceğiyle ilgili fikir sahibi olur ve gerek gördüğü durumlarda bu ödev modelini tercih edebilir. Ödev uygulamalarıyla ilgili öğretim programlarında uygulanması tavsiye edilen herhangi bir ödev modeli bulunmamaktadır. Söz konusu çalışmada uygulanan ödev yönteminin ödev performansı ve tutumu şekillendirdiği göz önünde

bulundurulduğunda, öğretim programlarında etkili ödev yöntemlerinden bahsedilmesinin önü açılmıştır.

Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, gelecekteki araştırmalar için bazı öneriler sunulmuştur:

- Çalışma, ödev performansı ile ilgili problemin yaşandığı tek bir sınıfla yürütülmüştür. Söz konusu uygulama, başka sınıf ve okullarda da yürütülebilir ve genellenebilir sonuçlar elde etmek açısından araştırma geliştirilebilir.
- Öğrenme toplulukları temelli ödev modelinin etkisini vurgulamak için, kontrol grubu ve deney grubu oluşturularak deneysel bir çalışma yürütülebilir.
- Çalışma, ödev performansı ile ilgili problem yaşayan İngilizce öğretmeni tarafından, İngilizce ödevleri üzerinden yürütülmüştür. Aynı şekilde, öğrenme toplulukları odaklı ödev uygulamaları başka branşlarda da denenebilir ve ödev uygulamalarında toplulukla öğrenme anlayışı öğrenme sürecinde yaygın hale getirilebilir.

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Soyadı/ Surname : Ayık Şora

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