

Title:

**Moving from teaching older learners to young learners:
Cases of English language teachers in Turkey**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the experiences of four English language teachers in Turkey who moved from teaching in either high schools or language schools to teaching English to young learners. The study follows these teachers in their first year of teaching in primary school, describes the changes they went through in their approach to teaching English, and identifies the influences on these changes.

The background to this research was an educational reform which introduced English into the primary curriculum. After this reform, there was a shortage of English teachers at the primary level. A common solution was to recruit English teachers from other levels of the educational system. Three of the participating teachers taught in high school before they moved to teach English in the primary school. One of the participating teachers taught English to adults in a language school before moving to the primary level.

The data for the study was generated through systematic interviews with the teachers, as well as regular observations of their classes, over the course of the school year. The interpretation of the data was informed by the existing literature on teaching English to young learners and the literature on teacher change.

At the end of the school year, all of the teachers said they would like to continue teaching English in the primary school. In adjusting to teaching children, the teachers mainly focused on developing class management strategies. The teachers did not, however, focus on maximising opportunities for learning the target language. The main influences on the teachers' change were in-service training, textbooks, as well as interaction with and support from colleagues. The research contributes to the debate of how to best facilitate the introduction of English into primary schools, and calls for further research into teacher development in the context of such curricular reforms.

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Abbreviations

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
EYL	English for Young Learners
HFI	Hierarchical focusing interview
L1	Mother tongue/ first language
MEB	Milli Egitim Bakanligi (Ministry of Education)
NLP	Neuro-Linguistic Programming
PO	Post-observation interview
PYP	Primary Years Programme
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
TEYL	Teaching English to Young Learners
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

1 Introduction

This thesis explores the experiences of four English language teachers in Turkey who have moved from teaching in either high schools or language schools to teaching English to young learners in primary schools. The study follows these teachers over the period of one school year, describing the changes these teachers go through in their approach to teaching young learners, and identifying the influences on these changes.

The background to this research is an educational reform that, in 1997, introduced English into the Turkish primary school curriculum. This reform resulted in a great demand for primary English teachers. Due to the brief period of time between the decision by the Ministry of Education to implement the reform, and its actual implementation, the demand for primary English teachers was not satisfied through normal pre- or in-service teacher training. To cope with the demand for English teachers, it was common practice for primary schools to recruit high school or language school English teachers to teach their new primary English classes. This study explores the implications of this practice, by describing the experiences of former high school or language school teachers teaching English to young learners for the first time.

The integration of foreign languages into the primary curriculum is becoming increasingly widespread around the world (Nikolov & Curtain, 2000; Poppi, Low & Bondi, 2005). Rixon (2000) draws attention to the growing demand for teachers at primary levels due to reforms to integrate foreign languages in the primary curriculum. She argues that problems with placing qualified teachers at primary levels are usually experienced when training teachers is not a part of the reform. Nikolov (2000a) points out that the lack of trained teachers leads to 'minimalist' solutions, such as bringing specialist teachers from different levels or getting experienced primary school classroom teachers to teach English.

The present study explores the ramifications of a 'minimalist' solution to the kind of situation described by Rixon (2000), as experienced by the Turkish primary sector. This situation, where there is a lack of systematic teacher training accompanying the introduction of English into the primary curriculum, is not unique to Turkey. For example, recent reforms that introduced English into the primary curricula of the Czech Republic (see Faklova, 2000) and Bulgaria (see Berova & Dachkova, 2000) were similarly not supported by any systematic teacher training for primary English teachers.

The study also offers findings to describe the experiences of teachers making a transition from teaching one age group to another. There is a 'gap' in the literature on teacher change describing such transitions. The studies that seem to come the 'closest' to filling this gap is one that explores teachers' making transitions from teaching advanced level English to

teaching beginner level learners (Burns, 1996), or those that explore teachers making transitions from working in one culture to working in a different culture (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004; Freema, 2004).

1.1 Research Aims

This study aims to explore the experiences of English language teachers, who previously taught in either high schools or language schools, during their first year of teaching English in primary school. The following more specific objectives help focus this overall research aim.

- The research seeks to describe the changes teachers experienced in their approach to teaching English to young learners over their first year at primary level.
- The research seeks to understand what influenced the changes these teachers experienced over their first year teaching at primary level.

Hence, the study has a descriptive element, an interpretive element as well as a longitudinal dimension.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

This first chapter has introduced the study, as well as the research aim and objectives.

The second chapter provides a description of the Turkish educational context, as well as a general framework for understanding good practice in the teaching of English to young learners. The educational context section serves to provide background information about the educational reform that motivated this study, as well as some insight into Turkish high schools, language schools and primary schools, as well as information on pre- and in-service teacher training in the Turkish education system. The general framework for the teaching of English to young learners is presented to aid the later analysis of the data.

In order to situate the present study in relation to previous research, the third chapter reviews the teacher change literature. This includes reviews of studies that have explored teachers making the transition from pre-service training to a first teaching position, as well as studies of teacher change in the context of curriculum reforms.

The fourth chapter introduces the research questions and the research design. It also provides a detailed account of the instruments used to generate data and the procedures involved in data generation and data analysis.

Chapter five contains the description of change and the discussion of influences on these changes for each of the four participating teachers. The chapter is organised into four sections, each one reporting on the experience of one teacher, in the form of a case study.

Chapter six brings together the findings from each of the four case studies reported in chapter five. The findings are combined in a cross-case analysis, focusing on commonalities between the experiences of the four teachers.

In chapter seven there is a general discussion of the findings reported in chapters five and six. This discussion is structured by the general framework for good practice in the teaching of English to young learners, outlined in chapter two, as well as points generated by the review of the teacher change literature, in chapter three.

The eighth and final chapter explores general and specific contributions of the study to the field of teaching English to young learners and to the field of teacher change. This chapter also includes a discussion of the limitations of the study.

2 Educational Context and Teaching English to Young Learners

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I discuss the educational context in which the present study is situated, whilst in the second section I examine the current literature on teaching English to young learners, and discuss the challenges English language teachers in Turkey who have moved from high schools or language schools may face when they start teaching at primary level. The educational context section serves as a resource, describing teaching contexts of relevance to this study. The section on young learners presents a general framework of teaching English to young learners to aid the analysis of the data.

2.1 Educational Context

There are not many published materials describing the Turkish educational context. However, there are a number of materials published about the state of teacher training in Turkey which have served as valuable resources for the present study. The Turkish Ministry of Education website (2005) provides some information about the general education system in Turkey but does not give much information about English teaching in high schools or primary schools. Consequently, the descriptions given in this chapter are mostly based on 1) government documentation, 2) the information provided by the teachers who participated in this study, 3) my observations of a variety of school contexts over a period of time and my interactions with teachers in these contexts as part of my job as an educational consultant for a publishing company, and 4) insights from my own experience as a student in the Turkish education system. I was given the opportunity to visit over 200 schools in the three years I worked as an educational consultant. All of these visits involved interaction with mostly English language teachers, but also, principals, teachers of other subjects, and also, sometimes, students. As my primary responsibility as an educational consultant was in the area of Young Learners in the publishing company I worked for, I got to know all the primary schools in my own region, in Istanbul, but, in addition, I traveled frequently to other cities all around Turkey, and was therefore lucky to get to know a wide range of school types, and teacher and student profiles.

2.1.1 Educational reform

The reform that motivated the present study was passed in August 1997 and as a result of the reform compulsory education was extended from five years to eight years. The reform called for integrating five-year primary schools and three-year middle schools to create new

'primary education schools' (MEB, 2002). The overall aim in increasing compulsory primary education from five years to eight years was to increase the overall quality of education by providing everyone free education for eight years (MEB, 2002).

As part of this reform, in the academic year of 1997-1998, English was introduced into the primary curriculum. To leave foreign language education until after primary education in this new system would mean waiting until the students were 15 years old (after eighth grade). This was considered too late, especially in light of the importance of foreign languages for enhancing Turkey's interaction with the rest of the world (Tebliğler Dergisi, 1997). Therefore, the Ministry of National Education integrated English into the primary curriculum starting from fourth grade.

Prior to the reform, students started learning English only after they finished primary school (after fifth grade). Based on their success in an examination they took at the end of their primary school education, they could go to 1) private middle/high schools (called 'colleges'), 2) so called 'Anatolian' middle/high schools, or 3) 'normal' middle/high schools. Private 'colleges' taught mainly English (but also French, German and Italian) intensively and for some subjects (science, maths) the medium of instruction was English. 'Anatolian' schools were part of a state system that had similar foreign language provision as private 'colleges'. Private 'colleges' and Anatolian schools had a preparatory year, the exclusive purpose of which was to prepare the student in the foreign language used as a medium of instruction in certain lessons. After they completed their preparatory year, students were supposed to have sufficient command of the foreign language to continue their education for the next six years (until they graduated from high school) in that foreign language. In 'normal' schools, by contrast, a foreign language (mainly English) was taught as a subject and not as the medium of instruction, and over fewer number of hours per week compared to the private 'colleges' and 'Anatolian' schools. The 'normal' schools, therefore, unlike private and 'Anatolian' schools, did not have a preparatory year.

Before the educational reform there were two types of primary schools in Turkey, private schools and state schools. The number of private schools is significantly fewer than the number of state schools (MEB, 2002). Although there has been no significant change in the number of private schools compared to state schools in the whole country, after the reform, there has been an increase in private schools in big cities. A survey of the Turkish education system, conducted by the British Council (2000) after the reform, also reports that there are a significant number of private primary schools, especially in big cities. However, this report does not comment on whether this increase took place after the reform.

The main reason for the increase in private primary schools, based on observations conducted by the publishing company I worked for, and information gathered from school

principals or founders during our school visits, was due to a difference, in terms of language teaching, in the implementation of the educational reform, in private and state primary schools. In state primary schools, English was introduced in fourth grade. Although private primary schools, like state primary schools, abide by the syllabus provided by the Ministry of National Education, they were given permission to integrate English into their curriculum earlier than fourth grade. Most private primary schools in Turkey now teach foreign languages beginning in first grade, if not kindergarten, as is the trend in other European countries such as Hungary (Nikolov, 2000b) and Poland (Komorowska, 2000). This has led to private schools becoming more popular for those parents who want their children to start learning English as early as possible.

Although, private primary schools were able to include English in earlier grades (first grade through to third grade), this was not officially recognised. That is, students were not officially assessed, and foreign languages did not appear on their report cards as an official subject. Three years after the implementation of the eight-year compulsory education system, in 2000, the Ministry of National Education officially declared that English will be integrated into the primary curriculum starting from grade one for all schools, private and state. However, this change had not yet been implemented in the state primary schools during the period I was conducting my fieldwork (in 2001). However, even in the current situation, five years later, state primary schools still offer fewer hours of English language instruction compared to private primary schools. In addition, Rixon (2000, p. 161) points out that in many countries, parents' perceive that English teaching is of "significantly higher quality" in private primary schools than in state primary schools, and this is also generally the case in Turkey.

The increase in the number of private primary schools in big cities has created an atmosphere of competition in the primary school sector. Over the past six years, this has resulted in many more private schools being founded. The quality of foreign language instruction has since become an important criterion in determining the prestige of a private primary school among its competitors.

The following section looks at the transition of English language teachers from teaching older learners to young learners as a result of the above described educational reform.

2.1.2 Transition from teaching older learners to young learners

With the integration of English in primary education in Turkey, teachers were needed for the new English language classes in both private and state primary schools. However, before the reform, newly qualified English language teachers had not received any 'teaching English to

young learners' training as part of their university curriculum. Neither had there been any organised and systematic in-service training in teaching English to young learners for existing English language teachers before the reform. As such, English language teachers trained to teach middle or high school students had to teach English at primary level, and sometimes even in kindergarten without any formal training for this new role. Rixon (2000) draws attention to teacher supply problems in many countries where English was integrated into the primary curriculum. She states that these problems "relate to countries in which the introduction of EYL [English for Young Learners] was not only relatively recent but also sudden" (p. 161). Nikolov (2000a) also points to the lack of trained teachers in contexts where English has been integrated into the primary curriculum. She states, "in most contexts minimalist solutions are paired with high expectations" (Nikolov, 2000a, p. 39). These minimalist solutions include primary school teachers (mainstream) teaching English, like in Sweden (Sundin, 2000) and Austria (Jantscher & Landsiedler, 2000) or English language teachers from other levels (e.g., high school) teaching English at primary level. In Turkey, the most common solution was to transfer teachers teaching English at high school to teach English at primary school.

Having to teach young learners without any training was not the same for a state school teacher and a private school teacher. If a teacher who was previously teaching sixth grade (middle school) in the state system was appointed as a primary school teacher again in the state system, the youngest level she might teach was fourth grade. Thus, she would teach students who were at most two years younger than her previous sixth grade students. However, if a teacher who was previously teaching in sixth grade (regardless of whether it was in the state system or private school) wanted to teach at a private primary school, she might teach children as young as six or seven years old (in kindergarten or first grade). This meant that the age difference between her previous and new students might be significantly greater than for teachers making this transition in the state system. The aim of this study is to look at those teachers who experienced such a more substantial transition, in terms of their students' age. The study is, therefore, conducted in Turkish private schools.

Both private and state primary schools hired newly qualified teachers to fill in the new primary level English classes. However, there were also many experienced high school teachers who left their old jobs to teach in a new school. These teachers would also be placed in younger primary levels due to the demand arising from the number of new classes opening at that level. In other words, if high school teachers decided to change their jobs (for whatever reason), they usually found themselves teaching at primary level in the new school they started working in. This was also the case for some language school teachers who wanted to make a transition from working in language schools to working in high schools. The present

study focuses on these two groups of teachers, making the transition to primary schools from either high schools or language schools. In the next two sections, I therefore describe these two contexts in more detail.

2.1.3 English language teaching in high schools (before the reform)

Before the educational reform, students in private ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ schools were exposed to English for the first time in a one-year preparatory programme where they were taught 24 hours of English per week. The students would then be exposed to around seven or eight hours of English per week for the following six years of their education until graduating from high school.

Before the educational reform, most newly qualified English language teachers were placed in the above-mentioned preparatory programmes. The aim of these programmes was to bring students’ English up to a so-called ‘upper-intermediate’ level (in textbook terms). The textbook chosen for this level followed a grammatical syllabus and the English language curriculum was developed around the teaching of grammatical structures. Therefore, teachers were under pressure to teach as many grammatical aspects of the language as possible within one school year, in order to help students reach upper-intermediate level.

In preparatory classes there were two types of English lessons. One lesson type focused on teaching the structure of the English language (commonly referred to as ‘main course’ lessons). The other lesson type focused on developing the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Different teachers were usually assigned to these two lesson types of English. For example, it was common for Turkish teachers to take on the ‘main course’ lessons and native speaker teachers to take on the skills lessons. Fewer hours were devoted to skills lessons compared to ‘main course’ lessons. A typical example of a lesson schedule for a preparatory programme would include 15-16 hours of ‘main course’ lessons and eight, nine hours of skills lessons per week.

Once students completed their preparatory year and moved on to their high school education, the number of hours of English per week decreased to around seven or eight. However, the ‘main course’ and skills distinction remained until the end of high school. The ratio of ‘main course’ lessons to skills lessons also remained the same.

More generally, the role of English language teachers in high schools would also depend on the type of school they worked in. If they worked in private ‘colleges’ or ‘Anatolian’ schools, they would have a more active role in terms of their responsibilities compared to their colleagues in state schools. These teachers would also be expected to contribute to their students’ language learning out of class hours. Their responsibilities would

not be restricted to the English language curriculum. The common responsibilities that such teachers working in 'colleges' and 'Anatolian' schools would have, in addition to their English class time, would be to always use English with students out of class time, to be in charge of English clubs (e.g., English conversation club, English book club, creative writing club), and to take students on field trips (involving some activity related to English). In state schools, however, English language teachers' main responsibility would be to cover the English curriculum (strictly following the assigned textbook) during their class hours.

Teaching styles in high schools would vary between 'main course' and 'skills' lessons types. 'Main course' lessons would rely more on the textbook than skills lessons. In fact, the term 'main course' refers to the central textbook used in a particular level, and all the other textbooks used for English at the same level are referred to as 'supplementary' books. Teachers would follow the grammatical strand of these 'main course' books very closely and the English curriculum would usually be designed according to this strand. Rixon (1999, p. 55) suggests, "For many teachers a textbook is the syllabus starting-point and the vertebral column of much teaching". Richards (1998, p. 125) also argues "in many schools and language programs the textbooks used in classrooms *are* the curriculum" (original emphasis). This is also the case in Turkish high schools, where the curriculum is based on the textbook chosen for the particular level. 'Main course' lessons would usually be taught by doing all the activities and exercises provided in a textbook unit.

In skills lessons, by contrast, teachers would sometimes use a 'supplementary' book, such as those designed to develop specific skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). Some teachers would not use such textbooks at all and would develop their own activities and materials. The 'skills' lessons would usually have a more informal atmosphere than 'main course' lessons. Students would have more chances to use the foreign language, and to do more physically engaging activities, like games. Finally, 'skills' teachers would sometimes help 'main course' teachers if the 'main course' teacher felt that a certain topic had not been learnt well, in which case she would ask the 'skills' teacher to review that topic in his/her class.

It would be expected of high school teachers, both in the state system and in private schools, to exert some discipline and authority in their classes. In most high schools, teachers would be expected to have control over their students' behaviour and prevent students from misbehaving. Examples of 'misbehaving' that high school teachers complain about are, shouting and not listening to the teacher. An important criterion for whether a teacher has control over her high school students during the lesson would be the amount of noise coming from that teacher's classroom. It would not be uncommon for a high school principal to walk down the corridors during class time to see if there is any loud noise coming from any of the

classes. Such inspection would usually discourage high school teachers from using activities that involve a lot of student-student interaction (i.e., group work and pair work). If students misbehave or do not fulfill their responsibilities, teachers would have reprimanding powers such as deducting grades, or assigning more homework to an individual student. In high schools, teachers would usually have the students' parents on their side and this would allow them more freedom in exerting control over students.

Homework plays an important role in the Turkish education system. Teachers are expected to give homework after each lesson. Homework is considered to be an important means of doing revision. It is believed that revision helps what has been taught to 'settle' (a common phrase used by teachers in Turkey) in students' minds. Parents also put pressure on their children to do their homework promptly and teachers always use lesson time to check homework. This relates equally to 'main course' and 'skills' lessons.

It would not be common in high schools for teachers to bring many supplementary materials, such as flashcards and posters, unless these were provided as components of the textbook used, especially so in the 'main course' lessons. The only type of extra materials teachers would use would be worksheets and handouts to support the teaching of grammar. These worksheets would usually be made up of grammar exercises compiled from various grammar resource books. In some schools, all of these worksheets and handouts would be collected in folders that would become a part of the resource library of their English department. Teachers would refer to these folders if they needed to support their teaching of grammar or vocabulary. These folders would hold the original copies and teachers would then make photocopies of the ones they would need for their classes. They would also contribute by adding new worksheets they prepared to the existing folders.

Teachers making a transition from language schools to primary schools may experience this change in a different way from those coming from high schools. The following section provides a brief description of language schools.

2.1.4 Language schools

It is important to note that language schools have not been affected by the educational reform of 1997. One of the teachers participating in this study worked in a language school before teaching at primary level. The information presented in this section draws on her description of the language school she worked in, as well as my own experience as a language school teacher.

Language schools in Turkey cater for a variety of language learning needs. With respect to English, language schools provide courses in 1) general English, 2) English for specific purposes (e.g., tourism, business management), 3) English conversation, 4)

preparation for TOEFL (and other similar examinations), 5) preparation for the university English examination, and 6) preparation for the government language examination (which is taken by government officers).

The role of teachers in language schools is to simply cover the curriculum. They are not expected to be involved in extra curricular activities with their students, as teachers in primary or high schools are. Language school teachers also do not have to deal with class management as much as primary and high school teachers. The main reason for this is that language school students take these courses with clear purposes and therefore try to make the best of their time in the classroom. This eliminates most class management problems that high school or primary school teachers may face.

The main difference in teaching methods in language schools compared to other education contexts is the intensiveness of the teaching programme. The language learning needs of adults taking language courses are different from the needs of students in primary and high schools. Adults have an instrumental need in learning the language quickly and efficiently and thus most come to language schools expecting to be able to use the language communicatively in a short period of time. Language school teachers, therefore, generally make more use of group work and pair work activities compared to teachers in primary schools and high schools. Language school teachers focus on teaching the structure of the language, but seem to give equal importance to developing the listening and speaking skills of their students.

The use of extra materials can also be more varied in language classrooms than in high schools. Language schools seem to have more financial opportunities to buy flashcards, posters, and supplementary books for their classes. International textbooks, similar to the situation in high schools, also influence teaching methods in language schools. All language schools use international textbooks and the teachers' main responsibility is to follow these textbooks.

Having described the two contexts teachers participating in this study made a transition from, high school and language schools; in the next section I describe the context into which teachers made the transition, the primary school context.

2.1.5 Primary schools

The Ministry of National Education states that the roles of classroom teachers, who are responsible for one class for the period of one school year and who teach all subjects except music, physical education and art, should be 1) to take into account the rights of their students, 2) to establish cooperation between the school, the families and other educational institutions, 3) to be positive towards teaching, students, the environment and Turkish social

values, 4) to know what and how to teach students, 5) to involve the students actively in the process of learning, 6) to reinforce students' learning in the right amount and at the right time, 7) to identify students' learning difficulties, and 8) to provide opportunities to students to develop themselves in the areas in which they have difficulties (cited in Çetin & Çetin, 2000).

This means that, in the Turkish primary education system, the classroom teachers are culturally seen as figures that students should respect, love, and regard as a 'mother' or 'father'. The teacher is expected to continue the home education at school. They are also expected to strike the right balance between being an authoritative figure and being like a mother/father in their behaviour towards the students. Of relevance here is that, mild forms of reprimanding (e.g., not allowing children to play with friends, taking away things they like from them, not allowing them to do things they like), when bringing up children, are acceptable by Turkish society.

Primary school students are taught, from a very young age, to respect their elders. This is a very important cultural value in Turkish society. As a sign of their respect, children are expected not to interrupt when their elders are talking, not to ask too many questions, or to question their elders' knowledge. In the classroom, these values become apparent in the way students are expected to behave towards their teachers. All students stand up when their teacher enters the classroom and they greet the teacher. Students raise their hands if they want to talk (comment or answer a question) and they are expected to stand up when given permission to speak.

Another role of classroom teachers is to deal with young children's parents. This is especially so in private schools, where parents are considered, by the administration, as the financial backbones of the schools, and are therefore given a lot of say in their children's school and classes. Parents feel that they should have control over their children's learning as much as teachers do, and in some cases there are tensions between teachers and parents on what is considered 'proper' teaching methods. Parents are often seen around the school grounds during the school day and they sometimes enter their children's class during a lesson without advance notice.

The dominant teaching style in Turkish primary schools is similar to how Asian primary teaching contexts have been described. For example, Lamie's (2004) description of a Japanese context, Young and Lee's (1987, cited in Pennington, 1996), Cortazzi and Jin's (1996) description of Chinese context, and Lewis and McCook's (2002) description of a Vietnamese context. In these contexts, learning is based on a transmission model, which Pennington (1996) defines as follows:

Learning is the accumulation of a knowledge store acquired in a process of

simple transfer of information from a source to a receiver. The focus of learning is on the source (e.g., its credibility and reliability) and the characteristics of the information the source provides which make it easy or difficult to receive (e.g., its clarity and quantity). (p. 339)

The Turkish primary education system shows many characteristics of this transmission model. Teachers instruct from the front of the classroom and they present the content in a clear format in order to enhance student comprehension. Students all perform the same task at the same time. Teachers are expected to 'give' (in Turkish colloquial usage) the content and students are expected to 'give back' what they learned to the teacher. The 'giving back' refers to students being able to display their knowledge of the subject in oral or written forms of assessment. Memorisation is also a part of the learning culture in Turkey although more and more schools seem to be discouraging their teachers' reliance on memorisation techniques in their teaching.

Giving homework and checking homework regularly is another important feature of primary schools in Turkey. Students usually have a separate small notebook in which they write the homework for that day and parents are told to make sure that the students complete their homework for the following day.

As Türnüklü and Galton (2001) report, there is a lack of use of a variety of teaching materials in Turkish primary classrooms. The main source of materials in primary subject classes is the textbooks assigned by the Ministry of National Education. Bayrakçı (2005) states that in the Turkish education system, textbooks hold a more important place than any other teaching resource. These textbooks are usually organised into units, and each unit has an introductory text that is followed by exercises. These exercises are, generally, not embedded in any meaningful context. There is a lack of game-like activities in these textbooks for children.

The following section looks at how English is integrated into the above-described primary curriculum.

2.1.6 Primary English (after the reform)

An important result of the educational reform of 1997 was that English became compulsory until the age of 14. If we take the state system, learning of English takes place starting from fourth grade as compared to sixth grade previously. In private schools, English is started in kindergarten or first grade. Such an extension of language learning, spanning more years, is, in Turkey, considered important for eventual attainment (Tebliğler Dergisi, 1997). It is thought that the learning of a language over many years would be more effective than

learning a language by intensive exposure over only one year (which was the case in preparatory programmes of ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ schools before the reform - see Section 2.1.3).

In the new system, private schools feel pressure to bring their students’ English level up to the level once achieved by the end of the preparatory programmes of ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ schools. This pressure is added to by the parents’ perception that it is better to learn a language over many years than over a single year. School administrators and teachers often find themselves trying to convince parents that although younger children (e.g., seven and eight year olds) will have more time to learn the language, their cognitive development is not the same as a twelve-year-old students’. Hence, it is not necessarily realistic to expect children to learn the language ‘better’ just because they started learning it earlier. As a result, parents are often asked to be patient and not to put too much pressure on their young children.

Adding to the above pressure is the potential anxiety caused by English placement examinations required by private ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ schools. Those students who have passed the general (subject-wide) entrance examination for private ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ schools at the end of their eight year primary education, must, in addition, take an English placement examination. The reason for this is that several subjects in these high schools are taught entirely in English. If they pass this English examination they start ninth grade automatically. If, however, they fail this examination, they need to take one year preparatory English (just as all students had to before the reform). The reality is that not all private primary school students manage to pass the English placement examinations, even though they have studied English since first grade. Private primary school teachers are, therefore, under pressure to bring their students’ English to a satisfactory level (in this case, a level determined by the individual placement examinations given by ‘colleges’ and ‘Anatolian’ high schools).

In the new education system, primary English language teachers have a variety of responsibilities similar to, although not as extensive as, that of the classroom teacher. These responsibilities include being involved in students’ extra-curricular activities (such as going on field trips and organising class shows). They also sometimes need to cover for the classroom teacher when she is absent. In some private schools, English language teachers even act as assistant classroom teachers, serving as support to the actual classroom teacher.

In almost all primary schools, both state and private, English teachers conduct their lessons in students’ main classroom. That is, students do not go to a separate classroom designated for English lessons. As such, English teachers almost always conduct their lessons in a class, the layout of which is determined by the classroom teacher. In some cases, English teachers change the layout of the desks for their own lesson but most of the time they do not

bother with this as doing this takes time away from their lesson.

The teaching techniques used by primary English language teachers are usually quite different from the teaching methods used by classroom teachers. Firstly, in primary school English classes the 'formal' nature of classroom teachers' lessons (described in Section 2.1.5) is replaced by a more informal atmosphere with more visible physical activity around the classroom. Textbooks seem to be a major influence here. The influence of textbooks is particularly strong when they are followed rigorously, as is often the case with English language teachers newly appointed to teach young learners. Johnson (1995, p. 137) states that teachers who are non-native speakers of English "may find commercial materials to be their only source of linguistic and cultural information about English" and that therefore, they "may depend heavily on commercial materials for their syllabus design, lesson planning, and instructional activities". In the same way as non-native speaker teachers, teachers teaching young learners for the first time may also seek guidance from the textbook in terms of class management and the types of activities to use with young students. Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 317) also suggest that textbooks provide "confidence and security" to teachers. They go on to state that:

Textbooks survive and prosper primarily because they are the most convenient means of providing the structure that the teaching-learning system-particularly the system in change-requires. (p.317)

The variety of games, activities, songs and role-plays proposed by international textbooks seem to encourage primary English language teachers and students to be physically more active compared to classroom teachers. Also, students in English lessons tend to be physically more active compared to when they have a lesson with their classroom teachers due to the opportunities provided by these games and activities that are a part of the English language classroom.

This element of physical activity also brings with it an extra responsibility for English primary teachers. This is the responsibility of organising the classroom for learning and managing children's behaviour. Due to this energetic nature of lessons, English primary teachers seem to have more class management concerns compared to classroom teachers.

The matter of when to introduce reading and writing, or, literacy skills, into the English classroom is an ongoing debate in private primary schools. Some schools promote literacy in English as soon as children begin to read and write in Turkish. That is, some schools feel pressured to start teaching reading and writing fairly early in the first grade in order to be able to prove to parents that their child is learning something. Other schools start

teaching reading and writing in English after children have become somewhat fluent in their Turkish literacy skills.

In primary English language classrooms, a type of material commonly used, (in addition to the main textbook), are flashcards. Teachers also use posters (mainly those provided by textbooks but also those prepared by teachers) and puppets (if the textbook provides them as a component). The types and amount of materials English language teachers and classroom teachers use are similar, with a difference being that in English classrooms the materials are all written in English. The primary level classrooms of private schools, especially the younger levels, are decorated with children's work from their classroom teachers' lessons, their English lessons or art lessons. Other examples of displayed materials in the classrooms are posters, descriptions of class rules and birthday charts.

More detailed descriptions of each of the schools that the participating teachers worked in during my fieldwork are provided in Chapter 5. In the next section, I describe pre-service training of English language teachers in Turkey. Subsequently, I talk about in-service training possibilities for English language teachers.

2.1.7 Training of teachers

In the Turkish education system, there is a growing gap between the number of existing English language teachers and the number of English language teachers needed (Seferoğlu, 2004). There have been several government plans to increase the number of teachers, involving the introduction of various teacher certification programmes. This is in addition to the main initial teacher education programmes provided by universities, which are "far from meeting the high demand for teachers of English" (Seferoğlu, 2004, p. 153). One of the additional teacher certification programmes that was introduced by the government in 1990's was one where graduates of English-medium undergraduate programmes from any university, and from any academic field, could take two semesters of training and become qualified teachers. This received a lot of criticism (Simşek & Yıldırım, 2001, cited in Seferoğlu, 2004). The general idea behind these criticisms was that such programmes resulted in a decrease in the quality of teaching. Another teacher certification programme implemented by the government was one where trainees got face-to-face training by English language teachers for two years, and received distance education for the remaining two years. This provided them with a four-year degree, which was more comprehensive than the previously mentioned two-semester programme. However, the trainers leading these certification programmes were not appropriately qualified. Some did not even have a diploma in teaching, and some did not have any experience in teaching (Seferoğlu, 2004). Such attempts illustrate the urgency felt by the government to increase the number of existing English language teachers, and not worrying

about the quality of these programmes. The integration of English into the primary curriculum created a further incentive for the government to train more teachers, as there was a sudden increase in English classes around Turkey.

Shortly after the reform, a module in “Teaching English to Young Learners” was added to the third year of the four-year university-based initial teacher training programmes. This ensured that two years after the start of the new education system, when these students graduated, they could immediately start teaching in primary English classrooms.

The Ministry of National Education has an in-service teacher training department. State school teachers are required to participate in the training provided by the Ministry of National Education teacher trainers (Civil Servants’ Law, 1965, cited in Özer, 2004, p. 91). Such in-service training is mainly organised as short-term courses or seminars and takes place on weekends or after school hours. As Özer (2004) discovered in his study, the majority of the teachers, although they feel the need for professional development, do not attend these seminars willingly. They give reasons such as, 1) they are not consulted about the contents of the teacher training programmes, 2) their needs are not considered in any other ways, 3) there is a lack of qualified instructors in the teacher training programmes, and 4) poor accommodation and dining facilities where the in-service training takes place. From his findings, Özer concludes that scientific research methods are not used to assess the in-service training needs of teachers, that the education system lacks motivational factors that encourage teachers to attend training (taking place during their time off work), and that, generally, the administrators of schools consider in-service training unimportant and consequently do not give it proper attention.

The situation described above also applies to English language teachers. Although there were a few one-off attempts to provide training for English language teachers, in the area of ‘Young Learners’, these took place a long time after the implementation of the reform. Also, these attempts were not adequate for fulfilling the demands of teachers who had made a transition from teaching in high schools to teaching in primary schools (Yalın, 2001).

Alternative forms of in-service training for teachers starting to teach young learners for the first time began to emerge soon after the implementation of the reform. However, such training was sporadic (i.e., one-off seminars) rather than systematic. International publishers were active in training teachers of young learners. While they promoted their young learner textbooks they also provided training to teachers mainly through their own educational consultants. They also invited ‘experts’ from other countries, such as authors of their textbooks, to give seminars on ‘Teaching English to Young Learners’. Other international education organisations (such as the British Council) located in Turkey also provided young learners courses. Overall, the majority of teachers beginning to teach English to young

learners were ‘under-trained’ when they first entered their primary school classes. In the next section, I consider the challenges teachers without prior training in teaching English to young learners may face when they enter the primary classroom.

2.2 Teaching English to Young Learners

Teachers who have experienced the transition from teaching older learners to teaching young learners are likely to face a number of challenges as first-time primary school teachers. Based on the description of the high school, the language school and the primary school contexts in the Turkish education system in Sections 2.1.3 through to 2.1.6, it may be possible to make some guesses as to the challenges teachers experiencing such a transition may face. The following list suggests a few ways in which English language teachers in Turkey may find it a challenge to start teaching young learners for the first time after having taught high school or language school students.

- In primary English classes in Turkey there is generally more noise and movement compared to high school or language school classes. *Managing young learner classes* may require different skills and strategies than dealing with older students and this may present a challenge for teachers entering the young learner classroom for the first time after having taught older learners.
- *Teaching techniques* used in primary school English classes are different from those used in high school or language school classes in Turkey. Teachers may find it challenging to adapt their teaching to include types of activities they never used before in their teaching.
- The use of a greater variety of *teaching materials* is encouraged more in primary English classrooms compared to high school and language school classes. Teachers making the transition from teaching high school or adult students to young learners may need to spare more time than they used to for finding or preparing a variety of materials for their young students.
- Teachers who used to teach older learners may need to find a number of ways to support children’s understanding by using more *simple language, body language, and gestures*, especially if their lessons had been more of a lecturing style, as is often the case in Turkish high schools.

The above bullet points highlight a need for understanding better what is involved in teaching young learners as compared to teaching older learners. In order to understand what is involved in teaching young learners, it is necessary to start off by gaining an insight into

children's nature and their general characteristics. To begin with, it may be important to note that children do not come to the English classroom with a clear understanding of why they are learning the language, especially in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context such as Turkey, where they do not have much use for the language in their daily life. It is, therefore, important for teachers to create conditions in the classroom that will motivate children to learn English (Moon, 2000). One of the ways of motivating children to learn English is by making the language learning experience meaningful for them.

One of the main characteristics of children as learners is their need to find meaning in anything that they are engaged in (Donaldson, 1978; Halliwell, 1992). As Halliwell (1992) states, children have an instinct for indirect learning, which suggests that children may not approach an English language task with the aim of learning English, but more so for the aim of having fun, completing a challenging task or accomplishing a non-linguistic goal such as 'winning a game'.

It is also important for young learner teachers to take into account children's instinct to focus on meaning, their instinct for fun and games, their instinct for talking, their instinct for fantasy and their creative ability (Halliwell, 1992) when trying to create a classroom environment conducive for learning English. These characteristics of children are, to a large extent, what makes children different from older learners, and what makes teaching children different from teaching adults or high school students.

Research also shows that young learner teachers use different means of teaching their students than teachers of older learners. For example, an Australian study conducted by Hird, Thwaite, Breen, Milton and Oliver (2000), comparing the practices of ESL teachers of young learners and older learners, found that teachers of children used the students' L1 (mother tongue) more in their classes, that they used more group activities and that they would explicitly model the language for their students; teachers of children drew on children's experiences and interests, and used recycling and revision more than teachers of adults; teachers of children used more practical and hands on activities whereas teachers of adult learners used more drilling and rehearsal; and teachers of children focused more on children's individual needs and interests, whereas teachers of adults focused on "linguistic competencies as seemingly objective criteria to be applied to everybody" (p. 29).

Another study by Olsen (1998), with primary and secondary school English language teachers in Norway, showed that teachers of young learners in grades one to three focused mostly on three things: to speak English with the children, to do songs and rhymes and to use audio-materials. Teachers of young learners from grades four to six generally stated that they used games, competitions and role-plays the most. Finally, teachers of teenagers mostly used writing activities, as they felt that using role plays or songs and rhymes were perceived as too

childish for the teenage students. Olsen's findings suggest that traditional methods, like writing activities and reading aloud, were more widespread in teenage classes as compared to young learner classes.

The following two sections summarise, in the form of a general framework, what seems to be agreed in the literature to be current good practice in teaching English to young learners. This discussion is divided into two parts for analytical purposes. In the first section, I focus on the young learner classroom environment more generally, and in the second section I focus on the particular teaching techniques and activities used in young learner language classrooms. These two sections are followed by a conclusion that attempts to understand the above bullet points, and thereby the challenges faced by teachers making the transition to teaching young learners.

2.2.1 Characteristics of young learners' classroom environment

In this section I talk about the general characteristics of young learner classes that make them environments conducive for learning. An exploration of the literature seems to indicate that young learner classroom environments should be 1) secure, 2) predictable, 3) constructive, 4) confidence-building, and 5) target language-based. These five characteristics, including their basis in the literature, are discussed in this section.

Wragg (2001) claims that effective class management involves ensuring that children engage in the task at hand. To engage the child in the task the teacher needs to create the optimal conditions in the classroom. Moon (1991) suggests a few ways in which teachers can organise their classes, such as planning, organising the physical environment, establishing routines and conventions, developing strategies for managing tasks (i.e., getting students' attention, giving instructions, monitoring and ending the lesson). Moon refers to these processes as ways of "creating the conditions for language learning to take place" (p. 40). Such a view sees children as active and autonomous learners (Pointon & Kershner, 2000). The teachers' main role, within this view, is to create the optimal atmosphere for children to be able to construct meaning from their learning experience.

One of the ways of establishing a classroom environment that is conducive to learning is to create a sense of **security** for the children. From the literature it is evident that giving children individual attention, praising their achievements and efforts, speaking in L1 at strategic moments, and bridging the gap between the home environment and the school environment, may all contribute towards creating a sense of security for children. These are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

Upon entering a classroom environment for the first time, children are likely to very quickly become aware of the decrease in the individual attention they get as compared to the

attention they get from their parents. This may cause children to feel less secure in the classroom environment. Dean (1992) suggests that for a teacher to help children to learn as well as give them individual attention, they need to consider children's individual needs, abilities and interests. According to Dean, a primary school teacher needs to find ways of getting children involved in group work so that they can get the majority of the children started on their work and can then have the opportunity to work with individual children.

Teachers' use of L1 in their lessons may also support children emotionally by giving them a sense of security (Moon, 2000). Teachers can make use of L1 when trying to explain certain things that are otherwise too complicated for children to understand in the target language. This may help children by giving them some clarity, therefore making them feel more secure. Also, teachers could soften the mood, and lower children's anxiety by using L1 whenever they feel it becomes necessary.

The feeling of security could also be enhanced by teachers' efforts to bridge the gap between the children's home and school environment. Dean (1992) points out that children's readiness to learn in school depends on the collective support children receive from their home environment and their school environment. The interaction between teachers and children's parents may help parents become aware of their children's progress at school. This could then allow parents opportunities to establish some continuity from the school to the home environment for their children. If the teachers were to keep in touch with parents on a regular basis, report to them on their child's progress, and give them responsibilities such as helping their children with their school work, they may be able to bridge the gap between the school and the home environment.

Another characteristic of a young learner classroom that may help build a sense of security for children is **predictability**. Routines and class rules can be a means of creating predictability. If children know what teachers expect from them, such as how to get the teachers' approval, what they are allowed to do and not do, and when they may or may not do certain things, it is likely that they will feel more secure and more likely to respond to the class activities and teachers' instructions positively. Brewster, Ellis and Girard (1992) suggest that children need to know the rules and routines in a classroom in order to know how to behave. They say that "children become aware very quickly of teachers who are inconsistent in their standards of discipline or who maintain discipline simply through sarcasm, ridicule or bullying" (p. 131), and then, they do not participate in lessons. Moyles (1995) also acknowledges the role of routines. However, she cautions against it becoming boring, and suggests that a change in routine once in a while will help keep children alert and interested. The right balance, therefore, must be found, keeping the classroom predictable and at the same time stimulating.

To allow opportunities for children to predict what will happen next and, thereby, to also foster conditions where they can feel secure, it is also important for the classroom environment to be **constructive**. That is, if children are given a purpose for what they are asked to do, and if they are explained the reasons for teachers' actions and reactions, they may be more likely to behave more consistently themselves. This, then, could prompt a productive and positive cycle where security, predictability and the constructive characteristics of a classroom reinforce each other.

One way of achieving such a constructive classroom environment is by establishing effective communication with children. Moyles (1995) believes that telling children why they are undertaking an activity, and what they are expected to do, is important for children coping with activities or tasks. She points out that children have a different level of understanding from adults and that such guidance is valuable for children in orienting themselves for learning. Teachers of young learners may not feel the need to tell the purpose of activities or give other explanations about what they expect children to do in class, arguing that children would not yet understand these explanations. Galton (1994) takes a critical stance towards not telling children the purpose of activities just because teachers feel that they might not understand. He shows how a young student in a research project would have been able to contribute to a class project much better if his teacher had told the class why they were doing the particular activity and what the purpose of the activity was. Also, Galton (1994) advises teachers to give explanations like, "I need quiet because I can't give these instructions", rather than simply saying, "I need quiet" (p. 64). Even for very young children, teachers' consistent explanation of the purpose of activities, and explanations of why she reacts in certain ways, may be useful in eventually getting children accustomed to looking for a purpose in what happens, asking for explanations, and in general becoming more goal oriented and thereby more constructive.

Furthermore, a constructive classroom environment involves rewarding children's achievements rather than reprimanding them for what they have not achieved. That is, an environment where children can feel that their achievements are recognised is likely to help children develop self-confidence (Dean, 1992), as well as develop some responsibility for their own learning (Moon, 2000). Gipps (1994) reports on a series of studies into primary classrooms in Britain, which reveal that a positive atmosphere with encouragement and praise for children helps their learning. Moon (2000, p. 32-33) emphasises the importance of being sensitive towards children's feelings, encouraging them, giving positive reinforcement, as well as giving responsibility to underachievers and praising them. Dean (1992) suggests that children whose parents and teachers praise them and encourage them are more likely to become confident in themselves and that this confidence would carry forward into their adult

age. Research also shows that children whose parents and teachers approach them in a negative way, always emphasising the mistakes children make, are likely to have more difficulty in developing a strong and confident self-image (Dean, 1992).

A common method of reinforcing positive behaviour is by giving children rewards, like stickers or stars, for their positive behaviour and achievements. The concrete display, in class, of children's achievements and the outcome of children's work could also act to reinforce positive behaviour. Finally, in addition to creating a constructive environment, rewarding positive behaviour further promotes a sense of security and predictability in the classroom.

Teachers who try to make their classroom environment constructive also allow children to become self-confident and encourage them to take responsibilities for their behaviour and their learning. Such a learning environment can be described as one that is **confidence-building**. In this environment, not all the authority resides with the teacher. Brewster et al. (1992) suggest that in a classroom environment where the teacher has claimed all the authority, and students are expected to sit quietly in their seats, will decrease the chance for learning to take place. Galton (1994) warns against teachers creating an environment where children feel too dependent on the teacher to the extent that they need reaffirmation all the time, and thus cannot develop the ability to work independently on individual tasks. He expresses his concerns in the following quote.

A teacher may be warm and friendly, as prescribed by the direct instruction model, but this classroom climate may induce in the children a dependency upon the teacher and an unwillingness to take risks when answering teacher's questions or working independently on a challenging problem. (p. 54)

One of the ways in which teachers can make children aware of their responsibility for their own learning and for their own behaviour is by actually giving children responsibility. Allowing children opportunities to get involved in decision-making processes will give children some authority, and make them feel more self-confident. Galton (1994) also states that negotiating rules of behaviour is a successful strategy, because then the rules become everyone's rules, and when they are broken it is not necessarily a "defeat" for the teacher.

The development of a sense of confidence in young learners is important for their motivation for learning English. Cameron (2003) draws attention to this issue when discussing the challenges of starting language education at very early grades. She suggests that an expansion of TEYL around the world requires that careful attention be paid to the challenge of keeping children motivated for learning a language for such a long period of

time. Cameron points out that this is particularly important for the transition of students from primary school to secondary school. She states:

If unsuccessful early learning demotivates pupils, and they come to believe that English lessons are difficult, or boring, or a waste of time, then secondary teachers will not only need to keep pupils motivated for a further five years: somehow they will also have to remotivate those who already feel they cannot succeed in language learning. (p. 106)

In sum, good practice in the young learner classroom includes creating a sense of security, predictability, making the environment constructive and developing a sense of confidence in children. This involves creating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning, which may keep children motivated and stimulated. However, this must take place in an environment which is **target language-based**.

It may become necessary for teachers to use L1 when giving instructions, long explanations or when trying to show affection to children, so that children know what is happening and can feel secure (Moon, 2000). It is also important that children be able to use L1, especially in very early age groups because children need to talk in order to learn any language and also for their thinking to develop (Vygotsky, 1978). Edwards and Mercer (1987) emphasise the importance of language for children's learning in general and they make the point that it is important for teachers to try to find ways of creating a common understanding with the children in the language that is used during the lessons. However, Moon cautions that when conducting a large portion of lessons in L1 children "will get limited exposure to English" (p. 67). Moon suggests that using L1 is "a strategy to be used when it will assist pupil's learning English and not an end in itself" (p. 67). In other words, the children must feel that the purpose of the classroom experience is to learn the target language.

Encouraging a target language orientation in the classroom needs to go hand-in-hand with creating security, predictability, a constructive atmosphere and building confidence. For example it is important that routine phrases and instructions teachers use in the classroom, as well as all the class displays on the walls be in the target language. One aspect of the predictable classroom environment could be that the target language is predictable. For this, class rules and routines that teachers always use can be formulated and used in English. Cameron (2001) draws attention to routines as effective means of supporting children's use of target language. She gives the example of class management routines that are used frequently and regularly in primary classrooms as a way for children to feel secure about understanding the foreign language. These routines may consist of phrases like, "*please give out the*

scissors” (p. 10). Teachers can then make such phrases more complex, appropriately scaffolding the language for children, such as “*Give out a pair of scissors for each group*” (p. 11).

In addition to using the target language for class rules and routines, it is also important for the class displays, like posters, flashcards, as well as rewards, certificates, or other positive reinforcement means like stickers to appear in the target language. This will also give children the sense that the purpose of the lesson is to learn the target language. If the target language were used consistently in the classroom environment, children would be able to associate their classroom environment with the target language.

To summarise, the characteristics of a young learner classroom that make it an environment which is conducive to learning, include:

- The feeling of **security** it provides children, which is likely to help them function in their classes sociably;
- Its **predictable** nature that provides children with some guidelines which might, in turn help them feel more secure;
- Its **constructive** nature, where children are rewarded for their achievements, and are treated like ‘thinking’ individuals which may help them to feel successful and important;
- Its **confidence-building** nature, whereby children are given responsibilities for their own learning and could therefore, again, feel a sense of achievement and success for being able to do certain things on their own;
- It being **target language-based** so children know the purpose of their language class is for learning the language and could therefore have a focus and a reason for being in that class.

2.2.2 Characteristics of young learner classroom language activities

In this section I talk about the characteristics of activities that can make the young learner classroom conducive for children learning English. These characteristics are informed by basic principles of teaching young learners provided in the literature on TEYL. Such a discussion informs the participating teachers’ approach to teaching young learners for the first time in the present study. The characteristics of activities include them being 1) concrete, 2) meaningful, 3) challenging but accessible, and 4) target language-based.

One of the main differences between children and older learners has to do with the ability of older learners to think abstractly. Children, especially those who are very young, on

the other hand, need to be introduced to concepts through **concrete** means (Cameron, 2001; Moon, 2000). Wood (1988) suggests that activities that provide ‘concrete and perceptual support’ can help children’s learning. He argues that if the topics and activities relate to students’ knowledge of the topic, and thus, the topics and activities are sensitive to students’ interest area, taking account of their age and context, then this would provide children with concrete and perceptual support.

Other ways in which teachers can introduce language through concrete means is through visual aids, like pictures, posters, flashcards, and gestures. Also, making the language learning experience more concrete, and therefore also more meaningful for children can be achieved by focusing on things that children can see and hold, and by involving children in hands-on activities (Moon, 2000). Moon suggests that it is important to support children’s learning starting from the concrete, by using pictures, materials that children can see and touch, and moving to the abstract, by using words, or meta-language. The ‘here-and-now’ principle allows children to experience language learning through concrete means (Halliwell, 1992). Children are not required to think of hypothetical situations and scenarios but are shown, or given things to work/play with in the classroom and can therefore experience a situation by living it, not just thinking about it.

Related to the principle of ‘here-and-now’ and the need to provide children with concrete experiences is the idea of making the language activities in the young learner classroom **meaningful** for children. Rixon (1991) suggests that for children, meaningful means ‘fun’. If children have fun and they enjoy a particular activity or game, they would usually want to do more of it, which, in turn, is likely to increase chances of exposure to the language.

A study conducted by Nikolov (1999), on children’s attitude towards learning English, provides children’s point of view on what they enjoy about language classes. In her study, when asked about class activities that they liked the best, most children in first and second grades made a general statement that they liked playing games the best. Children in the third, fourth and fifth grades mentioned more specific games that they liked, such as, Bingo and playing cards. Nikolov points out that the general tendency of young learners in her study “reflected an enthusiasm towards playful language learning activities, intrinsically motivating tasks and materials, and a negative attitude towards tests” (p. 51). Tongue and Gibbons (1982) also support the use of activities such as games in language classes, claiming that they are likely to make the language learning experience more meaningful for children. They suggest that such activities provide children with a purpose for using the language and also for interacting with their peers. This is echoed by Khan (1991), who states that in playing together, children interact, and in interacting they develop language skills.

Halliwell (1992) draws attention to children's 'instinct' for indirect learning, and suggests that it is useful to make use of this 'instinct' by setting up real tasks in the language classroom, i.e., tasks that resemble what children would do out of the classroom, in their play environment. In addition to making the language learning experience meaningful for children, such real tasks will enable children to experience the 'here-and-now' in the language classroom. For example, instead of telling a child to hypothetically think about going to the supermarket, if such a role-play situation was set up in the classroom with flashcards or realia, this would become a meaningful language learning experience for children with a "real task" that they are also likely to play out of school.

Songs, rhymes, and poems, can also create a meaningful context for language learning (Brewster et al., 1992) as traditional songs and rhymes may be or are likely to be a part of children's everyday life. Similarly, making use of imagination in the language classroom can be another means of creating meaningful language activities for children. Tough (1995) states that imaginative play requires children to think beyond their present experiences as they build up imagined scenarios for their play. They often use elements of fairy stories and fables in their play (Rixon, 1991). These elements from fairy stories or fables children read in their mother tongue as well as those introduced in their English classes could be used for engaging children in learning by creating an environment of fantasy and imagination for them in the classroom, and thus making language meaningful.

Another characteristic of activities in a young learner classroom that is conducive to learning is their ability to offer children a level of **challenge**, but to also be **accessible** at the same time. This phenomenon is explained by Cameron (2001) who proposes that whether children learn or not by engaging in a task depends on the "dynamic relationship between demands and support" (p. 26) in an activity. She suggests that if demands are very high then children will find the activity very difficult and not succeed in completing it or in using the target language to complete it. Conversely, if there is too much support then children will not be challenged. Cameron gives the example of a teacher explaining the meaning of a reading text in children's first language as too much support, whereby children will not even feel a need to think about the target language. Cameron suggests that the right balance between demands and support is one where the child is challenged into their "space of growth" (p. 28), that is, where the demands on the student are slightly higher than the support provided. This 'space of growth' is also described by Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD). ZPD refers to the distance between what children can achieve by themselves and what they can achieve with the support of a more experienced other. Challenging but accessible activities will help children gain a sense of achievement as they will neither be disillusioned by the difficulty of the process of language learning nor see it as a very simple feat that they

do not even need to put any energy into.

One means by which activities in language classrooms can be made challenging but accessible for young children is through the interaction of the teacher and the children. Vygotsky (cited in Wood, 1988, p. 26) believes that “a child’s *potential* for learning is revealed and *realised* in interactions with knowledgeable others” (original emphasis). Similarly, Bruner (1966, cited in Gipps, 1994, p. 23) sees learning “as taking place through interaction with an interested adult”. Wood (1988) also points out that children’s knowledge is often a product of the ‘joint construction’ of understanding by the child and more expert members of his culture. Through the ‘joint construction’ of understanding, Wood refers to the role the child’s elders (parents and teachers) play by giving support to the child in learning until the child has ‘internalised’ what is to be learned. Such a concept of support is explained by ‘scaffolding’ (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976, cited in Cameron, 2001, p. 8). For Bruner, “the *processes* that underlie intelligent and adaptive thinking are not exclusive inventions of the child, rather, they are *communicated*, albeit in subtle ways, from the mature to the immature” (original emphasis) (quoted in Wood, 1988, p. 10). This interaction between the “mature and the immature” for supporting children’s learning is frequently acknowledged in the literature (see Donaldson, 1978; Wells, 1985).

Moon (2000) approaches the idea of ‘supporting’ children’s learning through some practical suggestions. She talks about revising vocabulary, keeping instructions simple, giving children a purpose for doing activities, demonstrating and modelling how to do an activity, giving clear feedback to children’s responses, and very importantly choosing and creating activities that are interesting to children as means of supporting children’s learning. Moon also suggests that teachers can assist children’s learning through repeating phrases, and framing questions. Using language at children’s level, adjusting speed of talk such as pausing to give children time to think, and using gestures are all further examples for how teachers can support young learner’s understanding.

A study that emphasises supporting children’s understanding of the target language was conducted by Cabrera and Martinez (2001). They looked at the influence of ‘interactional adjustments’ on primary school children’s comprehension. They argue that not only comprehensible input, which they refer to as linguistically adjusted input, but also ‘interactional adjustment’ is necessary to support children’s understanding. By ‘interactional adjustments’ they refer to repetitions, comprehension checks, and gestures. In their experimental study, stories were read to one group of children using ‘interactional modifications’ and read to another group without using such ‘interactional modifications’. The results showed that the use of repetitions, comprehension checks and gestures helped children’s comprehension.

Hence, activities in the young learner classroom should be concrete, meaningful, and challenging but accessible. The above discussion has also showed that these three characteristics of activities combine together to form activities conducive to learning. However, an important characteristic of classroom activities is missing, and that is that they should be oriented towards being **target language-based**.

Halliwell (1992) emphasises that teachers should be aware of the language learning potential the activities they use offer children, and not just use activities like games as a filler at the end of class time. In a similar vein, Moon (2000, p. 88) suggests that a language-learning activity should involve learners in work that requires use of the language they are learning. In other words, it is important for teachers to recognise the linguistic aim of the activities they use in the class and not use activities like games only for the sake of getting children to enjoy themselves (Rixon, 1991). Rixon warns against teachers becoming so overjoyed at children having fun that they fail to realise that the children are not learning any language, in other words, that the activity does not have a “linguistic challenge” for the children (p. 33). She argues that teachers should consider the “language pay-off” of a game they intend to use in their young learner classes (p. 35).

It should also be pointed out that if activities are made to be concrete, meaningful, and challenging but accessible, then a focus on the target language is facilitated. For example, by playing games that the children are familiar with, by engaging children in concrete activities, and by providing children with an appropriate balance of demands and support, a teacher will be better able to maintain a target language focus in classroom activities.

In sum, the characteristics of young learner language activities that are conducive for learning, include:

- Activities that are **concrete** so that children can experience the ‘here-and-now’;
- Activities that are **meaningful** so they relate to children’s own experiences;
- Activities that are **challenging but accessible** so children receive appropriate amount of support but can also feel confident as a result of accomplishing tasks;
- Activities that are **target language-based** so the aim of teaching language to children is fulfilled.

2.2.3 Challenges in teaching young learners for the first time

From the above exploration of the characteristics of young learner classrooms and the types of activities used in young learner language classrooms it is possible to outline a set of challenges facing teachers who have not taught in such a classroom environment. Taking into consideration the context of the teachers who are the focus of this particular study, the

Turkish educational context, which was outlined in section 2.1 of this chapter, this section looks at possible challenges such a group of teachers may face in teaching young learners for the first time.

In terms of establishing a classroom environment that is conducive to learning, teachers who are used to teaching older learners are likely to recognise that the nature of a young learner classroom is different from a high school or language school classroom. One of the more striking aspects of the young learner classroom may be children's need to feel secure in their classroom environment. Teachers of older students may be somewhat unfamiliar with such a notion as older students may be less likely to show their teacher any need for security explicitly. Similarly, teachers of older learners are not likely to spend as much energy on trying to make the classroom environment predictable for their students. Once they enter a classroom with younger children they may recognise the need for creating class rules, and routines. Teachers of older learners may struggle to determine what kind of rules and routines to create for their new younger age group, as they will most likely not be able to foresee the type of class management issues they will need to deal with. This challenge may become more substantial if teachers have not had much contact with children in their daily lives, and less substantial for teachers who have children of their own, or who have been around young children long enough to know their general characteristics.

In the Turkish culture, it may be difficult for teachers to see the value of explaining children the purposes of activities, involving children in decision-making processes, or giving children responsibilities. The reason for this is that, as described in Section 2.1.5, in Turkish society, children are not encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Instead they are usually told what to do and what to say, and they are not encouraged to talk when their elders are talking, or to ask too many questions. It is a challenge for teachers who may be influenced by such public perception of children to get to know children for who they are, and discover what they can do on their own. It may take time for teachers teaching children for the first time to begin seeing children as active learners, who can be given responsibilities and a say in the classroom.

In addition to the challenges teachers may face in establishing a classroom environment conducive to learning, former teachers of older students may also face challenges in trying to set up language activities that are conducive to learning. In the Turkish education system, the methods used in teaching high school or adult learners English include a more transmission-based approach (see Section 2.1.6) where there is a lot of translating, writing down of grammar rules, memorisation of grammar rules, drilling, and practising grammar rules through worksheets. In other words, language is most often not introduced or practised in any meaningful context. English language teachers who are used to this way of

teaching languages may be surprised to find out that young children are not as capable as older learners of learning a language when it is not embedded in a meaningful context. The challenge, therefore, for teachers who teach English to young learners for the first time, may involve getting to know about children's interests, how their minds work, what they enjoy, what they do out of class, and in their home environment, so that they can begin to make the language learning experience more meaningful for them.

A further challenge for teachers teaching young learners for the first time is exactly how, or to what extent they make use of classroom activities. It may be easy for teachers to get used to the different types of activities that are common in young learner classrooms, like games and songs, as there is ample guidance for how they can use these activities in their textbooks and teacher's books. However, it may not be as easy for teachers to think about the linguistic aims of such activities. Teachers may be mostly concerned with getting the games or songs or other such activities to function properly or with whether children like and enjoy these activities or not. Within the focus on whether children enjoy the activities or not, or whether the activities 'work' or not, teachers may overlook the opportunities for language learning created by these activities.

Once teachers become more in charge of the classroom environment, they are likely to divert their focus to the language content of activities. In other words, if teachers can establish, perhaps together with their students, some class rules and routines and create criteria for appropriate behaviour in their classroom, and get their young students to take these rules and these criteria seriously and follow them, thereby achieving a class environment that is conducive to learning, they may then have the opportunity to deal with teaching of the target language. Without having an environment that is conducive for learning to take place, it may be very difficult for young learner teachers, especially those who are teaching young learners for the first time, to focus on the language that they are teaching, and whether children are learning the language or not.

The characteristics of a young learner classroom environment, and young learner language teaching activities suggest a set of challenges that teachers who move from teaching older learners to teaching young learners may face. These challenges require these teachers to go through a change process. The following chapter reviews the literature on the change process teachers go through when entering new teaching contexts, or when they are exposed to curricular innovation.

3 Perspectives on Teacher Change

This chapter starts with a brief section that situates the present research within the teacher change literature. This initial section suggests three areas of the teacher change literature that may be relevant to the present research. These three areas, covered in the subsequent three sections of this chapter, are: a) teacher change process in the context of teachers having moved from their pre-service training to their first year of teaching, b) teacher change process in the context of a prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or reform, c) teacher change process in the context where there is no prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or reform. The chapter concludes with a summary of insights that are carried forward to the next chapter.

3.1 Situating the Study

With the progressive development of research in the area of teacher education since the beginning of the 1980's, the notion of studying 'the teacher' has been receiving considerable attention. Freeman and Richards (1996, p. 1) have clearly indicated the need to "understand more about ... what they [teachers] know about language teaching, how they think about their classroom practice, and how that knowledge and those thinking processes are learned through formal teacher education and informal experience on the job".

The present research investigates English language teachers' process of change following a transition from one teaching context to another. It is very rare to find studies that focus on experienced teachers who change teaching contexts and how they cope with such a transition. Burns (1996) conducted one such study. She looked at teachers who moved from teaching advanced level learners to beginner level learners. Another example is teachers starting to teach in a new country. Beynon et al. (2004), as well as Freema (2004) conducted studies of how immigrant teachers coped with the new culture they became a part of after years of experience of teaching in a different culture. Facing such a transition, as Burns (1996, p. 154) suggests in her title, is like "starting all over".

Burns' study (1996) is of particular relevance to the present research as it focuses on English language teachers' experiences of transition. In her study of six experienced English language teachers of advanced adult learners who began to teach beginner level students, Burns was interested in how teachers' forms of practice could change with reflection. All her participating teachers received support from in-service sessions and curriculum support teachers. However, they identified the needs of their learners themselves and made their own decisions about planning and preparation of course content, materials and assessment tools.

Burns provides a detailed analysis of data from one of the participating teachers. This teacher stated that she felt like she was “starting all over again” (p. 154) although she was an experienced teacher. She admitted to “feelings of uncertainty about the best way to proceed” with her new beginner level learners (p. 159). She said that she had to make changes about her view of language use and usage. With her previous advanced learners her language use was ‘communicative’. However, she experienced a tension about whether to focus on language use or usage with the beginner level students. The other teachers also suggested that most of the time they were ‘feeling their way around’ during the lessons and they relied on their previous teaching experience to “test out successful approaches to planning” (p. 169).

Studies such as the one conducted by Burns contribute to the literature on experienced teachers and the specific challenges they face, or the advantages they have over their novice counterparts when they encounter a new teaching context. According to McAlpine and Crago (1995) prior experience helps teachers to predict certain outcomes and make decisions about their practice. If teachers have a lot of prior teaching experience they may find it easier to predict outcomes and “anticipate possible situations in lessons” (Tsui, 2003, p. 27) and therefore make decisions more efficiently and appropriately in their new context by drawing on their previous experience.

However, if the new teaching situation, for example teaching young learners for the first time, is sufficiently different from their previous practice, then it may be more difficult for teachers to make the necessary adjustment to their teaching techniques. This may be especially true if teachers were set in their ways of teaching. In such cases, changing what already exists may be more of a challenge than learning from scratch. As Sikes (1992) explains:

Experienced teachers who have been teaching for some years will have developed ways of doing things which they have found to work for them in their situations. Consequently they may be reluctant to abandon tried and tested methods for new ones which they may be afraid will fail. (p. 47)

In such situations, personal qualities (e.g., being a risk-taker or having confidence) may play a role in experienced teachers’ transition from one context to another. That is, teachers who have some years of teaching experience behind them may be able to carry forward their confidence in their practice to a new teaching context. This may be an important difference between a novice teacher and an experienced teacher. In a similar vein, teachers who have taught for some years may be more open to taking risks in the classroom. In comparison, novice teachers may be more likely to follow the textbook or curriculum closely and ‘play it

safe' to avoid any troublesome situations.

Beyond the studies conducted by Burns (1996), Beynon et al. (2004) and Freema (2004), I have not managed to identify studies that investigate the transition of experienced teachers from one teaching context to another. However, there are three areas of existing research that may help inform the present investigation. The **first** of these areas is the study of pre-service teachers moving to their first year of teaching. Research conducted on teachers in their first-year of teaching, after completing their pre-service training, may provide useful insight for the present study since moving into a first teaching post is one type of transition, the same way as moving from one teaching context to another is a type of transition. Although the background knowledge, experience, age, motivation and expectations of experienced teachers is different from first year teachers, in the absence of studies looking at experienced teachers' process of transition, studies that look at first year English language teachers experience of transition may be useful. They are likely to explore what teachers experience when they first encounter a new teaching context. The **second** area is the study of teacher change that takes place in the context of a prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or reform. This literature may also be relevant to the present study as it looks at the process of teacher change and what may influence teachers' change process. Finally, the **third** area is the study of teacher change in the context where there is no prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or reform. In other words, teachers are not asked to change their practices in certain ways but they change their practices because they feel the need to. This latter area of teacher change literature is particularly relevant for this study as the teachers participating in the present study have not had to change their practice because they were given a prescribed method of teaching young learners following the reform. Instead, the change resulted from their own need to change their practices. In short, the teachers in the present study were not 'told' or 'advised' what to do following the implementation of English into the primary curriculum.

It should be noted that none of the studies that are reviewed in this chapter are from the Turkish context, or involving Turkish teachers. This is not because there has been no research done with Turkish teachers as participants. Rather, this is because I have not managed to identify any studies involving Turkish teachers addressing the substantive issues surrounding teacher change covered in this chapter.

3.2 Pre-service Teachers Moving to their First Year of Teaching

In this section I look at studies that investigate how newly qualified teachers cope with teaching in their first year. Many of the studies that look at teacher transition are focused on

the transition from pre-service teacher training programmes to the first year of teaching (e.g., Doecke, Brown & Loughran, 2000; Farrell, 2003; Hebert & Worthy, 2001; McAlpine & Crago, 1995; Ngoh & Tan, 2000, cited in Farrell, 2003; O'Connell Rust, 1994; Olson & Osborne, 1991; Richards & Pennington, 1998; So & Watkins, in press). These studies look at what the student teachers bring with them from their training into their first year of teaching, and how much of their practice is influenced by their education, their 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975), their new teaching context, or their personality. In this section, I focus on two studies that look at language teachers in particular. I do, however, refer to studies from outside the field of language teaching where appropriate.

Farrell (2003) conducted a case study in Singapore of one newly qualified English language teacher who was in his first year of teaching. Farrell found that the teacher went through certain stages in his first year, starting with a sense of idealism and a strong desire to identify with the students. He then started struggling with discipline problems and tried to find quick fixes to these problems. He complained of lack of support from his more experienced colleagues. After the first semester, however, the teacher began to cope better. He established routines both inside and outside his classroom and tried to fit into the culture of the school. He focused on his students' learning and tried to 'put himself in their shoes'. The teacher finished his first year of teaching not only by adjusting to his new teaching culture, but also by making an impact himself. For example, he convinced the principal to look at options for abandoning the mid-term exams, which he thought were not effective. Farrell concludes that the teacher generally coped well in his first year of teaching. However, the teacher complained that he still had not been able to establish discipline in his classes satisfactorily.

Farrell reports that although the teacher coped well in his first year of teaching, he did not get any support from colleagues in accomplishing this. Farrell states that teachers who do not get any support in their first year become more concerned with survival, whereas teachers who do get support and are teaching in a collaborative environment are more likely to experience professional development as opposed to survival. Farrell cites a survey of first year English language teachers that was conducted in Singapore (Ngoh & Tan, 2000, cited in Farrell, 2003). This survey also found that support from colleagues is important for teachers who have just started teaching in a new context.

Studies outside the field of language teaching also support Farrell's findings. O'Connell Rust (1994), in a study looking at the experiences of two newly qualified teachers in America, reports that one of the main problems the teachers faced in their new job was to establish discipline in their classes. Another complaint was the lack of support they received from their colleagues in their struggle to cope with their first year of teaching. In a similar

study, Olson and Osborne (1991) followed four newly qualified Canadian teachers in their first year of teaching. In their study, teachers claimed that establishing control over their classes, like trying to keep children quiet and involved in the lesson, was the most challenging aspect of their teaching. Olson and Osborne also draw attention to the positive impact of emotional support that teachers received from their more experienced colleagues in their first year of teaching.

Richards and Pennington (1998) investigated how five Chinese graduates of a BA (Bachelors of Art) TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) programme coped with their new jobs in secondary school classrooms in Hong Kong. An important element in this study is that English language teachers in Hong Kong are expected to follow a communicative approach, as endorsed by the Ministry of Education. Teachers are trained according to this approach in their university programmes. Richards and Pennington found that the teachers in their study did not use communicative language teaching principles in their classes. They provide a number of reasons for why the teachers “abandoned ... the principles and practices to which they were most centrally exposed in their teacher education course” (p. 186). One of the reasons they give is that teachers were influenced by their own prior experience as students in the Hong Kong school system, which emphasised textbooks, exam preparation, teacher control and use of L1 (in this case Cantonese), alongside the use of English, in giving instructions. Other reasons had to do with the school contexts. That is, all five teachers began their teaching believing in the merits of a communicative approach but were soon confronted with practical constraints that prevented them from using the approach in their classrooms. These constraints included crowded classes, unmotivated students and exam pressure. Other constraints involved experienced teachers exerting pressure on the new teachers to conform to the norms of the school, heavy teaching and non-teaching workloads and a general lack of discipline in the school. Richards and Pennington claim that, “without any relief from these factors and without any reward for innovating in the face of them, the teachers would naturally be led back towards a conservative teaching approach to align themselves with the characteristics of the existing teaching context” (p. 188).

It should be noted that Richards and Pennington seem to take CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) as an ideal, and from this, treat any constraints present in the context as undesirable obstacles to achieving this ideal. In addition, if the teachers’ pre-service education offered a similarly ideal model then the teachers may not have been equipped to deal with the contextual constraints as well as could be. An alternative approach would be to view CLT less like an ideal, and more like something that might need adjusting in response to the context (see Holliday, 1994). The problems simply “exporting” western teaching approaches to the “wider world” create for teachers who try to implement the change are addressed by Wedell

(2003, p. 442). Had teachers in Pennington and Richard's study been presented this alternative model where CLT is not viewed as an ideal in their pre-service education then they might have been more able to deal successfully with the contextual constraints.

3.2.1 Summary

The above studies illustrate some of the experiences of newly qualified teachers. Lack of support from more experienced colleagues seems to be one of the factors that make the first year of teaching difficult for those teachers. First year teachers in Farrell's (2003), O'Connell Rust's (1994) and Olson and Osborne's (1991) studies all emphasised the importance of receiving support, whether it be related to teaching or emotional support, during their adjustment to their new teaching context. The teacher in Farrell's study (2003) managed to develop his own routines and tried to live by the school rules in order to 'fit in' to his new context after some time. However, he did these without the support of any colleagues and expressed that had he received some support it would have helped in his adjustment process.

Newly qualified teachers in Richards and Pennington's (1998) study found it difficult to use what they learned about teaching in their university teacher education programmes in their real classrooms. They reverted to techniques they were taught with when they were students. In other words they were influenced by their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975). Other reasons that teachers in their study did not use what they learned in their training were related to 'unexpected' practical constraints imposed by their school contexts, like managing large classes and dealing with discipline problems. Instead of trying to implement the communicative approach, which they were trained to use in their teaching, these teachers found themselves putting most of their effort into establishing means of interaction with their students. Such interaction may have been important for these teachers to establish some control over their classes and successfully manage their students. In a similar vein, in the studies conducted by Farrell (2003), O'Connell Rust (1994), and Olson and Osborne (1991), teachers beginning to teach for the first time all mentioned that they experienced most difficulty in their first year in trying to establish control and discipline in their classes.

Richards and Pennington (1998) also found that teachers in their study, although expected to teach using the principles of communicative approach, tended to focus more on direct grammar teaching. Reasons for this were the requirements of the context, such as having to prepare students towards examinations. This is especially a problem if there is a mismatch between the teaching curriculum and the assessment system.

The studies reviewed in this section all highlight the importance of contextual factors on teachers' adjustment to their new school in their first year of teaching, but possibly also how teachers need to be supported to deal with contextual factors.

3.3 Teacher Change in the Context of a Prescribed Response

In this section I review studies that look at how teachers change when a curricular innovation or educational reform is introduced, and there is a prescribed response available.

Most of the studies that look at the process of teacher change (how teachers change their practice, their attitudes, their thinking, their beliefs and values) investigate teacher change that takes place following an educational reform at the national level (Day, 2000; Lamie, 2004; Spillane, 2002) or a curriculum innovation at school level (Briscoe & Peters, 1997; Johnston, 1988; Pennington, 1995; Shaw, 1996; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). The work of Hargreaves (1994) and Fullan (1991) provide detailed accounts of the impact of educational change on teachers and how teachers respond, or are expected to respond to these changes.

Richardson (1990, p. 11) states that in this literature on teacher change (where imposed change is being investigated), 'change' is defined as "teachers doing something that others are suggesting they do." She goes on to say that:

The constant changes that teachers make when meeting the changing needs of the students in the classroom or trying out ideas that they hear from other teachers is not recognised in these formulations. A critical feature in this literature is that someone outside the classroom decides what changes teachers will make. (p. 11)

Lamie (2004) investigates four teachers involved in a curriculum innovation, the implementation of CLT in Japanese schools. With the implementation of CLT, teachers were provided with strict guidelines in how to teach English. Teachers were expected to change their existing practices in accordance with the guidelines. Lamie's study uncovered a number of factors that influenced teachers' change process. One of the main factors that influenced the success with which teachers changed their practices was the quality of the training they received. One of Lamie's participant teachers' lack of self-confidence prevented him from trying out new techniques in CLT. However, his confidence was re-established as soon as he received adequate training in how to use the new technique. This shows that guidance given to teachers in implementing a curricular innovation is important in building their confidence.

Lamie states that the influence of the school environment and culture on their change process was stressed by all the participating teachers. For example, they all pointed out that the unsupportive principal was a potential barrier to change.

The teachers participating in Lamie's study talk about the influence of awareness of

what they do in class and why they do it, on their development as teachers and the change process they go through in adapting a new approach (CLT) into their teaching. However, the study shows that teachers becoming aware of their practices and reflecting on their teaching is important for teacher change only in so far as it involves the context in which the teacher works and not only teachers' skills, knowledge and attitudes.

All the teachers in Lamie's study shared the view that teacher training was important to help them raise their awareness of teaching related issues. One teacher said, "One of the main shortcomings of Japanese teachers' training system is that teachers rarely have a chance to get a training course" (p. 132). Lamie's findings suggest that even teachers who are willing to change "must be given the support to do so" (p. 120).

Lamie draws attention to the influence of feedback from students, parents or colleagues, and student outcomes on the teachers' process of change. In her study, teachers said they were more likely to implement CLT in their teaching if they could see student progress and learning based on some activities they conduct using this new teaching approach. Another way in which teachers feel good about changing their practice and therefore put more effort into it is through positive feedback they get from their students as well as the parents and their colleagues.

Lamie reports on a few external factors that played a negative role in teachers' change process. The textbooks teachers used during the implementation of CLT in their classes did not match the principles of CLT. Lamie states that, for this reason, textbooks were a hindrance to teachers' attempts to change their practice. She also mentions that large classes were also a constraint for teachers when they tried to implement CLT in their classes. Another constraint was the examination structure of the Japanese school system. This presented a dilemma for teachers in their attempts to change their practice in response to the implementation of CLT because there was a mismatch between the principles of CLT and the types of exams administered. They were particularly wary about the possibility of the adverse effect changing their teaching practices would have on students' success at university entrance examinations.

In a similar way to Richards and Pennington's study (1998), Lamie's study also seems to take the view that whatever stands in the way of implementing a more 'Western' teaching method in a 'non-Western' teaching context are constraints that hinder the success of the implementation of the new teaching method. Both Lamie and Richards and Pennington seem to be regarding the implementation of CLT, exactly as it is used in 'Western' cultures, into a 'non-Western' culture as a normal process. Only after the implementation do they talk about reasons why certain aspects of the particular method do not work. The findings of both Lamie and Richards and Pennington's studies may have been different had CLT been

adjusted, revised and was implemented into Asian contexts by taking into consideration the peculiarities of the context (see Holliday, 1994).

The findings of Lamie's study led her to develop a model of change. Lamie's model of change includes six 'interconnected' factors that she suggests have an influence on how teachers respond to change. These six factors are, personal attributes, practical constraints, external influences, awareness, training, and feedback. By personal attributes, Lamie refers to issues such as teacher confidence and teacher attitudes. By practical constraints she means factors such as textbooks, resource books, class size, school type, examination structures. Lamie uses the notion of 'awareness' to refer to what some might term 'reflection'. She suggests that for any of the other elements in her theory of change to have any influence, the first condition is that the teacher needs to be aware of these factors. Richardson (1990, p. 12) supports this view by pointing out that "experience is educative only with reflection". The external influences that Lamie refers to in her model of what influences how teachers respond to curricular change are factors such as, the nation, the community, the parents and the school. By training, Lamie refers to the in-service teacher training teachers are provided with. Finally, Lamie's model takes account of student and parent feedback as important factors that influence teacher change.

Pennington (1995), in her study of eight Hong Kong teachers, focused on teachers' reaction to using the process approach to teaching writing as part of a curriculum innovation. Pennington suggests that a mutual adjustment took place between the innovation and the context into which it was introduced, as the teachers adapted process writing to their teacher-centred, transmission-oriented teaching culture. One of the teachers in her study "even made attempts to relate process writing to the ever-present Hong Kong standardized examinations" (p. 725). This provides another example in which the curriculum innovation did not seem to have taken place with full consideration of the context for which it was intended and as a result, teachers implementing the innovation were left to their own devices in adapting the innovation to their own education context.

Pennington also reported a number of factors that were influential in teachers' process of changing their practice to implement the process writing approach. The materials provided, and the training offered in specific classroom techniques, served as an important factor in starting a process of educational innovation and teacher change. She points out that it may take teachers longer to change if they are not strongly supported by their colleagues and the school administration. Also, just like Lamie (2004), Pennington found that teacher change depended on whether or not they received a positive initial response from students to a new teaching technique or teaching materials.

Pennington notes that the number of years of experience teachers had was also an

influence on how quickly they could change their practice to adapt the new process based writing approach into their classes. She found, for example, that the experienced teachers were able to master the procedural aspects of process writing and were able to extract principles for their own materials design quicker than less experienced teachers.

One of the most important influences on teachers' change process was their 'awareness' and their ability to reflect. Pennington's model of change is built around the notion of reflection. Her model, influenced by Schön's (1995) reflective approach, focuses on the change within a teacher's system of beliefs and practices. In her model, she proposes that the teacher change cycle begins when "a dilemma or problem captures the teacher's attention, activates his or her mental processes, and passes through the cognitive-affective filter, rather than being screened out or deflected by it" (Pennington, 1995, p. 722). Through increasingly deep reflection, teachers in her study were able to reconsider their previous notions of teaching and "reconstruct a teaching framework to incorporate the previously contradictory elements" (p. 722).

Briscoe and Peters (1997) studied how twenty-four elementary science teachers changed their practice in response to the introduction of a problem-centred learning approach. The prescribed response, then, was to teach according to a problem-centred approach. Most of the participating teachers were willing to experiment with problem-centred learning in their classrooms. Briscoe and Peters found a few factors that assisted the change that the teachers made in their practices. One of these factors was the brainstorming sessions teachers had with their colleagues, who were also in the same process of trying to change their practice. Most of the participating teachers stated that "knowing that a colleague would be there to try similar activities and discuss successes and failure provided teachers with courage to take risks" (p. 59). Also, the participating teachers met with teachers from other schools on Saturdays, in the context of regular gatherings. Those teachers who did not have 'in-school colleagues' greatly benefited from these Saturday meetings. Finally, Briscoe and Peters also found that a teacher's individual commitment was of "equal importance to the creation of an environment that supports change" (p. 62). In other words, their findings suggest that it is not only teacher collaboration that helped teachers change their practice but their individual commitment had influence on this as well.

Day (2000) conducted a study of fourteen teachers in England (six primary and eight secondary) who were expected to change their teaching practices according to prescribed responses to the 1988 Educational Reform Act. Day discovered a number of factors that influenced the teachers' change process to respond to the innovations brought forth by the Educational Reform Act. He states that for one of the teachers, organisational support had been a key factor, but for all the other teachers, the "personal-professional qualities" had been

more influential on their change process (p. 119). The most important aspect of these 'personal-professional qualities' that influenced teacher change that Day focuses on is teacher commitment. In a similar vein to Briscoe and Peters (1997), Day states that teacher commitment is an important element of teacher change. It may be argued that teacher commitment to the educational change will have a lot of influence on whether the educational change is implemented successfully or not especially when teachers are expected to change their practice in order to implement a certain reform act or a curriculum innovation.

Another study that looked at how teachers changed their practices in relation to a prescribed response to curriculum innovation was that conducted by Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1996). They studied teachers involved in a school-based curriculum innovation, which involved the changing of their reading programme. The main influences in teachers' change process were teachers' commitment to learning about the new reading programme. Wideen et al. explain this saying, "one of the factors that drove the innovation at Lakeview [the school] was the staff's commitment to knowledge and the use they made of it" (p. 193). Wideen et al. also found that communication and interaction among teachers, and the sense of cooperation among them was essential for teachers' change process. They state that the teachers in their study "through discussion, trial, and more discussion transformed outsider's knowledge into their new cultural practices" (p. 196).

Finally, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) report on the role of the textbook in the implementation of a curricular change. They collected data from an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) context. They suggest that the textbook "has a vital and positive part to play in the day-to-day job of teaching English, and its importance becomes even greater in periods of change" (p. 317). They claim that the most important factor in achieving lasting change is teachers feeling of security and confidence. Their argument, therefore, is that the most effective agents of change will be "those that can create the supportive environment in which teachers will feel able and willing to take on the challenge of change", and that textbooks, because they provide security for teachers, will be "very effective agents of change" (p. 322-323). Kleinsasser (1993) also supports the role of the textbook in helping the process of change, stating that, in their study, "teachers' isolation shaped what they planned to accomplish in their classrooms and the textbook appeared to be these teachers' best colleague" (p. 382).

3.3.1 Summary

The studies, reviewed in this section, looked at teachers who experience change in their practices due to prescribed responses to curriculum innovation or educational reform. Findings from the studies showed that there were a variety of factors that influenced teachers'

change process.

One of the influences seems to be the ability of teachers to reflect. Pennington (1995), in her study, draws attention to the role of engaging in reflection in teacher change. In a similar vein, Lamie (2004) emphasises the notion of 'raising awareness', pointing out that it is important for teachers to be aware of what they are doing and why in order to change their practice.

The influential role of organisational and collegial support on teachers' change process was a common finding among the studies reviewed in this section. Briscoe and Peters (1997) and Wideen et al. (1996) have both reported that interaction and cooperation with colleagues have been influential on the change process of teachers participating in their studies. In Day's (2000) study, one of the teachers was particularly influenced by the organisational support he received in trying to change his practice. A similar finding was reported by Pennington, who suggested that teachers who were supported by the administration could make changes more quickly.

Both Pennington (1995) and Lamie (2004) talk about the positive influence of whether a student likes a particular innovation and whether the innovation results in positive learning outcomes or not and the effect this has on teachers' willingness to incorporate the innovation into their teaching. In addition, their studies showed that parents', colleagues and principal's positive feedback to what teachers were doing new in their practices motivated teachers to change their practice.

Pennington and Lamie also emphasised the importance of in-service training for teachers during their process of change. They claimed that such guidance from teacher educators helped teachers implement the changes more readily.

Both Briscoe and Peters and Day focused on the importance of personal qualities, more specifically, teachers' commitment to change and knowledge in their change process. Wideen et al. also acknowledged the influence of commitment, but their findings suggested that a commitment to knowledge itself had an important influence on teacher change.

Pennington found that factors such as years of experience influenced teacher change. She points out that the more experienced teachers could change their practices more easily because they were able to understand the procedural aspects of the new teaching approach and were able to adapt aspects of the new approach to their own teaching in a more skilled way.

The studies reviewed in this section all highlight the importance of contextual factors on teachers' change process where there has been a prescribed response to a curricular innovation or educational reform, as well as the most common influences that play a role in teachers' change process.

3.4 Teacher Change where there is No Prescribed Response

In this section, I provide a review of studies that examines teacher change that is not a result of a prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or reform or transition. The review includes studies that consider teachers of English as well as different subject matters (i.e., technology and science) and studies that look at primary and secondary school teachers. I also review one study, by Gebhard (1990), that investigates pre-service English language teachers' process of change during their practicum. I first review studies that examine teachers of subjects other than English and conclude with studies that look at English language teachers.

In a study conducted in Australia, Rennie (2001) looked at how primary school teachers coped with teaching 'technology', which was newly introduced into the primary curriculum. Rennie worked with two teachers from different schools. Neither teacher was provided with appropriate resources and training but did have access to general national curriculum statements. From this they had to come up with their own responses to how to teach technology. In both schools teachers could see other teachers in their school doing technology education successfully. However, although they could see and talk to teachers who were teaching technology already, both teachers emphasised that they had to develop confidence in the content and process of the new subject by themselves. That is, neither the general national curriculum statements, nor seeing other teachers teach technology successfully, were sufficient, and instead the teachers had to develop their own response to the new subject as they went along.

In developing their own response as they went along, collaboration with other teachers and their level of commitment proved to be important influences. Rennie (2001) suggests "in the absence of [organised] professional development, it seems essential that they [teachers] try it [teaching technology] in a supportive environment" (pp. 66-67). In both schools there was an established collaborative environment. One of the teachers benefited from the support they got from their colleagues. The other teacher, however, did not make as much progress despite the collaborative environment in her school. Rennie reports that this was due to this teacher not being committed to changing her practice as much as the other teacher. Rennie argues that "effective leadership and collaborative support promote change, but they do not ensure it" (p. 64). This finding shows the importance of commitment in the context of teacher change.

Wood and Bennett (2000) conducted a study in England with nine early childhood teachers. They looked at these teachers' theories of play, the relationship of these theories to practice and the change in their theories over time. This study showed that being engaged in reflection had a positive influence on teacher change. Wood and Bennett refer to the process

of reflection as “the bedrock of professional growth” (p. 636) and they state that reflection is an important element of learning in that it enables teachers to develop a language for talking and thinking about their practice.

The school in which the teachers worked provided “in-depth opportunities for reflective consideration” (Wood & Bennett, 2000, p. 642). This involved opportunities for teachers to come together and discuss their teaching and share ideas. Wood and Bennett point at the importance of collaboration for reflection by claiming that if teachers engage in interaction where they can raise their level of awareness, they are likely to experience learning which in turn will result in changes in their practice.

One of the teachers in their study stated that an in-service course had influenced the change in her approach to ‘play’. Wood and Bennett emphasise the role of “high-quality professional development courses which support the process of change in teachers’ thinking and practice at different career points” (p. 646). They suggest that such courses would need to stimulate improvement in the quality of reflective thinking which is seen as a necessary condition for change and development to take place and to be sustained.

Some of the teachers in Wood and Bennett’s study claimed to have changed their practice as a result of learning through experimenting with new ideas. One of the teachers said, “I know I learn from other people, from teachers or whatever, but I also learn very much when I have a go myself.” (p. 642). Teachers claimed that they were able to engage in this process of experimenting with ideas, trying and re-trying activities, because they were constantly encouraged to reflect on their practices with the help of their colleagues.

From these various efforts by teachers developing their own responses to their teaching situations, Wood and Bennett identified three stages of change. Stage one began with reflective consideration of the teachers’ theories, stage two involved problematising practice, and stage three was where teachers changed and re-aligned their theories and practice and examined the consequences of this for future practice. Wood and Bennett summarise the impetus for change for the teachers participating in their study as follows:

- raising their theories and practice to a conscious level of awareness;
- engaging in shared discourse;
- watching videotaped episodes of practice;
- juxtaposing their theories and practice, and identifying discontinuities;
- reconceptualising key elements in their theories and practice;
- identifying constraints which mediated their practice;
- identifying dilemmas in their teaching;
- sharing ideas and perceptions in a community of practice;
- drawing on the perspectives and knowledge of researchers. (p. 646)

Ritchie and Rigano (2002) conducted a study in Australia of teachers' self-initiated change. They worked with three high school science teachers but only reported detailed findings from one of these teachers. This teacher's response to his teaching situation was motivated by his "dissatisfaction with previous practice" (p. 1079) and his realisation that alternative practices would likely provide better learning outcomes for his students. He was also committed to improving his practice and he was encouraged by the supportive school community in which teachers felt comfortable taking personal risks and engaging in professional discussions.

Ritchie and Rigano emphasise the importance of school culture in teacher change. They state that in their study, "the culture at the study site supported teachers to try out new ideas and continually strive to improve the learning opportunities for their students" (p. 1091). The school principal was supportive of teachers' practices and the innovations teachers wanted to implement, but in addition, the wider school community encouraged teachers to try out ideas that might benefit students. In this community, the teachers "gained personal satisfaction from working individually and collectively to improve student outcomes" (p. 1092).

In her survey study Bailey (1992) looked at the responses to teaching situations of 78 EFL and ESL teachers from a number of contexts around the world. For some of her teachers, dissatisfaction with their current teaching prompted the change. For other teachers, a response was necessary because of changes occurring in the context, although what changed is not explained in any detail. Bailey (1992) states that for teachers to change their teaching they must "first become aware of their current practices and perceive a need to change, they must also have a positive attitude, an openness to change, so they can gain the necessary skills and knowledge to bring about desired changes" (p. 254).

The changes the teachers in Bailey's study went through in their practice over time included a decrease in their use of error correction, an increase in using the target language, a decrease in explicit teaching of rules, moving from relying on commercially produced materials to using more varied materials (even teacher generated materials), emphasising communicative competence in their teaching, and an increase in their use of group work.

Bailey (1992) also investigated what influenced the change processes. She found that change agents such as teacher educators, speakers at conferences as well as peers and colleagues had an influence on teacher change. The teachers also acknowledged the importance of their students' ideas and feedback on their change process. Another crucial influence, similar to findings reported in other studies reviewed in this section, was the support groups some teachers created among themselves to share their ideas and classroom experiences.

In his study of seven student teachers who were involved in a teaching practicum,

Gebhard (1990) focused on the changes these student teachers made in their practices over a sixteen-week period. He was particularly interested in the kinds of interaction these teachers experienced in their practicum and how these interactions provided opportunities for change. Gebhard found that five of the seven student teachers exhibited changes in their practice. The common areas in which they changed were: 1) going from lecturing and questioning style to more interactive ways of teaching, 2) using classroom space more efficiently, 3) expanding the 'real-life' content of their teaching, and 4) correcting students' mistakes more strategically.

Gebhard found that the student teachers tended to change their teaching behaviour when they had opportunities to try out their teaching ideas through a variety of activities. Talking about their practice with teacher educators and their peers was also reported as influencing change in their practice. In addition, the student teachers reported that they changed their teaching each time they did practice teaching in a different context/school. Finally, Gebhard directs the reader's attention to a point that is relevant to the present study. He states that each time these teachers were put in a different teaching context this move created a stimulus for changing their practice. The notion of starting all over again with new students and a new class automatically brought forth a need for change.

3.4.1 Summary

Teachers in the above mentioned studies were involved in change due to a dissatisfaction in their own teaching. In other words, these teachers *wanted* to change their practice. In one of the studies (Gebhard, 1990), teachers stated that having to change their teaching context was an impetus for change. This is a similar situation for the teachers participating in the present study. When teachers are faced with a new teaching context, it is natural that they feel a need to change their practice in order to cope with the new teaching situation.

All the studies reviewed in this section talk about interaction with and support from colleagues as a factor that influenced the change process of teachers. Three of these studies (Rennie, 2001; Ritchie & Rigano, 2002; Bailey, 1992) reported that the collaboration between teachers was important in terms of the support teachers who were trying to change their practice received. The other two studies (Gebhard, 1990; Wood & Bennett, 2000) focused on the importance of collaboration in how it encouraged reflection. Rennie's (2001) findings, however, show that interaction with and support from colleagues is effective only if the teachers were committed to change.

Both Wood and Bennett and Bailey commented on the importance of in-service training and other training opportunities for teachers' change process. The teachers in their studies said that they learned through in-service training and they became more willing to try

out new practices in their classes.

In two of the studies (Gebhard, 1990; Wood & Bennett, 2000) teacher change took place through teachers' process of experimenting with new ideas and new techniques. The student teachers in Gebhard's study were particularly pleased about the insight they gained by teaching in different contexts and situations (practice teaching in different schools).

Both student learning outcomes and students' feedback to the activities used by the teacher were reported as having an influence on teacher change process. Teachers in Ritchie and Rigano's (2002) study were influenced by the learning outcomes of their activities. In other words, if they saw that their students succeeded in an activity, they tried harder to integrate similar types of activities into their teaching. Bailey (1992) found that the teachers participating in her study were more inclined to change their practice if they got positive feedback on a teaching or class management strategy they tried out. For the student teachers in Gebhard's (1990) study, feedback from their tutors (teacher educators) and their peers were also influential in how and to what extent they changed their practices.

In Rennie's (2001) study, another factor that was reported as influencing teachers' change process was the existence of other teachers already using a practice that they wanted to integrate into their classes. Teachers wanting to change their practice would then have a model to aspire to.

The studies reviewed in this section all highlight the importance of contextual factors on teachers' change process where teachers were not faced with a prescribed response to a curricular innovation or an educational reform, and they present some common contextual factors that played a role in the changes they made to their practice and their approach to teaching.

3.5 Conclusion

There are many contextual factors that are reported, in the studies reviewed in this chapter, which influence teacher change (positively or negatively). These factors can be summed up as:

- interaction with and support from colleagues;
- textbooks and other resources;
- teacher training;
- student learning outcomes;
- feedback from students, parents and other members of the school (e.g., principals and colleagues).

There are also some personal factors that are reported to have an influence on teachers' change process. A list of personal factors that may influence teacher change are:

- having a sense of commitment (where there is an imposed change);
- being experimental in class, trying out new ideas;
- being reflective.

All the studies reviewed that report on personal qualities as potential factors in teacher change also emphasise the influence of contextual factors on the shaping of these personal qualities. An appropriate example is how, in Lamie's (2004) study, a teacher gained self-confidence in his teaching as a result of teacher training and guidance provided for him.

Richardson (1990), in her quote below, reiterates the importance of contextual factors on teacher change.

The teacher-change literature is quite convincing in its consideration of the effects of the nature of school organisation on teacher change. For this reason, individual teacher change should be viewed within the culture and norms of a collective of teachers, administrators, other personnel, and students in a particular school. (p. 14)

Hargreaves (1992) also supports this view pointing out that teachers do not develop by themselves but rather they "learn a great deal from contact with many other people who are knowledgeable about and have experience of teaching and learning" (p. 216). The way they do this, according to Hargreaves, is by taking courses from 'experts', studying for higher degrees, or undertaking training in new techniques and approaches. In a similar vein to Richardson (1990) and Hargreaves (1992), Hoban (2002) suggests that, "teachers do not develop their strategies and styles of teaching entirely alone" (p. 217). Despite the importance placed on context, Lieberman (1996) argues that such a focus on context has been missing in research conducted on professional development.

In the present study, I investigate the extent to which the influences that play a role in teachers' change match those influences that are reported in the literature as provided in the bulleted list above. I also explore whether there are any other influences that emerge from the present study that have not been reported in the literature on teacher change. A discussion of the influences on the change process of teachers participating in this study is made in light of the bulleted list presented above (see Chapter 7).

To sum up, the present study looks at teacher change embedded in the context in

which it is taking place, in addition to taking account of personal qualities of teachers, their attitudes and their 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975). The following methodology chapter presents how teacher change was investigated in the present study.

4 Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research questions, the research design, the methods used to generate the data and the procedure of analyzing the data for the present study. The chapter consists of five sections. In the first section I introduce the research questions and explain how these relate to the aims of this study. In the second section I discuss the research design. In the third section I provide a brief description of the pilot study. In the fourth section I describe the process of selecting and contacting the teachers who participated in the study. The fifth and sixth sections describe the data generation and data analysis procedure.

4.1 Research Questions

The aim of this study is to find out how teachers, whose previous experience was limited to teaching either adult or high school students, adjust to teaching young learners in their first year of working with them. The teachers' transition happened in the context of an educational reform in Turkey, that introduced English into the primary curriculum. As a consequence, English began to be taught at primary level. Due to the sudden introduction of this reform, many English language teachers found themselves teaching primary school children without any training by the Ministry of Education (see Section 2.1.2).

In order to understand the experiences of the teachers participating in this study, the following four research questions have been formulated.

1. What changes in approach, if any, do teachers who formerly taught older learners, experience in their first year of teaching English in primary school?

In this question, 'older learners' refers to high school students or adult learners.

The aim of the first research question is to track changes in the way teachers approach teaching English to young learners in their first year of working in primary school. This question is descriptive in nature. That is, it is answered by a description of the areas in which teachers changed over the period of a school year.

2. What influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?

The aim of the second research question is to get an understanding of possible factors that influenced the changes described in responding to the first research question. The question

provides a tentative explanation of what may have influenced teachers' change process based on the evidence gathered from teachers' interview and observation data.

3. What are the similarities in the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?

This research question aims to identify the common patterns in the changes that the teachers experienced, over the period of their first year of teaching young learners. Hence, this third question builds directly on the first question, by highlighting the common change patterns among the participants in the present study. Just as was the case for the first research question, this third question will yield answers of a more descriptive nature.

4. What are the similarities in what influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?

This final research question looks at the common factors that influenced the changes identified in the third research question. This question aims to bring together the findings gathered from the previous questions in order to take a general look at the more common influences on teachers' change process.

4.2 Research Design

The research follows a case study approach. Yin (1994) suggests that a case could be an individual event or entity. Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 120) view case studies as in-depth observations of the 'characteristics of an individual unit, which could be a child, a class, a school or a community', that aim to probe deeply into the various phenomena that constitute the individual unit. Furthermore, Yin (1994) defines a case study as:

An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (p. 13)

Teachers' shifting from teaching older students to teaching younger students is the contemporary phenomenon that this study investigates. It is also a situation in which the boundary between the phenomena under investigation and the context surrounding it is not clear; the teachers making the transition are the cases, and the context they are in (the transition they are making) defines the boundaries of both the cases and the phenomenon.

Case studies make use of a variety of data generation instruments in order to be able to make thick descriptions and gain rich insights into the phenomenon to be investigated. An overview of the relationship between the data generation instruments used to explore the cases and the research questions is provided in Table 4.1.

Research questions	Primary data generation instruments	Secondary data generation instruments
1. What changes in approach, if any, do teachers who formerly taught older learners, experience in their first year of teaching English in primary school?	a. Hierarchical focusing interviews with the participant teachers b. Post-observation interviews	a. Observation of classes of participant teachers
2. What influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?	a. Hierarchical focusing interviews with the participant teachers b. Post-observation interviews	a. Observation of classes of participant teachers b. Casual observations in the form of field notes c. Documents collected from participant teachers
3. What are the similarities in the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?	a. Hierarchical focusing interviews with the participant teachers b. Post-observation interviews	a. Observation of classes of participant teachers
4. What are the similarities in what influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?	a. Hierarchical focusing interviews with the participant teachers b. Post-observation interviews	a. Observation of classes of participant teachers b. Casual observations in the form of field notes c. Documents collected from participant teachers

Table 4.1: The relationship between research questions and data generation procedures.

The primary source of data for all the questions was interviews with the teachers. The two types of interviews used in this study were ‘hierarchical focusing’ (Tomlinson, 1989) and post-observation interviews. The additional data generation sources that were used to support interview data were classroom observation notes, field notes and documents. The methods of data generation are discussed in detail in sections 4.5 and 4.6.

The analysis of the data generated for this study recognises the social constructivist nature of both teachers’ practice and the research process. The social constructivist approach is built on the assumption that ‘the terms by which the world is understood are social artifacts, [and] products of historically situated interchanges among people’ (Gergen, 1985, quoted in

Schwandt, 1994, p. 127). In other words, with social constructivism the emphasis is on the collective generation of meaning as shaped by the conventions of language and other social processes' (Schwandt, 1994). The methodological approach of this study assists in revealing the meaning individual teachers construct from their interaction with the social and physical elements of their new teaching context. In addition, the interaction between the researcher and the participating teachers are viewed through a social constructivist perspective. This means that the interaction between the researcher and the teacher, for example, during interviews, are considered as a process which results in data generation rather than the researcher simply gathering interview data from the participant teacher.

The analysis of the data generated is influenced by an interpretivist perspective. That is, it is based on the assumption that, "many important human activities are conducted by systems in which multiple actors attempt to form coherent interpretations of some set of phenomena" (Hutchins, 1991, p. 287). Applied to the 'human activity' of doing research, this approach becomes significant in situating the research in the researcher's, the participants' and the audiences' interpretations of the phenomena. In one sense, the strength of such research may depend on the extent that the interpretations of these different parties are 'coherent'.

Wideen et al. (1996), in talking about the interpretivist view of teacher development and change, argue that such a view takes a more teacher-centered approach and recognises the limitations of outside experts who try to change teachers' practice through programmes such as supervision or staff development. The role of the researcher, in a similar way, changes from being someone who comes from outside the school environment and advises teachers on what to do, to someone who attempts to "understand and interpret developmental change, and who engages in the joint construction of knowledge with teachers" (p. 188).

This study also emphasises teachers' own perspective by taking an emic approach to data generation and data analysis. The interview schedules are so prepared that during data generation I, as the researcher take careful consideration not to impose my own thoughts and views on the matters discussed. Furthermore, the analysis of the generated data is driven by the participating teachers' articulated topics rather than me, as the researcher, imposing my own categories for analysis (see Section 4.5).

4.3 Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study between October 2000 and February 2001. This was the school year previous to the one in which the main fieldwork took place. The purpose of the pilot study was to try out the effectiveness of the data generation instruments and to gain experience in using these instruments. With respect to interviews, I used the pilot study to practise how to

minimise my interference when teachers were talking, especially focusing on allowing them to generate their own constructs (as compared to introducing constructs myself). For classroom observations, I used the pilot study to gain practice in focusing on what was important for the purposes of the study, and to practise becoming as unobtrusive as possible during the observation. I used the pilot study to refine my interview questions to suit the purposes of the study, based on the responses I got from teachers. I also used the pilot study to develop an effective classroom observation schedule.

4.3.1 Description of pilot study participants

During the months of September and October (the beginning of the 2000/2001 school year), I got in touch with three teachers (two female and one male) who had recently started teaching English at the primary level. All three teachers had previously worked in a language school, where they had taught a range of adult students, including university students, businessmen, and housewives. They had no previous experience of teaching in any type of primary or secondary school. All the names used in the pilot study are pseudonyms.

At the time of the pilot study, one teacher, Tuna, had just started to teach pre-school children, aged three and four, as well as kindergarten children, aged five and six, in a private primary school. She had graduated from university about three years earlier. Her university teacher education programme included an introduction to teaching English to young learners but not a full module exclusively devoted to teaching English to young learners. The second teacher, Kerim, had just started to teach fourth and fifth grades (ten to eleven year olds) in a private primary school. He had graduated from university about six years earlier and had not had any 'young learners' training at all. The last teacher, Bilge, had just started to teach grades one to three (seven to nine year olds). She had graduated from university about three years previously, but she had not had any young learner training as part of her university programme.

4.3.2 Piloting the data generation instruments

I asked the three teachers, Tuna, Kerim and Bilge, whether they would be willing to help me with my research by allowing me to interview them and observe their classes. I briefly explained the topic of my research, making a general statement that it was about teachers who were in their first year of teaching at the primary level. I also requested, and was granted, permission to audio-record the interviews.

I conducted two types of interviews, 'hierarchical focusing' interviews (Tomlinson, 1989) and post-observation interviews. Both interviews were semi-structured. They served the purpose of developing effective questioning techniques and ensuring interview questions

were appropriate for the purposes of the research.

The hierarchical focusing interviews lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. I conducted the interviews in Turkish in order to limit any possible tension caused by speaking in a foreign language. I transcribed these interviews and then translated them into English so that I could discuss them with my supervisors in Leeds.

I made arrangements with the three teachers to observe their classes and got permission to audio-record these lessons. I only conducted one classroom observation with each teacher. I was not able to conduct observations systematically over the school year as was the plan for my later main study.

After each observation, I conducted a twenty-minute semi-structured interview with the teacher. I started the interview with the following question: "What do you think about the lesson you just had?" Once the teacher started to bring up topics, I only prompted him/her if I felt it would be useful for the purposes of the study that he/she elaborate on a topic.

The specific lessons learnt from the pilot study are detailed in Sections 4.5 and 4.6, which describe the instruments used to generate data for the main study.

4.4 Selecting Participants and Getting Access to Schools

In this section I firstly discuss the criteria for selecting the participants for my study, I then describe the process of selecting participants and the ethical considerations involved. Finally, I give a brief description of the participants.

4.4.1 Criteria for selecting participants

The criteria for selecting participants for my study were determined by the aim of the study. Consistent with the case study approach of the present research, the participants were selected according to the principles of purposeful sampling (see Yin, 1994; Patton, 1990; Silverman, 2000). That is, the aim of the research required participants who had just started teaching English at primary level, and whose previous experience was with adult (language school) or young adult (high school) learners. Neither the age of the teachers, nor their gender was a criterion for the selection of participants.

I aimed to work with five participants (although I included four participants in my thesis, the reasons for which are explained in Section 4.4.2). I expected this number to strike a right balance between the feasibility of data generation, manageability of the data, and capturing some variety of the phenomenon under investigation, thereby being consistent with a case study approach. That is, it was important that I had enough time with each teacher during the period of a school year, that I had enough time to manage and analyse the data I generated and that I work with enough teachers to gain a variety of perspectives on the

phenomenon under investigation.

There was also an element of convenience sampling (see Robson, 1993). That is, as I lived in Istanbul at the time of data generation, and as the research was to take place over a school year, the teachers selected were only from those who taught in different schools around Istanbul.

4.4.2 Contacting participants, access and ethical issues

I started my fieldwork in September 2001. In the three years before I started the fieldwork (September 1998-September 2001), I worked as an educational consultant for a publishing company in Istanbul, Turkey. Through this job, I got to know many teachers, especially in private primary schools. It was, therefore, relatively easy for me to get access to these schools and to find teachers who fitted my selection criteria.

In August, the month before schools opened for the 2001-2002 school year, I went around a large number of schools asking the heads of English departments whether there was a teacher in their department who fitted my selection criteria (a teacher who had started teaching English to young learners (grades one to four) with previous experience of teaching high school or adult learners). If there was such a teacher, I asked to be introduced to him/her. In meeting the teacher, I explained that I was undertaking a doctoral study that involved working with teachers who had just starting teaching young learners. I asked the teacher if he/she would be willing to take part in such a study over the period of a school year. I clearly explained the amount of interviews and classroom observations I was planning to conduct. Once the teacher agreed informally, I brought him/her an informed consent letter (see Appendix A) explaining the stages of my data generation, details about possible publications and the ethical standards I would follow. The consent form follows the guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2000). The form needed to be signed by the teacher if he/she formally agreed to take part in the research. With the head of English departments' consent, I then wrote a letter to the principal of the school asking for permission to conduct research in their school. Once this permission was granted, I got back to the teacher to fix a date for our first interview. All teachers, heads of department and principals approached in this way agreed to participate in the research.

If the teacher was teaching more than one grade, I specifically asked to observe his/her youngest class. If the teacher was teaching more than one class in this grade I left it to the teacher to decide in which class I could conduct my observations. In such instances, the teachers unanimously chose the class where they stated they had least class management problems.

The teachers and I were aware that a year long relationship would inevitably affect

both parties. All the teachers, without exception, stated that they looked forward to being able to talk about their new experience with me and that this would help them develop in this new field they embarked on.

A further influence on my relationship with the teachers was my previous role as an educational consultant. Within the context of English language teachers in Turkey, the existence of publishers and educational consultants is well established. Educational consultants, although not to the extent of teachers, administrators and students themselves, have become a part of the school culture, especially within English departments. This suggests that educational consultants may also have an impact on the teacher change process. This was especially the case in primary schools when I started my research, as teaching English to young learners was such a novel experience for many of these teachers. In the three years before I began my fieldwork, I gave a number of seminars on 'Teaching English to Young Learners' in schools, as part of my job. I also made frequent school visits to help teachers with the materials they used or any other methodological questions they had. It is my observation that teachers in Turkey expect educational consultants who work for publishers to provide them with help in methodological issues. This role seems to be different, in the teachers' minds, from that of someone simply introducing textbooks and providing support to teachers in the use of textbooks.

Although I had not met any of the participant teachers before the research took place, and although I was not working as an educational consultant any more when I started my fieldwork, I had to bear in mind that the teachers might have seen me not only as a researcher but also as someone who would help them in their development as young learner teachers. In order to avoid misleading the teachers I made it clear to them, at the start of the research, that as a researcher I needed to take on a more neutral role in my relationship with them, and that for this reason they should not expect any overt help from me in their development as young learner teachers. However, I tried to draw teachers' attention to the benefits of being involved in such research for them. I told them that by participating in such a systematic process of verbalising their thoughts, and thereby reflecting on their practice, they would inevitably contribute to their own professional development. All of the teachers gave me the impression that they valued such an opportunity, some even commenting that they rarely got chances to talk with their colleagues about their work because of busy working schedules. Also, I told them that I would be happy to discuss anything about their work and their experiences after the fieldwork was completed.

All the same, I recognise that it is impossible to expect the teachers to get rid of their perceptions of me as an educational consultant and I acknowledge that the teachers may have refrained from saying things they felt I would not approve of or that I would believe was

wrong in our interviews.

4.4.3 Description of participants

Five teachers agreed to participate in my research. All the participants had just started teaching English at primary level, and their previous experience was with adult (language school) or young adult (high school) learners.

At an early stage in the data generation process, one of the teachers experienced a major and sudden bereavement. In my judgement, this affected her behaviour in the lessons considerably. She showed significantly different reactions to what the children did or said compared to before her experience of this bereavement. Even so, I continued working with this teacher all year, but when looking at the data more closely at the analysis stage, I felt that the data was not representative of what her year would have been like had she not experienced the bereavement. For this reason I decided not to include her case in this thesis.

Table 4.2 shows a brief description of the four participants who have been included in the thesis. In the fifth chapter, at the beginning of the analysis of each case, there is a more detailed description of the teachers, their background, and their respective schools.

	Age	Previous teaching experience	Experience before move	Currently teaching
Sevda	26	High school students	3 years	1 st grade
Gamze	31	High school students	9 years	1 st grade
Imge	24	High school students	1 year	1 st grade
Tomris	30	Adult students	1 year	3 rd grade

Table 4.2: Overview of participants

The names of the teachers, as used in this thesis, are pseudonyms.

The following three sections introduce the instruments used to generate data for the present study. Each instrument is first discussed from a theoretical perspective. This is followed by an account of insights gained from the pilot study. Finally the instruments used in the main study are outlined.

4.5 Data Generation Instruments: Interviews

As pointed out in section 4.2, the use of interviews was central in this study as they generated the main data used for answering the research questions.

4.5.1 Theoretical perspective

May (1997) states that, “interviews are used as a resource for understanding how individuals make sense of their social world and act within it” (p. 129). Yin (1994) suggests that interviews are an integral part of case studies, and when used in case studies, they are usually open-ended, whereby it becomes possible to ask interviewees for the facts of a matter as well as their opinions about events. This study makes use of interviews to get at teachers’ approach to teaching English to young learners for the first time, and over the period of a school year. Through participating teachers’ accounts I can better understand the teachers’ own reality and how they make sense of their new teaching experience. Similarly, interviews with teachers can help explain the observations I conducted in teachers’ classrooms.

The interpretivist and social constructivist elements that influence this study have also played an important role in the choice of interviews as the main instrument for generating data. Interviews allow flexibility in one’s line of inquiry, such as following up on what the interviewer has said and getting into deeper levels of understanding through face-to-face interaction (Robson, 1993). Such deeper level understanding through face-to-face interaction was especially important for a more insightful interpretation of data. Coming from a social constructivist perspective, interviews created opportunities for a shared understanding of the phenomenon to emerge between the participating teachers and me as a researcher. Interviews also allowed me to take a more emic perspective, as they allowed opportunities for teachers to reveal their own thoughts and their own beliefs and attitudes.

At a more practical level, the advantage of face-to-face interviews, as suggested by Robson (1993), is that they allow at-the-moment modifications of one’s line of inquiry, such as following up on interesting responses. This has been an important element in the data generation in this study whereby I was able to get at valuable insights from teachers through a continuous process of probing them further about topics they brought up during the interviews. More details about this are provided when discussing ‘hierarchical focusing’ interviews (Tomlinson, 1989).

Another feature of interviews that carries significance for the purposes of the present study is that, they leave little time for the interviewees to reflect on the answers they give. It takes place more spontaneously, which may be useful in getting at deeper feelings. It allows for the interviewer to get at immediate reactions, which, in many cases, may be more genuine than thought-through reactions. It is important for this study that teachers’ instinctual

responses are captured as this may lower the chances of teachers being influenced by external factors (such as talking with colleagues or reading on the subject before giving an answer).

Written journals could have been an equally appropriate means of generating data for a case study such as this one. However, I preferred to use interviews as my experience of interacting with teachers in the Turkish education system showed me that the circumstances under which teachers work do not leave them much time for their own personal life, especially in private schools. Although all the teachers I worked with stated that they were happy to contribute to my research, and to have the opportunity to reflect on their practice, had I asked teachers to participate in the study through written journals, I suspected that I would not be able to generate as much data as I had through face-to-face interviews. I felt that teachers would find writing journals in their spare time a burden, as I knew they already spent a lot of time on preparing lessons and materials at home. In addition, in the Turkish culture, talking about issues and discussing them verbally is always the preferred method over writing about them. Therefore, it also seemed culturally more appropriate to generate my data mainly through interviews.

A disadvantage of interviews, which is rather important for this study, is that, the interviewer, under any circumstance, will have an influence on the interviewee. This influence may be reflected in what the interviewees say, possibly in the form of not expressing what he/she wants to say simply because the interviewer is there. This may be even more problematic due to the use of audiotapes to record the interviews. In this study, my former job as an educational consultant (see Section 4.4.2) may have had an additional impact on what the teachers said in the interviews.

I used two types of interviews, hierarchical focusing interviews and semi-structured interviews following classroom observations that I refer to as, post-observation interviews. I discuss these two interviews in the following sections.

Hierarchical focusing interviews

Robson (1993) defines focused interviews as “an approach which allows people’s views and feelings to emerge, but which gives the interviewer some control” (p. 240). The ‘hierarchical focusing’ interview, developed by Tomlinson (1989), takes this one step further by doing justice to both the researcher’s agenda as well as “facilitate [the] emergence of the interviewee’s perspectives and definitions of issues” with as little influence as possible from the researcher (p. 155). Hierarchical focusing interviews allow opportunities for the researcher to carry out interviews as “open-endedly as possible, ... within a non-directive style so as to minimise researcher framing and influence” (Tomlinson, 1989, p. 162). For this, the researcher designs an interview schedule with an agenda that comprises a number of

general questions and related sub-questions that is of interest for the purposes of the study. During the interview, the researcher introduces the general questions, however, he/she does not immediately ask the sub-questions. Instead, he/she uses probes, such as “would you explain this further” or “is there anything else that you could say about this?” to allow the interviewee the chance to say all there is in his/her mind. Tomlinson argues that, in this way, it “was possible in principle that the interviewer might find sufficient ideas and aspects emerging that he or she never needed to introduce any of the remaining items in the agenda, since these were all covered sooner or later” (p. 165). Only when there was nothing forthcoming from the interviewee on a sub-question would I ask that question.

Robson (1993) defines a probe as, “a device to get the interviewee to expand on a response when you intuit that she or he has more to give” (p. 234). My probing techniques included paraphrasing or summarising what the teacher said. My probes served to initiate a topic by picking up on a certain issue the teacher mentioned but did not elaborate. In probing I tried to refer to constructs that the teacher had already expressed, or statements she made so that I did not introduce new constructs. The main aim of this was to minimise my influence, as a researcher, on what teachers said. It was important that the manner of summarising and paraphrasing was constructive and triggered free talk from the teacher rather than making the teacher feel that what he/she was going to say was already said (summarised or paraphrased) by the interviewer.

In the present study, hierarchical focusing interviews were used to approach teachers with an agenda guided by my research questions, but at the same time trying to avoid imposing my thoughts, ideas or constructs on teachers’ talk. The hierarchical focusing interview is seen as particularly relevant to the theoretical positioning of the research. It serves the social constructivist approach in that it can reveal “the subject’s contribution in perception and ‘sense-making’ cashed out in terms of the social construction of reality” (Tomlinson, 1989, p. 156). This would be compatible with an open-ended questioning technique, commonly used in exploratory studies, but at the same time it would require the interviewer to have an agenda that falls within the limits of the specific phenomena to be investigated. The hierarchical focusing interview is also compatible with the interpretivist nature of the research in its concern for the ‘indivisible interplay between the knower and the known’ and consequently, the “emphasis on the importance of [an] individual perspective” (Tomlinson, 1989, p. 156). To this effect, hierarchical focusing interviews may be useful in letting the interviewees’ perspectives emerge, which in one sense may reflect their interpretations of the existing phenomenon. However, it would also allow for the interviewer to have control over the aspects of the phenomenon under investigation by “steering one’s interlocutors implicitly towards one’s intended topics” (Tomlinson, 1989, p. 159).

The main purpose in using the hierarchical focusing interviews in this study was to get teachers to talk about their experience of changing teaching contexts (such as teaching a young age group after having taught older students for a number of years) and to compare and contrast their previous and new teaching situation.

Post-observation interviews

The interviews I conducted after the classroom observations were similar in nature to the hierarchical focusing interviews. These interviews also consisted of open-ended questions and as such they allowed the interviewee freedom in what they wanted to say. However, in these interviews, I did not have a particular agenda. After each observation, I asked the teachers one question, in order to facilitate their talk. I asked them, "If you were to do the same lesson again, what would you do differently and what would you do the same?" After asking this question, I continued the interview by only probing them about the topics they introduced, asking them to make clarifications, and elaborations about what they said. In this way, I was able to get at teachers' own thoughts and their own constructs related to the lesson they taught. Most importantly, I was able to get insight into what was important for the teachers about the lesson they conducted and about teaching young learners in general, rather than imposing my ideas about what was important in teaching English to young learners. Through using both the hierarchical focusing interview schedule and the post-observation interviews I was able to keep to an emic perspective in generating data for this study.

The main purpose of the post-observation interviews was to capture teachers' ongoing experiences in the classroom. The use of these interviews helped in the investigation of change in teachers' attitudes, approaches to teaching young learners over the school year. The post-observation interviews also allowed me to probe further into issues raised by hierarchical focusing interviews.

4.5.2 Lessons learnt from piloting interviews

As described in section 4.3.2, I conducted one hierarchical focusing and one post-observation interview with each teacher during the pilot study. After conducting pilot interviews in various places, I found that I needed to avoid situations where there would be noise or where the teacher would feel reluctant to talk (for example, in the presence of other teachers). In short, the pilot study showed that the most productive place to have an interview was an empty classroom.

The pilot study soon showed me that it was difficult to keep track of my interview agenda, while at the same time maintaining eye contact with the teacher and to pick up on issues she mentioned. I used the rest of the pilot study to practise my interview technique,

focusing in particular on, 1) being as non-threatening as possible, 2) decreasing my use of evaluative statements which could have psychological effects, and 3) studying most of my questions before the actual interviews so as to keep eye-contact with teachers as much as possible.

As mentioned in section 4.3.2, in the beginning of the post-observation interviews I asked the teachers, “What do you think about the lesson you just had?” I found that teachers did not say much when I asked them such a question. I saw that this question failed to focus the teachers’ minds sufficiently and delayed their response as they tried to think of where they should start. By contrast, I found that when I directed their attention to a specific instance in the lesson this triggered much more talk. However, I did not want to use this technique in the actual data generation either, as I thought it would affect teachers’ responses. That is, I would be telling them what I thought was important in the lesson they just taught, rather than allowing them to point out the parts of the lesson they thought were noteworthy. The question I eventually used to initiate the post-observation interviews in the actual data generation, as provided in Section 4.5.1, was, “If you were to do the same lesson again, what would you do differently and what would you do the same?” I discuss this question in more depth in Section 4.5.4

Piloting the post-observation interviews showed me that talking to teachers right after a class resulted in spontaneous and genuine sharing of experience. I also observed that if the post-observation interview was delayed in time teachers sometimes used the delay to plan what to say in the interview, thereby making it less spontaneous. This, then, highlighted the need for scheduling the post-observation interviews as close in time as possible to the lesson that I observed.

I will now go on to describe the procedure I used to conduct the hierarchical focusing interviews and the post-observation interviews, in my main study.

4.5.3 Procedure used in hierarchical focusing interviews

I conducted two hierarchical focusing interviews with each teacher, one at the beginning and one at the end of the school year. The first interview took place before any other data generation happened, in September and early October (see Table 4.3 in Section 4.8), depending on the arrangements made with each teacher. For the pilot study I had conducted only one hierarchical focusing interview with each teacher towards the beginning of the school year. I felt that having a follow up interview to the first one at the end of the year would be useful to more easily compare teachers’ progress over the school year.

At the beginning of the first hierarchical focusing interviews, I asked each teacher for some background information about themselves such as their age, their previous teaching

experience, which grades they taught in their new school. A sample of the sheet I recorded this information can be found in Appendix B. There were also occasions during the hierarchical focusing interviews in which teachers talked about themselves. I tried to prompt teachers to give information about themselves whenever it was appropriate during these interviews.

Each hierarchical focusing interview lasted for 40 to 45 minutes. This is consistent with Robson's (1993) suggestion that interviews under half an hour are unlikely to be valuable because it may be difficult to cover much ground when there is restricted time, and those over an hour may make unreasonable demands on the interviewees in terms of their time. The length of the interviews also needed to be in keeping with the teachers' work schedules. That is, interviews were usually scheduled when a teacher had a free period; such a free period would usually be 40 minutes in length.

All the interviews were audio-recorded, so that I could transcribe the interviews and then conduct a more detailed analysis of what the teachers said. The use of audio recording was included in the informed consent letter the teachers signed. In order to let them express themselves as freely as possible the interviews were conducted in Turkish, the teachers' mother tongue.

The agenda for the hierarchical focusing interview was compiled from my experience of working with Turkish primary English language teachers over the last few years, as well as a survey of the needs of classroom teachers in Turkish primary schools conducted by Eşer (1998). Although Eşer's study was conducted in state primary schools, many of the issues raised in the teachers' surveys complemented my observations over the past three years of working with private primary school teachers, as well as drawing my attention to certain aspects of the phenomenon that I was unaware of.

The hierarchical focusing interview schedules can be found in Appendixes C and D. As teachers began talking about the main question in my hierarchical focusing interviews, I probed them for further information on the sub-question under each main question, if and only if the teacher did not touch on any of these sub-questions while he/she was answering the main question. Once I felt that the teacher had run out of things to say for a main question, I introduced the next main question. All the questions I asked the teacher directly appear in a box. The questions I prepared in case I needed to probe the teachers are the ones that do not appear in boxes.

All of the teachers had at least two weeks of teaching by the time I conducted the first hierarchical focusing interview (see Table 4.3 in Section 4.8), which seemed sufficient time for them to develop some initial understanding of teaching young learners. There were seven main questions. The teachers were first asked questions about the reasons for changing their

teaching context. This was important to get an insight into teachers' motivation for involving themselves in such a change, and it was especially helpful in shedding light on whether they asked to teach the younger grades in their new context or whether they were told by the head of department which level they would teach. The teachers were then asked to describe their old and new teaching context and then how they felt about teaching in both contexts. These questions were important in getting insight into teachers' previous teaching contexts, especially in order to make comparisons with their new context and to find out about teacher's attitude towards their previous job. Teachers were then asked about their experiences so far in their new teaching context and also about their feelings about teaching children. The answers they gave to what feelings they had about teaching children was useful for understanding teachers' attitudes towards children. They were also useful as supporting evidence for what they said in interviews and their actions in the classroom.

Teachers were also asked methodological questions about teaching English to children and whether they had received any in-service training on teaching English to young learners. I asked these questions as they appear in Appendix C, but in Turkish.

In the hierarchical focusing interviews the questions asked in the beginning and end of the year were similar so that a comparison could be made more easily. However, in the second hierarchical focusing interview teachers were asked about what they felt about their experience of having taught children as well as what advice they would give to a new teacher who was in their position the following year (see Appendix D).

4.5.4 Procedure used in post-observation interviews

I conducted seven post-observation interviews for each teacher. As with hierarchical focusing interviews, post-observation interviews were audiotaped for further transcription. Permission for this was asked in the informed consent form signed by the teachers.

The interviews lasted around half an hour. However, there were a few instances when the teachers had a free lesson after their observed lesson and they talked for about forty minutes. If this was the case, I did not want to interrupt the teachers' train of thought or what they wanted to express, by giving the time as an excuse. As such, a few of the post-observation interviews were longer than others.

In most instances I was able to conduct these interviews right after the lesson finished. To achieve this I tried to observe classes after which the teacher did not immediately have another class. There were a very few instances where I had to wait for a teacher for one class period before I could interview them.

I used a set question at the start of each post-observation interview. I experienced a problem with this during the pilot study where the teachers had difficulties starting to talk

about the lesson, not knowing where to begin (see Section 4.5.2). During the actual fieldwork, each time I had an interview with a teacher after their lesson, I started by asking, "If you were to do this same lesson again, what would you do differently and what would you keep the same?" I found this question to be useful as it asked for a 'concrete' answer. The teachers always found one or two things about their lesson that they could use to answer this question. This starter question was also helpful for identifying issues which were more or less important for the teachers, assuming that the more immediate issue in the teachers' mind would be the one he/she mentioned first.

In the post-observation interviews, the starter question was the only question on my agenda. For the rest of the interview I asked questions based on what teachers talked about. In other words, I followed the teachers' agenda.

4.6 Data Generation Instruments: Classroom Observations

In this section I give a brief theoretical perspective on observation, then I talk about my experiences of piloting the classroom observation technique. Finally I describe the procedure used in conducting classroom observations in my main study.

4.6.1 Theoretical perspective

Robson (1993) refers to observations as being an appropriate tool for looking "at 'real life' in the 'real world'" (p. 191). In order to look at a contemporary phenomenon in depth, as is the aim of the present case study, it may not suffice to look at only what people say. It may be more enlightening to look at their actions as well. Robson points out that whereas data from interviews and questionnaires may show discrepancies between what people say they do and what people actually do, data from observations is more direct. Unlike observations, interviews and questionnaires depend on people's articulated/written views or opinions, which may often be different from the actual thoughts and feelings they carry. Observations, by contrast, allow the researcher to get at more direct input. As such, Robson suggests observations may be useful in validating or corroborating the messages obtained through other instruments. This is one of the main purposes of the use of observation in the present study.

Although observations provide more direct input compared to interviews due to awareness of being observed, there is a danger of behavioural change on the part of the person being observed. In classroom observations, teachers may change their behaviour if they regard the researcher as someone who will judge their performance implicitly or explicitly (e.g., in the form of writing it up in a thesis). Teachers may prepare their lessons more carefully, or in a different way than they normally would. Robson (1993, p. 208) suggests two

strategies that can be used to minimise such 'observer effects'. These are a) 'minimal interaction' with the group and b) 'habituation' of the group to the observer's presence. I tried to limit my interaction with the children during the lessons I observed as much as possible. I found that this was relatively easy when I had an observation schedule in front of me that occupied my attention. The children, in the beginning of the year, would come to check what I was doing but very quickly their attention in what I was doing decreased. In order to get the children 'habituated' to my presence around them, I tried to come in to the school frequently, and not only when I had an observation scheduled. Not very long after the observations commenced, children seemed to get on with their work as if I was an accepted party in their classroom. At least, the teachers told me the children were not reacting particularly differently from other times because of my presence.

Observer factors may also come into play in the activity of observation (Malderez & Bodoczky, 1999). It is possible that the observer has a tendency to see what they expect to see, or to focus on different things depending on their own mood at particular times. It is important to take account of these factors in the analysis of the data.

A further potential limitation of observation is that it is time-consuming. However, if the aim of a study is to get at a rich account and deeper understanding of a phenomenon, as is the aim of the present case study, it is necessary to use instruments such as interviews and observations, even though these are time-consuming.

The two distinct roles researchers can take on in observations are participant observer and non-participant observer (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The participant observer is typically described as engaging him/herself in the activities and the social life of the participants he/she is observing (Yin, 1994; Robson, 1993; Cohen & Manion, 1994). Non-participant observers, on the other hand, stand back from the group they are observing (Cohen & Manion, 1994). That is, in the example of a classroom, they do not participate in the activities conducted or answer teachers' questions.

During the observation of lessons, my role as a researcher lay somewhere between a participant observer and a non-participant observer. I did not participate actively in the lessons, during the observations. However, I did become a part of the routine of the classes I was observing. I interacted with children after class. My role may be characterised as what Robson (1993, p. 198) describes as a 'marginal participant'. In order to make the teacher and the students feel comfortable I tried to sit at the back, somewhere not as visible, and tried not to interact with the students or the teacher during the observation although this was not such an easy task. It is my feeling that the teacher and the students became used to my presence after some time.

The classroom observation served three purposes for the present study. Firstly, the

observation notes were used to triangulate what teachers said they did in the classroom during the interviews. Secondly, they were used as a supplementary source of evidence in addition to the interviews for any changes teachers made to their practices. Thirdly, the observational notes were useful for me to prompt the teachers during the post-observation interviews.

4.6.2 Lessons learnt from piloting classroom observations

To begin with, in order not to restrict myself to focusing on only a narrow part of lessons, I avoided using an observation schedule in the pilot study. Instead I tried to get an overall impression of the lesson. However, conducting the observations in this way made it difficult for me to focus on aspects of the lesson that would be useful in answering my research questions. Therefore, I decided to prepare an observation schedule that would provide some focus for what to observe in the lessons. I prepared a schedule in which I recorded my observations in three columns. One column showed the events that happened, another gave a description of what happened, and a final column was for my comments. Once I began using this observation schedule I found that it provided useful guidance. However, it was still not as effective for answering my research questions as I wished it to be. As a result of the pilot observations I prepared a slightly more detailed observation schedule for my main study. I discuss this schedule in the coming section.

During the pilot observations I also found that audio-recording the lessons was of great help. Audio-recordings were helpful in two ways. On the one hand they freed me to focus more closely on non-verbal behaviour, as I could check the recording later to see what was said. As such, I was able to make more exclusive notes about the 'actions' of the teachers and students during the lessons. In addition, the audio-recordings were a useful resource that could stimulate my recall of the lessons when I looked through my observational notes on later occasions.

4.6.3 Procedure used in classroom observations

Soon after I conducted the first hierarchical focusing interview, I started my classroom observations. I conducted seven classroom observations (and therefore also seven post-observation interviews) with each teacher between the months of September and May. My plan was to have fairly equal time intervals between each observation, but this proved difficult. For one, the scheduling of classroom observation, and therefore also the post-observation interviews, was dependent on the teachers' and school's schedules. In addition, I spent a period of time away from the field engaged in preliminary processing and analysis of data, receiving supervision from staff at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom.

My experience in the pilot study led me to use a schedule for observing the classes

(see Section 4.6.2). As it was not possible to write down and make notes of every thing that happened in the classroom, I was selective in my observations. I selected to observe what I thought would be most relevant for the purposes of my study. That is, I segmented the lesson into five-minute intervals and created five types of information I wanted to note down for each of these five-minute intervals during my observations. These were 1) the type of activity the teacher was doing, 2) the teacher's miming and gestures, 3) the teacher's movement around the classroom, 4) the students' actions and 5) any other comments. The lessons all lasted 40 minutes. The observation schedule I used can be found in Appendix E. Finally, with permission from the school administrators I audio-recorded all the lessons that I observed. The audio-recordings were used as supporting data; I did not transcribe these recordings.

4.7 Additional Data Sources

In this section I talk about my additional methods of data generating. These include 1) 'casual observations' (Yin, 1994), which resulted in field notes and 2) various curriculum, syllabus and lesson documents.

4.7.1 Casual observations resulting in field notes

Yin (1994) talks of the common use of casual observations in case studies, where the researcher makes fewer formal observations throughout a field visit, including occasions during which other evidence, such as that from interviews is collected. Such observations enable the researcher to notice the pictures, posters, and other artifacts in the school setting, which may then be used as evidence to make sense of the interview data. My causal observations took place in all parts of the school I had access to, such as the classrooms, the administrators/principal's rooms, the staffrooms, the cafeterias, and in the corridors.

The casual observations conducted in the schools were recorded as field notes. Patton (1990) states that, "the fundamental work of the observer is the taking of field notes" (p. 239). He draws attention to the importance of field notes for the recalling of what one has observed at a later time. Swann (1994, p. 31) suggests that an observer may use field notes for two purposes, 1) to record details of class or group interactions, and 2) to focus on the behaviour of an individual speaker, and that these notes may be the main source of information or may be used to supplement other data. In the present study, the field notes were jotted down spontaneously during the observations and they included everything that I believed to be worth noting (see Patton, 1990, p. 239). These notes were descriptive and contained contextual information such as date, time, individuals who were present, descriptions of the physical setting, the interactions that occurred, and the activities that took place, as well as what people said. In addition to these descriptions, I also added my comments and

interpretations when time allowed.

4.7.2 Documents

Patton (1990) describes the usefulness of documents saying that “they are a basic source of information about program decisions and background, or activities and processes, and that they can give the evaluator [researcher] ideas about important questions to pursue through more direct observations and interviewing” (p. 239). According to Robson (1993) the particular advantage of collecting documents is that one can return to these for further analysis if necessary, that this type of data is in permanent form allowing for “reliability checks and replication studies” (p. 280). The disadvantage is that documents available may be partial or limited, and thus may not always provide conclusive data on certain phenomena. It is therefore necessary to triangulate them with other accounts. May (1997, p. 157) also talks of the usefulness of documents when used alongside observation in allowing for comparisons to be made between the observer’s interpretation of events and those recorded in documents relating to those events.

The types of documents collected for this study were mainly materials such as handouts and worksheets that the teacher gave the children to work on during class or for homework. I also collected the textbooks that the teachers used in the specific classes I observed (together with the accompanying teacher’s books). The purpose of collecting these documents was to gain a richer account of the teachers’ experience in their new teaching context. As such, document collection was important to the underlying social constructivist approach to research in this study.

When collecting documents for the purposes of the study, I kept in mind that meaning can only be derived through the reading or writing of a text, that meaning does not simply reside in texts and that meanings can change when texts are re-read in different contexts or situations (Derrida, 1978, cited in Hodder, 1994). In other words, documents are prone to different interpretations by the researcher and the teachers, and other members of the school who use them. Therefore, I cross-checked any interpretations of these documents with the participating teachers.

4.8 Timeline of the Fieldwork

Table 4.3 represents a timeline of the fieldwork. As can be noted from Table 4.3, it was not possible to have systematic timeline, where for example I conducted the first hierarchical focusing interviews within the same week. The teachers’ schedules, unexpected cancellations followed by rescheduling of interviews and observations made this impossible. In addition, I was away for the period of around six weeks, in November and December, as I had to be in

Leeds for supervision purposes as part of the ‘split-location scheme’ I was enrolled in.

HFI 1: First hierarchical focusing interview

PO1-PO7: Post-observation interviews 1-7

HFI 2: Final hierarchical focusing interview

Dates/Teachers	Sevda	Imge	Gamze	Tomris
HFI 1	20 Sept. 2001	28 Sept. 2001	8 Oct. 2001	5 Oct. 2001
PO1	27 Sept. 2001	8 Oct. 2001	31 Oct. 2001	17 Oct. 2001
PO2	18 Oct. 2001	5 Nov. 2001	23 Jan. 2002	2 Nov. 2001
PO3	1 Nov. 2001	21 Jan. 2002	6 Feb. 2002	23 Jan. 2002
PO4	31 Jan. 2002	4 Mar. 2002	6 Mar. 2002	5 Mar. 2002
PO5	11 Mar. 2002	8 Apr. 2002	20 Mar. 2002	26 Mar. 2002
PO6	25 Mar. 2002	29 Apr. 2002	17 Apr. 2002	16 Apr. 2002
PO7	15 Apr. 2002	16 May 2002	15 May 2002	17 May 2002
HFI 2	16 May 2002	17 May 2002	22 May 2002	21 May 2002

Table 4.3: Timeline for fieldwork

4.9 Data Transcription, Coding, and Analysis

In this section I describe the data analysis procedure in detail. I give a sequential description of my attempts to manage and make sense of all the data that was generated during the school year. I begin by talking about how I analysed the interview data, as this was the primary source of data I used to be able to answer my research questions.

4.9.1 Transcribing the interviews

The transcription of the audio-recorded interviews began as soon as the first interviews had been conducted and continued throughout the data generation period. This allowed me to go back to previously held interviews with a particular teacher in order to make use of any information in future interviews. In this sense, there was no clear-cut distinction between the time that the data was generated and the time that I analysed the data.

Both the hierarchical focusing interviews and the post-observation interviews were transcribed fully in Turkish. The transcriptions focused on the content of what teachers said, as this was more relevant for the purposes of the study. The transcriptions did not include detailed coding of pauses, intonation or other detailed information that would be used in

discourse analysis. The focus of the study was on ‘what’ the teachers said, and not ‘how’ they said it. As such, they were ‘broad’ transcriptions (Gee, 1999). However, the transcriptions did include overlapping speech, as well as comments on emotional vocalisations such as giggling and laughter, since these features were considered to be useful for interpreting ‘what’ the teacher said.

In the transcriptions, each turn spoken by either the teacher or me as the researcher is numbered. The transcription conventions and a sample excerpt of transcription are provided in Appendix F.

Once transcribed, the interviews were translated into English. This means that I have not conducted the analysis on the original language of the interviews. The reason I used the translation of the interview data in analysis was primarily so that I could share the process of analysis with my supervisors. In other words, it was important that my supervisors could understand the interview data we were working on. I also felt that because my study focused on the content of what teachers were saying, rather than analysing the discourse, the translation would not interfere with the purpose of the study directly.

In the translation process I noticed that there were certain sayings in Turkish that do not have an exact counterpart in English. For example, I realised that the Turkish word ‘bilgi’, the literal translation of which is ‘knowledge’, could also stand for ‘information’, which in English can be quite different in its meaning from ‘knowledge’. In such instances I made use of the context in which the teacher used this term to interpret which meaning she was referring to. For example, if the teacher was talking about giving some sort of information to the students about where they should keep their notebooks, I could recognise from the context that she was referring to ‘information’ not ‘knowledge’ when she used the word ‘bilgi’.

A similar concern had to do with certain phrases commonly used by Turkish teachers, such as ‘give a lesson’ or ‘take the information’. These phrases are a colloquial part of the Turkish language, but they also suggest a tendency towards a specific approach to teaching. This approach sees the learner as a passive recipient of knowledge and the teacher as the one who transmits knowledge to the passive recipient. There is a tendency in the Turkish education system to view the process of teaching and learning as an act of giving and taking. But some Turkish teachers who are particularly perceptive of the implications of these phrases would not use them if they did not subscribe to a particular method of teaching. As these phrases are culture-specific, the translation may sound awkward at times.

More generally, I aimed to do a content-based translation. That is, the most important goal was to portray the meaning of what teachers were saying to the best of my ability. This decision was influenced by the translations done on the pilot study data. These translations were more literal, and I found that these more literal translations distracted the reader’s

attention away from the meanings of what the teachers were saying, due to the frequent awkwardness of sentences.

In order to check my translations, I gave one original Turkish interview transcription to a colleague fluent in both languages so that she could translate it into English. I then cross-checked my translation with hers for consistency. The majority of the transcript my colleague translated was similar to my translation, and where inconsistencies occurred I tried asking the teachers what they meant by certain expressions they used. This process helped produce the insights discussed above.

When analysing the interview data I worked with the translated transcriptions bearing in mind 1) the accessibility of the data for my supervision process, and 2) that I wanted to conduct a content analysis, not a discourse analysis of the data.

4.9.2 Coding the interview data

In order to develop a framework for analysing the interview data, I began an iterative process of coding and re-coding. My initial attempt at coding the data revealed statements about the use of games, the use of the mother tongue and use of positive reinforcement. I considered using these topics to frame my analysis. However, the coding of every individual topic that the teacher talked about in all the interview data resulted in a very large number of topics. It seemed impossible to base an analysis on such a large number of topics. It seemed that these topics needed to be organised in some way.

I then began to search for ways in which all the topics that emerged could be grouped by broader headings. The many individual topics seemed to group under four interrelated headings. That is, the teachers talked about, 1) being a teacher (BaT), 2) language teaching (LT), 3) teaching young learners (TYL), and 4) teaching English to young learners (TEYL). Figure 4.1 shows how these four groups interrelate.

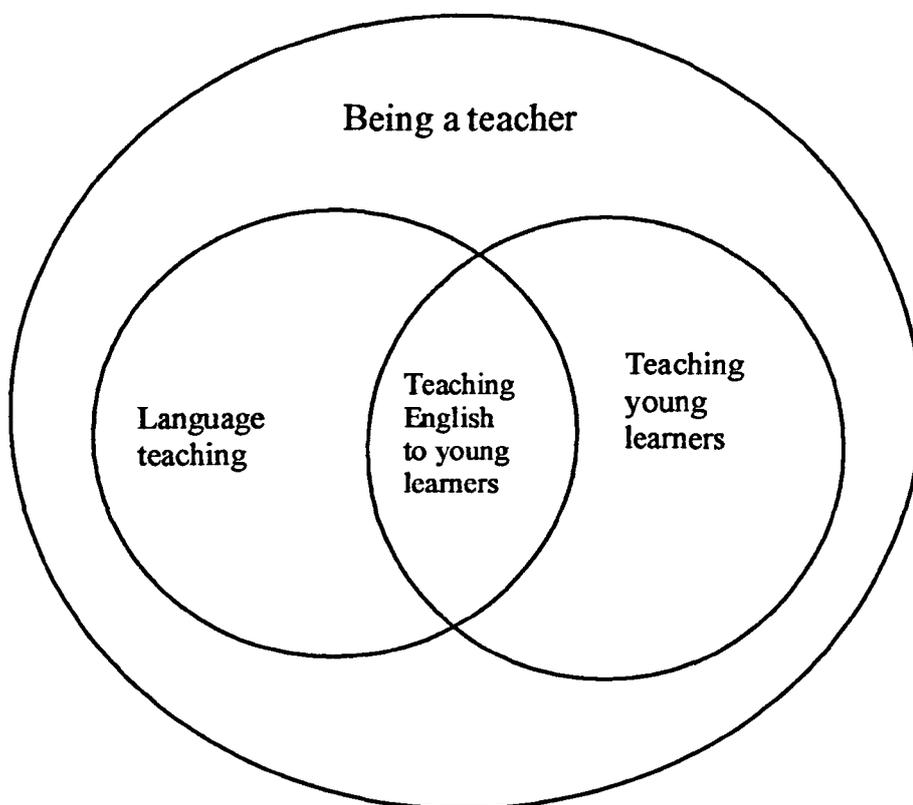


Figure 4.1: Interconnected headings for topics in the interview data

If the teacher made statements about how she approached the profession of teaching, the reasons she became a teacher, identifiable characteristics of being a teacher (like being organised, controlling or flexible), these belonged to the group, 'Being a teacher'. The list of topics related to being a teacher is listed in Appendix G.

If the teacher made general statements about language teaching, such as the importance of giving homework for language learning, her approach towards correcting mistakes, or her approach towards exams, these were grouped under the heading 'language teaching'. Additional types of statements grouped under this category were those where the teacher talked about teaching English to her previous (older) students. The following quote is a good example of these types of statements. The teacher is talking about how she conducted her lessons when she was teaching her high school classes in the previous years (words in bold mean that the teacher has said these words in English, not in Turkish).

I mean a lesson like a lesson. A lesson that has a specific organisation, like a lesson we are familiar with. I mean like teaching tenses, you give the vocabulary of the unit and then a general warm-up and then if there's a passage you read that or if you have a grammar topic you give that, questions

about it, homework, correction of homework, it was always like that. (Sevda, HFI 2:108)

The full list of topics grouped under ‘language teaching’ appears in Appendix H.

If the teacher made statements about challenges or advantages of teaching young children, or statements about the nature of young learners, their characteristics, how she developed strategies to manage their behaviour or about her interaction with them, these came under the heading ‘teaching young learners’. These statements did not include anything on language learning or teaching. For the full list of topics under ‘teaching young learners’ see Appendix I.

If the teacher made statements about the methods she used in her primary English classes, or about her approach towards using games for language teaching (for example using games to teach specific vocabulary items), using the mother tongue in class, or the direct teaching of grammar to the children, these would come under the heading, ‘teaching English to young learners’. The difference between this group and the group ‘teaching young learners’ is the teachers’ focus on language in the young learner classroom. For the full list of topics under ‘teaching English to young learners’, see Appendix J.

Below is an outline of the five headings that emerged from the data.

1. Being a teacher (BaT)
2. Language teaching (LT)
3. Teaching young learners (TYL)
4. Teaching English to young learners (TEYL)
5. Differences between younger and older learners and teaching them.

Note that these headings emerged from what the teachers said during the interviews; both the hierarchical focusing and post-observation interviews. Although the hierarchical focusing interviews were structured by a research agenda (see Section 4.5.3), this agenda was not the same as the above headings (see Appendixes C and D). Even so, it may indirectly, but not overtly, have contributed to the emergence of the five headings. The post-observation interviews, which also contributed to the identification for the headings, were not structured by a researcher agenda, except for the starter question (see Section 4.5.3).

Figure 4.2 below shows one strand of the coding scheme, the heading ‘Teaching English to Young Learners’ (TEYL), with all its topics (this can also be found in Appendix J).

In situation 1, the teacher started talking about one topic and then stopped talking about that topic and continued talking about another topic in the same turn, as in the following example. The forward slashes indicate the two different statements (topics) in this teacher's turn.

// I mean, our aim is to give them some social and behavior skills rather than just knowledge, of course in the first grades you may be forced to speak Turkish. You can give the commands in English but in most cases you are in a difficult situation, when you can't explain to them because they are getting used to the school psychologically and also they get to know their teacher slowly, and there are a lot of sentimental issues, // // they can't grasp if a teacher chooses a student, why she chooses that student. Does she not choose me because she doesn't love me? Or if you feel you need to pay a little more attention to someone else another student may want the same attention at the same time, when you say put it in my folder, the other one gets jealous, he says, 'put it in my folder too' and this can disrupt the flow of the lesson. You put it for now of course but (laughs) //. (Gamze, PO2:052)

This teacher starts to talk about the necessity she feels to use L1 in her classroom. She then goes on to talk about other issues that relate to her interaction with her young students that do not relate to using L1. These two statements that appear in the same turn, are therefore coded as different topics.

In situation 2, the teacher makes one statement but her statement gradually blends into another statement, such that the boundary between the statements is not very clear. Below is an example of this situation (R: Researcher, T: Teacher; words in bold mean that the teacher has said these words in English, not in Turkish).

R: *Which grades do you teach?*

T: *First, fourth and sixth.*

R: *Okay, and can you tell me the different things you do in these classes?*

T: *Well, in first grade we of course do activities:*

R: *What do you mean?*

T: *Flashcards, also puppets, I take puppets, it's a puppet that talks English, I talk but it understands English. There's a camera in it, it observes them and their behaviour and it talks with me. If there's a student who has diverted their attention to something else at that point in the lesson, we don't say naughty in PYP (giggles).* (Gamze, HF1)

In her final turn in the above exchange, this teacher starts off by talking about using extra materials like flashcards and puppets but then this blends into talking about what purpose she uses a particular puppet for. As such it is difficult to clearly differentiate where she stops talking about using extra materials and where she starts talking about a class management strategy.

In situation 3, there is no separation at all between the two topics that appear in a single turn. In other words, the teacher makes two or even three statements in one turn and they do not appear in a linear order, rather the statements are intertwined. The following excerpt provides an example of this situation.

Of course, by saying when they are drawing, I just taught them, for example I taught them rabbit, if I gave them a blank sheet of paper and I say let's draw rabbit, they draw a rabbit, and then I say colour, I say the colour for example, both the colours will be reviewed, it's the same in their funbooks as well. She gives the pictures, I ask what is this, and then I say, well, whatever, if it's a table, I say let's colour the table this colour, something like that. When we are practising in on under, under the table, for example if they learned book, we say there's a book there, we say draw a book, they just draw them there on their own. That's fun for them. There's always a review of vocabulary.
(Sevda PO4:072)

In the above excerpt, there are statements related to doing revision, to doing hands-on activities, and practising language structures. All of these topics are intertwined within the one turn, which made this type of turn difficult to code as separate statements.

Finally, there were also instances in which a particular statement was not confined within a single turn. In other words, the teacher continued talking about a particular topic over a few turns, as can be seen in the following exchange between a teacher and me as the researcher.

T: If I had said in the beginning that I would put up the work of those who did the best job maybe they would have worked more organised. I told them at the end and then they started colouring.

R: What are you going to do with the papers?

T: I will put them up. I don't know if you have seen them in the

classroom, there were triangles and stars, we did that in class, I will take them off and I will put these up. I mean I will choose the best ones among them, and I have a lesson with them again tomorrow, at the end of the lesson I will say that I will put some of the papers I didn't put up yesterday but only of those who are good in this lesson.

(Sevda, PO3: 054-056)

Here the teacher starts off by talking about a reinforcement strategy that she could have used in her lesson. After the researchers' questions, the teacher starts to elaborate on the types of strategies she used to reinforce positive behaviour. In such situations, each turn was coded as a separate statement, in other words, one turn was considered as a boundary for statements. As such, in this case, reinforcing positive behaviour was coded twice, once for each turn the teacher talked about it.

4.9.3 Coding the data in MaxQDA qualitative analysis software

A qualitative analysis software package called MaxQDA was used for coding the data in this study. The main reason this software was chosen was that it allowed me to organise all my interview data in one place and later to retrieve whatever coded information I needed from these data quickly.

Once the transcription and translation process was finished, all the interviews including both the hierarchical focusing interviews and the post observation interviews were imported to MaxQDA. Following this, I entered all the main headings, 'being a teacher, language teaching, teaching young learners and teaching English to young learners' in MaxQDA. Under each heading I listed all the topics that the teachers talked about in the interviews. These topics are all listed in Appendixes G, H, I and J. I then coded each statement that a teacher made as one of these topics.

Once all the teachers' statements were coded, MaxQDA software was used for data analysis. MaxQDA facilitated the data analysis for this study in that it allowed me to retrieve all the statements that were coded in any combination. In other words, I was able to highlight the name of the teacher, the specific interview and the code 'teaching vocabulary' and the software would show all the statements about the topic 'teaching vocabulary' in that particular interview for that particular teacher. If I wanted to look at a specific topic, like 'use of L1' across all teachers, I highlighted all the interviews of all the teachers and then highlighted the code 'use of L1' to get at this information. The possibility of extracting many such combinations made MaxQDA an effective tool for the analysis of my data in terms of time and accuracy.

4.9.4 Exploring the cases

This section describes the procedures involved in exploring the cases. The first section describes the steps involved in exploring each individual case (participant), and the second section describes the subsequent cross-case analysis.

Exploring individual cases

Exploration of each participant teacher (case) involved the following stages:

1. Description of personal and professional characteristics of the teacher;
2. Description of features of the teacher's new school;
3. Presenting the attitude of the teacher towards teaching young learners;
4. Presenting teacher's account of the differences between teaching older and young learners;
5. Identifying the changes in the teacher's approach towards teaching young learners and the influences on these changes.

The first three stages are intended to provide some background information about each teacher. The fourth stage involves an attempt to reduce the data and to create a foundation on which to carry out the analysis. The fifth stage responds to research questions one and two. I will now discuss each stage in more detail.

The first two stages of analysis involve giving a brief description of the teacher and a brief description of the school they began teaching at in the beginning of the data generation period (the schools that participated in the study). Before starting interviews and observations with teachers, I asked them a number of questions about their background (see Appendix B). I made use of this information as well as other information provided by the teachers in their interviews to talk about each teacher's qualities and their background. In describing the schools in which the participating teachers worked, I made use of teachers' interviews, particularly where they made comments about their school, as well as my observations of the school environment, the classes and the students.

The third stage of exploring each case makes use of the interview data. Each statement a teacher made on the topic 'attitude towards children and teaching at primary level', under the heading 'Teaching Young Learners' (see Figure 4.2) was retrieved using the MaxQDA software. The purpose of focusing on this topic at this stage of exploring each case was to provide an initial accessible description of the teachers' perspective on children and teaching children, and how this changed over the school year. To best understand the statements retrieved using MaxQDA, they were displayed in a time-ordered sequence, so to highlight any changes in the teachers' attitude towards children and teaching children over the

course of the school year.

The fourth stage of exploring each case includes a particular focus on the topics relating to the heading, 'Differences between younger and older learners and teaching them' (see Section 4.9.2). The reason for starting off with this was an attempt, on my part, to base my analysis on what the teacher felt was important rather than imposing my own view about what was important in their transition to teaching young learners. This approach also extends my attempts not to impose constructs while interviewing the teachers. Another function of this step was to achieve data reduction (Miles & Huberman, 1994). By basing my analysis on the topics that were most important for the teachers, I restricted the number of topics on which I would conduct an in-depth analysis, therefore allowing time for a more detailed analysis of the reduced data.

All the topics that one or more teachers talked about under the heading 'differences between young learners and older learners and teaching them' are listed below.

Differences between younger and older learners and teaching them

class management
use of extra materials
use of games
use of songs
use of project-work
use of L1
teaching of grammar

Stage four includes an additional data reduction technique. Using the MaxQDA software, the number of statements made for each topic was counted for each teacher, and then represented in a histogram. Figure 4.4 is an example of such a histogram, showing the frequency of statements across different topics for one of the participating teachers. The horizontal axis represents the ten most frequently talked about topics, and the vertical axis represents the number of statements made with respect to each topic.

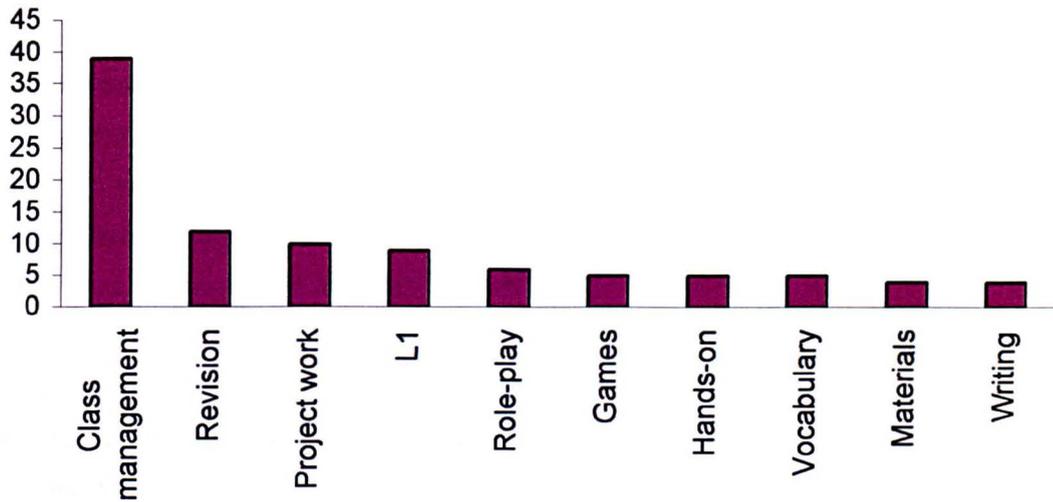


Figure 4.4: Example frequency chart of the topics most talked of by a teacher

This data was then combined with the differences identified by the teacher, resulting in a final list of topics to be explored in more depth. Hence, the final decision about which topics to focus on for each teacher was in part an emic one, relying on what the teacher herself identified as a difference between teaching older and young learners, but then also supplemented by data on how frequently the teacher talked about each topic.

The fifth stage provides answers for the first and second research questions. For each topic that was a part of the list of topics that emerged at the end of stage four, I first looked at the changes teachers experienced, in an attempt to answer the first research question, “What changes in approach, if any, do teachers who formerly taught older learners, experience in their first year of teaching English in primary school?”, and then I looked at the possible influences on these changes, in an attempt to answer the second research question, “What factors influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?”

To identify the changes, if, for instance, the teacher had mentioned the use of extra materials as a difference between teaching children and older learners, I looked at each statement the teacher made regarding this topic; beginning with the first hierarchical focusing interview, moving on to the post-observation interviews, and ending with the final hierarchical focusing interview. The MaxQDA software was used to quickly retrieve all the statements on this and other topics. My purpose was to find evidence of change in the teachers’ approach to each particular topic, e.g., ‘use of extra materials’. I supported the analysis of the interview data with my classroom observation notes. I used my class observation notes to confirm or disconfirm whether, for example, the teacher actually used ‘extra materials’ in their classes as much as they said they did or in the ways in which they

said they used them, or whether there was actually any change in their practice in terms of making use of extra materials. I followed the same procedure for identifying change across all the other topics selected for in-depth examination in stage four. I also visually represented the change in what I call, 'bubble charts'. These charts are described in detail in the following section.

To look at the possible influences on the changes that emerged from teachers' data, I tried to make use of all the interview data to reach an understanding of what may have influenced teachers' change process. The interview data on what the teacher said about being a teacher (BaT), about language teaching (LT), about teaching young learners (TYL), and about teaching English to young learners (TEYL) all played a vital role in understanding the factors that may have influenced the changes that occurred or did not occur. If, for example, the teacher showed a lot of change in her use of extra materials over the school year, data from what she said about being a teacher (for example, that she is creative, has artistic ability and likes to go beyond what the textbook offers) and data from what she said about teaching young learners (for example, what she thinks children's interests or needs are), was helpful in making sense of the change. At this stage, I also made use of any other sources of data, including class observation notes, field notes, and documents. In these sources of data I looked for evidence of factors that may have played a role in the change the teachers experienced.

I end each case with an outline of the areas in which the teacher changed (and those areas in which she did not show any change), what the changes were and the possible factors that influenced these changes in the form of a bulleted list.

Visual display

Soon after beginning to write my cases in a descriptive manner, I felt the need to look at the topics and the types of statements emerging from my data from a bird's eye view. I realised that having a visual display of the data would give the reader (and myself) a clearer perspective on what was going on. I therefore prepared a visual representation of the changes in teachers' approach to teaching young learners that took place over the school year. I prepared these visual representations for each of the topics on which I conducted an in-depth analysis for each teacher. I call these visual representations, 'bubble charts'. The bubble charts appear in the next chapter in the analysis of each individual case.

The charts serve the purpose of giving the reader a chance to see, at one time, all the statements the teacher has made in the interviews held throughout the school year, on one particular topic. More specifically, they allow the reader to see, at one glance, 1) the frequency with which a teacher made particular types of statements about a topic, 2) the time

(during the school year) when the teacher talked about a topic, and 3) how much the teacher talked about a topic in one statement.

In the sample bubble chart in Figure 4.5, one can see a visual representation of all the statements the teacher made on the topic of 'extra materials' across the interviews conducted over the school year. The horizontal axis indicates which interview the statements are from, starting with the first hierarchical focusing interview (HFI 1) conducted on 28 September, then followed by the seven post-observation interviews (PO1 through PO7) conducted throughout the school year, and ending with the final hierarchical focusing interview (HFI 2) conducted on 17 May. An attempt has been made to space the interviews along the horizontal axis according to how much time passed between the interviews. For example, more than two months passed between PO2 and PO3, and for this reason these are positioned further apart. On the vertical axis one can see labels that correspond to sub-topics within the overall topic of 'extra materials'. These labels were mostly generated by the teachers' own words, especially where she was consistent in her wording across statements. On some occasions it was necessary to paraphrase what the teacher said in order to arrive at a clear label for a sub-topic. This, then, was an additional more fine-grained coding of the interview data. Finally, each of the bubbles occupying the chart area represents one statement on the topic of 'extra materials'. Smaller bubbles represent relatively brief statements and larger bubbles represent longer statements. The analysis deliberately avoided any exact word count. However, in general, the larger bubbles in any single bubble chart normally represent around 100 words and the smallest bubbles, by comparison, represent as few as five to ten words. It should be noted, however, that the different bubble charts are constructed using different amounts of interview data. For this reason, bubble sizes are not necessarily comparable across charts.

Each subtopic covered by the teachers is represented by a different colour label and bubbles. For example, in the example chart in Figure 4.5, 'Sharing materials with colleagues' was represented by red bubbles and a red label, whereas, 'Re-using materials' was represented with pink as it was a different sub-topic.

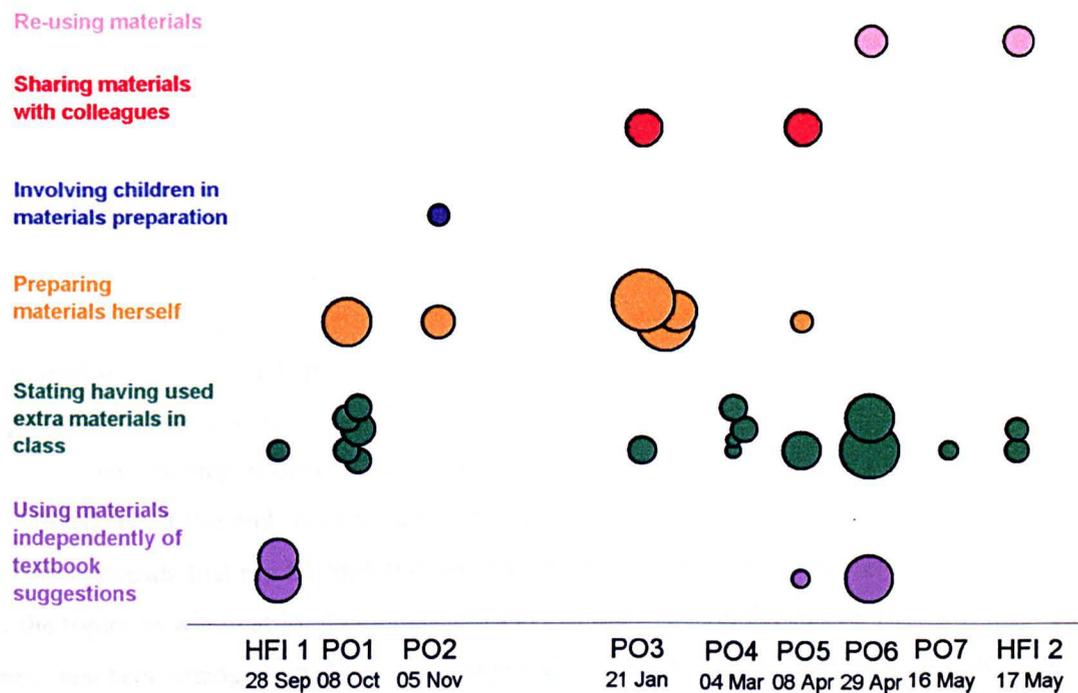


Figure 4.5: Sample bubble chart on the topic of ‘extra materials’

An important analytical dimension of the bubble charts is the ordering of the labels on the vertical axis. These were only ordered after the bubbles had been generated. The general rule was that the sub-topic that was introduced first by the teacher was positioned first (at the bottom) along the vertical axis, and the sub-topic that was introduced last was positioned last (at the top) along the vertical axis. Since some sub-topics were introduced in the same interview the following additional rules were identified to order the labels (these were applied to the data in the indicated order).

- 1) If two sub-topics were introduced in the same interview, the sub-topic that ‘disappeared’ from the teacher’s discourse first was positioned first along the vertical axis.
- 2) If two sub-topics were introduced in the same interview, and also ‘disappeared’ from the teacher’s discourse at the same time (was last covered in the same interview) then the sub-topic that contained more words (represented by a bigger bubble) in the interview where it was first introduced was positioned first along the vertical axis.

Hence, the ordering of the labels along the vertical axis is entirely data-driven. Furthermore, this ordering of the labels functions to highlight any changes in the teacher’s talk about a

topic across the school year. In addition, because the labels are largely based on the teacher's own words, this order of the labels, and the pattern of change that they highlight, is a further attempt at taking an emic perspective on the data.

4.9.5 Cross-case analysis

In this section, I describe how I explored similarities and differences between the four cases. This cross-case analysis responded to the third and fourth research questions, "What are the similarities in the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?" and "What are the similarities in what influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?" respectively.

The first step of the cross-case analysis was to refer to the summaries that appeared as a bulleted list at the end of each case in Chapter 5. This list was helpful in pointing out the common threads that ran through the participants' interview data. From this list, I focused on all the topics in which at least two teachers showed change over the school year. For example, three teachers changed in how they approached the topic of 'use of extra materials'. Therefore, the topic of 'use of extra materials' became a focus for the cross-case analysis.

The next step was to look at each of the topics (in which at least two teachers showed change), to see the similarities in the changes these teachers experienced in that area. The final stage in the cross-case analysis involved exploring what factors influenced the changes that did and did not take place. For the individual cases, these factors were discussed in Chapter 5. In the cross-case analysis, a further investigation of the factors was carried out for those topics that emerged as being common for at least two teachers in an attempt to answer the fourth research question, "What are the similarities in what influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?" Common factors were then discussed in an attempt to make sense of teachers' change process and to, later in the thesis, be able to provide insights that could be used to guide teacher training programmes, the planning of education authorities in Turkey and other contexts where teachers had to make such sudden transitions in their jobs.

In the next chapter, I describe the changes each of the four participating teachers experienced over their first year of teaching English to young learners and I discuss the influences on these changes.

5 Cases

This chapter includes an in depth analysis of each of my four cases. Below is a description of the structure of how each case is presented. The reason for this particular structure is two-fold; a) to help the readers follow my train of thought more easily, and b) to ultimately help me in answering the research questions. This structure is based on the stages outlined in the previous chapter.

The first section consists of a general portrait of the particular teacher;

1. The second section describes the school in which the teacher was working at the time of the data generation;
2. The third section looks at what the teacher says (at different times in the year) about her attitude towards teaching at the primary level;
3. The fourth section presents the topics the teacher identified as differences between teaching older and young learners and combines this with a frequency analysis to identify topics for in-depth analysis;
4. The fifth section contains an in-depth analysis of change in the teacher's approach to the topics identified in section four, and the factors influencing the changes;
5. Each case ends with summary of the findings for the particular teacher that can be carried forward to the next chapter in which a cross-case analysis is undertaken.

5.1 *Sevda*

5.1.1 A portrait of *Sevda*

At the time when I was conducting my fieldwork, *Sevda* was 26 years old. She had three years experience of teaching high school students (aged 17-18) before she started her new post as a primary school English language teacher. That was the only teaching experience *Sevda* had since graduating from university. In the primary school *Sevda* started teaching first, second, third, and fifth grades. The first grade was chosen for research purposes, as it constituted the biggest contrast, in terms of age group, with her previous experience of teaching high school students.

Sevda had not had any formal training in teaching young learners before she came to teach in her new school. She said that she had attended a few seminars on young learners but added that she “did not approach it in a conscious manner”.

Having been in and out of her classes and spending some time with her over the course of a school year, I felt that one of *Sevda*'s most striking qualities was the importance

she gave to 'organisation' and 'being organised'. She said that she liked things to be systematic and was quite happy when there was a strict framework for the tasks she was expected to fulfill. The following quote illustrates this point.

This is a very organised school, everything is very organised, I really liked that. Even the smallest thing, everything comes to us programmed. The system is so well established, everything goes well, nothing confusing, everything goes as planned and programmed, it's very nice. (HFI 1:073)

My meetings with Sevda went very smoothly, and she always seemed happy to help me with my research. She did not seem to be inhibited by my presence in her classes for observation purposes. She did not seem to have lack of confidence even though it was her first time teaching children and being observed while doing this. She had a very helpful nature. We had a lot of informal chats outside the interview times that helped me to get to know her better. This, in turn, fed into my work by allowing me to make more sense of the interview and observation data.

Although Sevda did not have any children, or any close contact with children out of school, her relationship with her first grade class made it difficult to imagine that she did not have any experience with children. In general, her attitude was warm and suggested that she cared about what her students felt and thought. There would be many instances during each observation where she would hug the children. She was patient with them and seemed to find their "naughtiness", as she put it, natural and sometimes even amusing.

5.1.2 A portrait of Sevda's school

The main characteristic of Sevda's new school was that it was big both physically and in terms of the number of students enrolled. At the time of data generation, there were about one thousand students, and the school consisted of both a primary and a secondary level. Due to the large number of students there were also a large number of teachers. This was also the case for the English department.

The English language teachers were spread out over three different teachers' rooms. This seemed to make it difficult for all of them to get together informally. The teachers did not seem to be allocated to teachers' rooms according to the levels they were teaching. This made it even more difficult for those teaching similar levels to interact with each other. Sevda often commented on how she sometimes could not see any of her colleagues throughout an entire day. She pointed out that one of the reasons for this was because the school grounds were large and most of the time she found herself running from one class to the other. She

also noted that all the teachers had busy schedules so they did not have much time to spend in the teacher's room, which further decreased the likelihood of her interacting with her colleagues.

My interaction with the head of department and other teachers in Sevda's school, led me to believe that teachers were expected to follow the textbook quite closely. The head of department was particularly careful about the selection of appropriate textbooks for each level. He commented that the choices they made about the textbooks would directly influence students' proficiency.

One aspect of Sevda's lessons that grasped my attention was the difficulty she faced when she wanted to conduct a video lesson. The textbook she used had a video component that she was expected to cover. However, every time Sevda wanted to use the video, she had to notify the administration so that they could send out a janitor to bring the video player to her classroom. When I asked her about this she said the video player was shared among teachers. The video player would always be brought slightly after the lesson started and in my experience this usually caused some distraction to the lesson.

5.1.3 Sevda's attitude towards teaching in primary school

In this section, I look at how Sevda's attitude towards teaching primary school children changed over a year of working with them. In both the first and the final hierarchical focusing interviews (see Section 4.5.3), Sevda was explicitly asked a question about her feelings towards teaching children (see Appendixes C and D). Sevda also talked about her feelings towards teaching children in some of the post-observation interviews (see Section 4.5.4) without being prompted. Figure 5.1 presents an overview of all the statements Sevda made about her attitude towards teaching children.

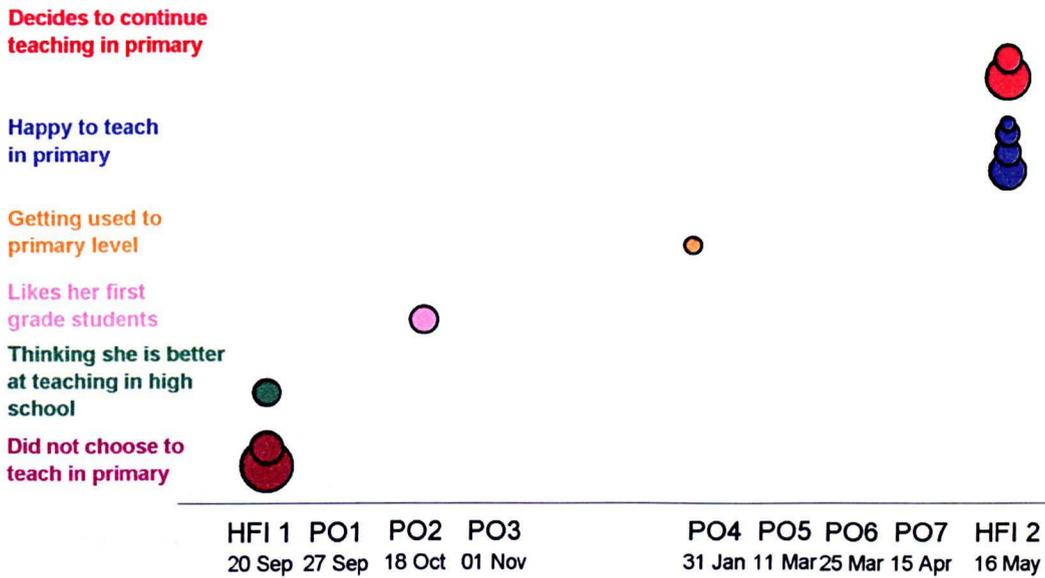


Figure 5.1: Sevda talking about her attitude towards teaching children

The bubble chart in Figure 5.1 shows a gradual change in Sevda’s attitude towards teaching children. In the initial interview, Sevda pointed out that when she first came to this school, she wanted to teach older students (e.g., sixth, seventh or eighth grades) and that she had not expected to be given the first grade. A comment from her in the beginning of the year, from the first hierarchical focusing interview, shows how she perceived herself as a teacher, “I actually think I am more appropriate for high school classes, I mean I believe I will be more successful in high school classes”. At this point, it seemed that she was unsure about her ability as a primary school teacher. She said she would try out the atmosphere in her new school and if she liked the school she would ask to teach high school students in this school next year. In sum, she was thinking her job as a primary school teacher was temporary, and if everything went well she would return to teaching high school students. This initial sentiment is clear from Figure 5.1 where Sevda can be seen to be talking about ‘not choosing to teach in primary’ and ‘thinking she is better at teaching in high school’ at the beginning of the school year.

Contrary to expectation, as the school year progressed, she seemed to like teaching children. Towards the end of October, after my second classroom observation, she talked about how she liked her first grade class. Then, in January, in the fourth post-observation interview, she said that she had got used to primary level, “I have got used to them, I have got used to primary school, I mean it’s so different from high school I can see that now.” Again, this change is visible in Figure 5.1 (see the pink and yellow bubbles). It seems that Sevda’s

first step towards acquiring a positive attitude towards teaching children was to get to know her own first grade class. Once she stated that she was happy with her own students, she began talking about how she was getting used to the primary school in general. That is, the first change in her attitude happened in relation to her own first grade class and the next change happened on a more general level.

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Sevda, as is reflected in the quote below, told me the reasons why she now enjoyed teaching at primary school. She said that it made her feel 'colourful', something which may suggest a positive attitude towards teaching children.

For one it is very colourful here, I mean that's very important, because when I was in high school and jumped up and down in the class, the children, it would be funny to the children, you couldn't do it to them. On very rare occasions once or twice, if they laugh you can laugh too but here you jump from branch to branch, I mean you jump, you hop, you run, you are very active here, you use games a lot, because of that I felt myself more colourful, I felt more active.
(HFI 2:004)

As can be seen from Figure 5.1, Sevda's final statements clearly presented a change from her initial opinion of herself as a primary school teacher. Whereas in the beginning of the year she was unsure about teaching very young learners and thought of herself more suited to teach in high school, at the end of the year Sevda said that she wanted to continue teaching at primary level (see the red bubbles). Her own account of this change can be seen in the quotes below.

Then I was indecisive actually. I was thinking, the first time I came here, I was supposed to teach at the high school level, then things changed and I went into the primary level, I said to myself I will try myself this year, let me see the school, the atmosphere and if it suits me then I will stay in this school but I will teach at high school level in this school but now I have decided to stay in primary school. (HFI 2:096)

I've decided on that now. I mean now I am definitely certain, then I had some doubts, whether I could do it, but now I am sure, I will stay here. (HFI 2:100)

5.1.4 Differences between primary and high school teaching

In this section, I discuss the differences between older (high school) and younger (primary

school) students, and teaching these two groups, that Sevda identified. The topics that are identified are combined with a frequency analysis of all the topics Sevda talked about over the school year, to arrive at the topics that will become subject to in-depth analysis in the next section.

There were various instances in which Sevda talked about differences between teaching high school students and children. However, most of these instances were when she was deliberately asked to comment on the differences between teaching young learners and high school students in the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews. This was an 'open' question that allowed her to reveal what was important for her rather than being asked to comment on specific issues that I, as the researcher, felt was important for the study. She pointed out, more or less, the same differences between children and older learners and teaching them in the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews. That is, she did not seem to have changed her mind about the differences over the school year.

In both the initial and the final hierarchical focusing interviews, the differences between children and older learners she pointed out were 1) the need to prepare and use extra materials in young learner classes because children learn through more visual means than high school students, 2) that class management in young learner classes is more difficult compared to high school classes because children have needs that high school students do not have (e.g., young children need to be constantly praised; something which is not as necessary in high school classes), and 3) the need to use many more games and game-like activities in young learner classes compared to her high school classes. Each of these is discussed in the following sections with supporting excerpts from the interviews.

Extra materials

Sevda felt that one of the main differences between teaching children and high school students was the amount of preparation and use of extra materials necessary for teaching young learners.

The biggest difference here, according to me, is that visual things have to be prepared, I mean like colouring, photocopies. For example, I look at my friend, a minute ago, she was preparing a wand, you need to prepare a magic wand and stuff. ... There's always something, there's always a need for preparation, colourful and active things that would suit the child's style, to suit the child's style, I think that's the biggest difference. (HFI 1:083)

She said that, in the past, she always saw her primary school teacher friends engaged in

preparing colourful materials but that she never had that in teaching her high school students. She said that in high school she always prepared handouts but that these were more mechanical and served the purpose of practising “grammar points”. She claimed that audio-visual techniques were important for children, and not so much for high school students, and that she did not use a lot of visual materials like posters, flashcards in high school.

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Sevda reiterated her opinion that using visual materials was necessary in primary school classes, as illustrated by the following excerpt.

I mean I definitely have to have a visual material when I go into that class [first grade class she teaches], a toy, something is necessary, something colourful. (HFI 2:106)

Class management

In the beginning of the year, Sevda said that she felt more relaxed with her high school students. One reason for this was that her high school students were calmer and did not require as much immediate attention as the young children she was now teaching.

Actually I was feeling very relaxed with them [her high school students]. For example, when we enter the class, every student has a different psychology, you enter, one day a student who is very cheerful and active can be very well behaved and proper. For five minutes before you begin the lesson you can share his problem, the others in the meanwhile can be somewhat more understanding, they can act very calmly. But here [in her first grade class], when I look at the young children, such a thing is not possible. You can only take the child out of class because you cannot deal with the child and leave the others unattended. I mean in primary school classes this is not possible.

(HFI 1:051)

Another reason why Sevda might have found it harder to talk to young children was that there was more of an age difference between herself and the children in her class. She pointed out that the less age difference there was between the teacher and the students the better it was. When there was little age difference she felt that the students could learn from her experiences, since not such a long time had elapsed since she herself had been through the same stages as the high school students were going through.

I got along with them very well, the things they could learn from me- because there wasn't such a big age gap between us, I graduated and I started teaching. For example, they had questions about university, we shared that. Sometimes they would ask things apart from English, about life in general, they can take things from you, they can make use of some of your experiences. Because there wasn't so much of an age difference, it went better, here it has become a bit different. (HFI 1:051)

At the end of the year, she also mentioned how there was a difference between managing her high school students and her young students, relating it to the short attention span of her young students. She seemed to feel that the struggle with teaching young learners was to come up with ways in which to get their attention and engage them in the lesson.

Oh, there are lots of differences actually. I mean, for example, in the first grade you become a child yourself, like a child you try to find things they will like, you say what should I do that will get their attention. With older ones you communicate by sometimes talking to them and by listening to them but their attention span is longer, the attention span of these ones [her first grade students] is very short, what was it with the little ones, forty seconds, it's nothing, and we try to get those kids to sit there for forty minutes. (HFI 2:070)

Teaching activities: Use of games

In Sevda's opinion, primary school is a more natural environment, involving the use of games and activities. She said that by contrast, in high school, "the technique was more important". She went on to explain this as:

For example, the difference between the present simple tense or the difference between perfect and past, you create a challenge within yourself about how you are going to explain it [in high school classes], you explain it this way, and then you explain it in another way. (HFI 1:077)

The differences in her approach to teaching English in high school and primary school can also be seen in the following quote, where she contrasts how she approached lessons in high school and in primary school.

It doesn't work like where they would stay put in their seats, you would give

your lesson, they would ask you questions, you would ask them questions, they would answer you [in high school classes] but it would be more of using activities [in primary school classes]. (HFI 1:069)

Sevda also felt that in primary school classes the teacher needed to use more of her imagination and creativity compared to high school classes.

In primary school there's more activity, it's busier, you try to find something new every minute, a game, I don't know, the exercises are more colourful. At the other school you only read the story, you gave the grammar, it wasn't so colourful, here it's very colourful. My books are fun as well! (PO4:100)

Finally, Sevda commented that she “believed games were necessary for children”, and that “in the other school there were almost no games we played”.

Frequency Analysis and Summary

The following is a frequency analysis to check how the above three topics, selected on the basis of what Sevda identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners, relate to the full range of topics Sevda talked about in the various interviews across the school year.

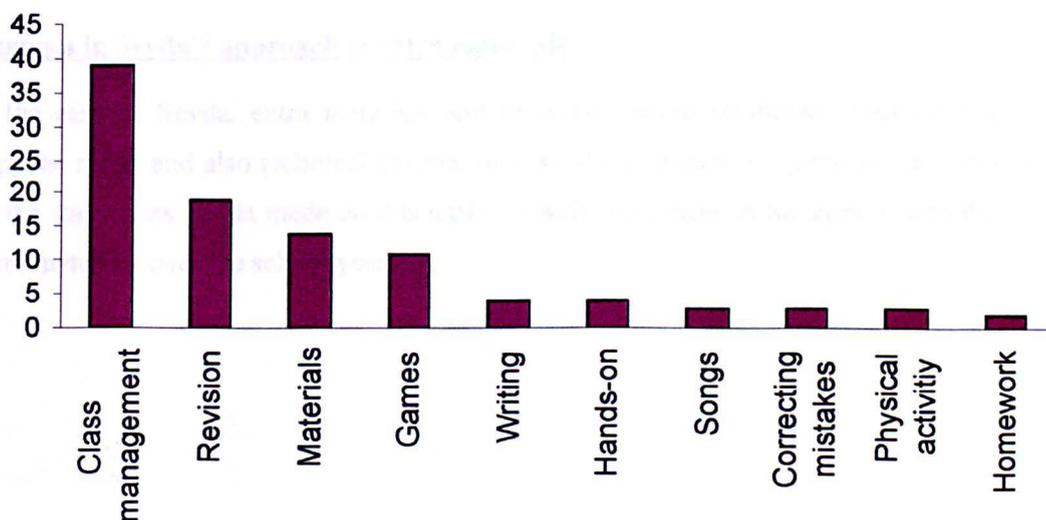


Figure 5.2: Frequency of statements in the ten topics Sevda talked about most

Figure 5.2 shows this analysis for the ten most frequently talked about topics. The vertical axis represents the number of statements made on each topic. The figure shows that of all the topics talked about by Sevda in the interviews the three topics she had identified as

differences between teaching older and younger learners were also three topics she spoke about very frequently. However, the analysis also shows that Sevda talked about 'Revision' quite frequently. Beyond this, the remaining topics seem to have been talked about a lot less frequently.

Based on the differences identified by Sevda, between older and younger learners and teaching them, as well as the frequency analysis in Figure 5.2, the following topics were selected for in-depth analysis.

- extra materials;
- class management;
- games;
- revision.

In the next section, changes in Sevda's approach to the use of extra materials, class management, her use of games, and her approach to revision is explored in depth.

5.1.5 Changes and influences on changes

This section contains an in-depth exploration of the topics identified in the previous section. At this point, in addition to the interview data, classroom observation data, documents and field notes are used.

Changes in Sevda's approach to extra materials

In the case of Sevda, extra materials and resources means textbooks, flashcards, posters, puppets, realia and also technical devices such as video. Figure 5.3 provides an overview of all the statements Sevda made on this topic, as well as changes in her approach to the use of extra materials over the school year.

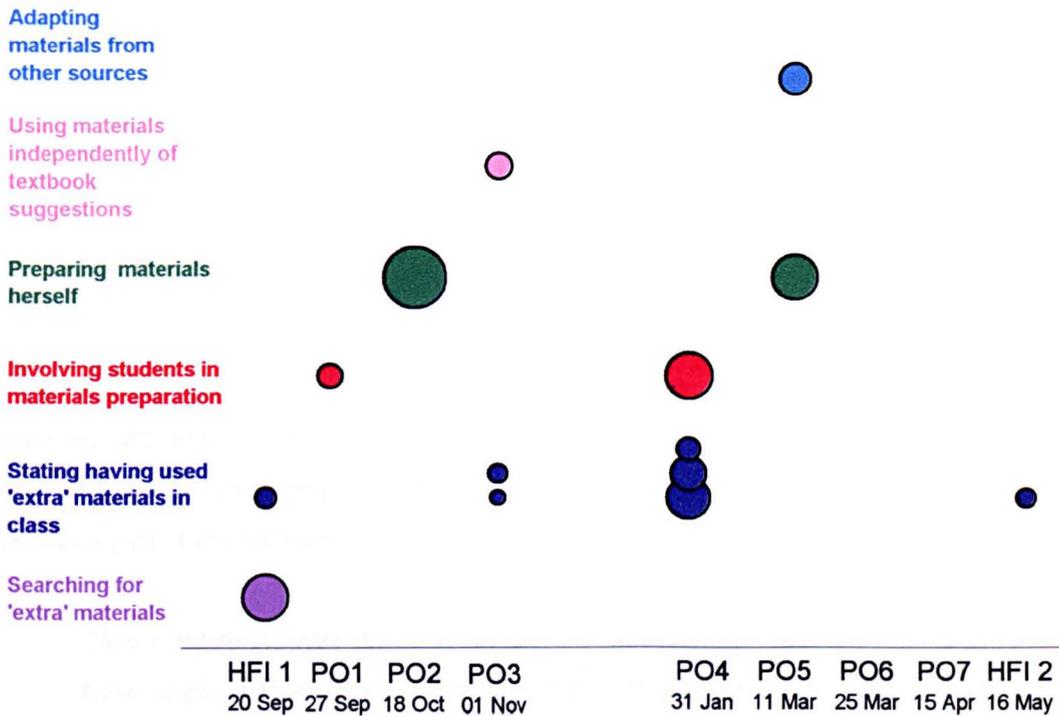


Figure 5.3: Sevda talking about extra materials

As can be seen from Figure 5.3, Sevda talked about materials fairly consistently from the beginning of the school year until the middle of the second semester (end of January). By contrast, she did not talk about it as much towards the end of the year. However, according to my observation notes, Sevda did make use of materials in a variety of ways and contexts until the very end of the school year. The fact that she no longer felt a need to articulate this topic may show that she felt more confident in her use of materials towards the end of the year.

In the first hierarchical focusing interview Sevda, in an answer to my question about whether she had any young learners training, talked about how little she knew about primary textbooks and how much time she spent trying to find resource books for her young students (see the purple bubble). This may suggest that she did not plan to just follow the textbook she was assigned to use and that early on she was already in search of materials in addition to the textbook for her young students.

Sevda most commonly talked about using materials by recounting the instances in which she used materials (see the second, blue ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.3). These were mainly descriptive statements, like “I will also give the word ‘balloon’, that’s why I am bringing the balloons”, or “when I was teaching the word hat I brought hats from home”. That is, the statements did not reveal much about why Sevda used extra materials.

In the first post-observation interview, Sevda talked about how she involved the

students in preparing materials (see the third, red 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.3). She talked about a lesson in which she got the children to make their own finger puppets. This activity seemed to be in the textbook, and the finger puppets were in children's cut-out books, so she got the children involved in preparing materials as part of an activity suggested by the textbook.

Yes, they've all made finger puppets earlier this week, the characters in the book so they will use them today. (PO1:003)

However, later in the year, in the fourth post-observation interview, she talked about having involved the children in preparing materials which was her original idea and not something that was a part of the textbook she used. She got the children to prepare New Years cards.

They want to prepare different things, it's a class who is good at using their hand crafts. For example, we had prepared Happy New Year cards for New Years, before that there was the Happy Birthday topic, we prepared birthday cards for their mum and dads. (PO4:024)

Note that this distinction, between getting the students to prepare something suggested by the textbook as compared to something thought of by Sevda herself, is not captured by the bubble chart, as both of these instances are represented in red, under the title 'involving students in materials preparation'.

In the second post-observation interview, Sevda talked about preparing materials herself (see the fourth, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.3). She mentioned a seminar she attended where she learned how to make a puppet theater, and then went on to describe what she did as can be seen in the following excerpt.

I took a box and I lined the inside of the box with cardboard. I drew Pingu and cut him out, I pasted them on rolled paper. ... I had prepared a magic pen, the fairy touches Pingu with the magic pen. I also gave them the flashcards. (PO2:012)

Although she sounded very enthusiastic about preparing this puppet theater, I, unfortunately, did not get a chance to see this lesson. Moreover, I did not observe any lesson in which she used materials she had prepared herself. She would mainly use ready made materials such as flashcards, puppets and other realia she brought from home or borrowed from her colleagues.

Later in the year, however, she did comment on another instance where she prepared her own materials. The timing of these instances is evident from the green bubbles in Figure 5.3. Again, I did not get a chance to see this lesson either.

Actually the colour was very dark, I coloured it very dark, I am going to change it because it is not visible, there's an apple there, when I colour the apple red - I photocopied, if I had one with me I would show you, it came out very dark from the photocopying, and when I coloured on top of it, it wasn't visible any more. (PO5:062)

The resource that Sevda used most in her classes was the class puppet that she was provided as a component of the textbook she used. Later in the year she collected other puppets from the staff room to bring to her class. This showed that she started to make use of materials independently of the teacher's book suggestions.

I brought these, these are not Pingu's ones, I chose them from Playway, we had them upstairs, I chose them all different, actually Pingu has some as well but Playway's ones were a bit clearer, they were bigger. I brought them because I liked them better. (PO4:086)

Similarly, in November, she talked about the balloons she brought from home to teach the word 'balloon'. This was the first time I had seen her take initiative and bring her own materials (see the pink bubble in Figure 5.3) rather than using something that was provided by the textbook.

In March, she talked about how she surfed the internet for materials and adapting them to her own students, a sign that she was trying to broaden the scope of resources she could make use of, and a sign that she was developing in her creative use of materials.

I surfed the internet a lot, I checked last night as well, I mean they are very heavy stuff, they can't do it. I'll probably bring something and we will simplify it. That's probably the best way. (PO5:080)

At the end of the year, in the final hierarchical focusing interview Sevda said, "I mean I definitely have to have a visual material when I go into that class, a toy, something is necessary, something colourful".

Influences on the changes in Sevda's approach to extra materials

Sevda had very little experience in high school of using extra materials. All she really prepared in high school were handouts and worksheets to practise language structures. Upon coming to her new school, she already knew that primary school teachers prepared lots of 'colourful' materials and thought that she would also need to use extra materials in her first grade class. However, as the year progressed, Sevda not only prepared extra materials such as flashcards, she also made use of these materials in more than one way. She was soon talking about involving her students in preparing materials and adapting materials. At the end of the year, she seemed convinced that extra materials were very important for the children's engagement in the lesson and that she definitely had to have extra materials when she went into her first grade class. So, in the beginning of the year Sevda may have thought that it was appropriate to use extra materials in her first grade class based on what her colleagues did but at the end of the year she used these materials based on her realisation of the children's needs and interests. This change is visible in Figure 5.3, where Sevda's starting point is a 'search for extra materials' and where 'preparing materials herself', 'using materials independently of textbook suggestions' and 'adapting materials from other sources' appears at later points in the year.

It seems that Sevda reached the understanding that it is not possible to engage children in the lesson if one does not use materials that will attract their attention and that will motivate them. Her systematic use of the class puppet is also evidence for her having got to know what her students enjoyed and liked. She described the importance of such puppets for motivating the children in the following excerpt.

For example, H. [a student] apparently has puppets at home, I was speaking to his mother. She says she gets him to do most things with the help of the puppet, like, you have to eat your meal, one puppet says that, you have to go to bed early. He came and told me in the first lesson, that he had puppets as well. He has also seen Pingu [name of puppet Sevda uses] in the teacher's room once and he came up to me and said, 'You forgot Pingu, you forgot your closest friend.' (laughs) (PO1:025)

Seminars may also have influenced Sevda to use extra materials, especially in the beginning of the year. She explicitly talks about the influence of seminars in her use of materials in the quote below.

I have learnt so much from the seminars I have attended this year, all of them

show new techniques, and now I know how I can do it, how I can use them, for example, when I went to Pingu's it was really useful, I mean I saw how to produce materials from things I would never have thought of. Also I understood how the more colourful you went into class the more useful you would be to them, that you could attract their attention that much more. So I saw a difference in terms of seminars. (HF1 2:102)

However, Sevda mostly used the ideas from seminars exactly as they were presented, without making any changes. This may suggest that she was not yet at a stage where she could adapt what she learned from seminars, but rather she saw them as information sources that she could make direct use of without engaging in too much reflection.

Furthermore, Sevda may have also been influenced by her colleagues in her preparation of materials. She commented that she saw young learner teachers always engaged in cutting, pasting, colouring flashcards, puppets, posters and this meant that she would need to do the same. The department meetings may have had a lot of influence on her use of materials. In the context of 'coordination within the department', Sevda talked about how the department was structured such that:

Every group has meetings three four times a week, every Monday we go into meetings, and there I know what will be done this week, we compare them, with whom I have to work, what kind of work I have to do with whom, everything goes on track because of this. (HF1 2:130)

Such cooperation and coordination may have been especially useful in the beginning of the year when Sevda was so unfamiliar with the primary school context. However, Sevda soon tried to search for appropriate materials for her own class. This may suggest that she gradually began to use her own ideas.

In sum, Sevda seems to have changed from relying on decisions made on her behalf, or using what she saw in seminars, to experimenting more on her own and relying on her own knowledge of her students' level and needs.

Changes in Sevda's approach to class management

Figure 5.4 provides an overview of all the statements Sevda made on class management, as well as changes in her approach to managing children over the school year.

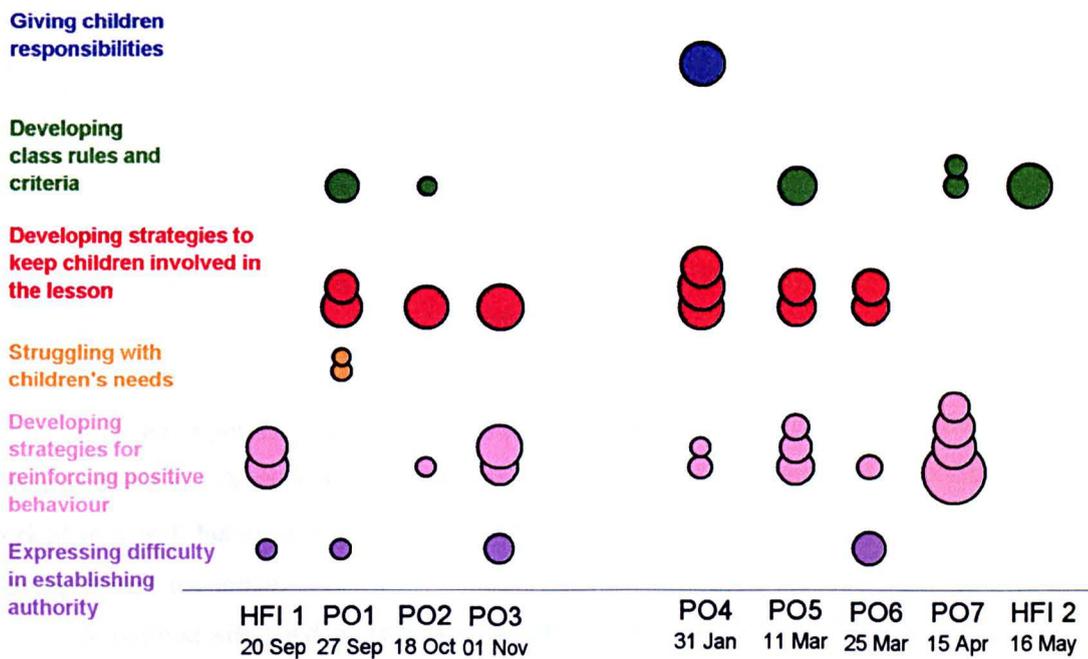


Figure 5.4: Sevda talking about class management

At various stages during the school year Sevda talked about how difficult it was to establish authority in her primary first grade classroom (see the first, purple ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.4). She did not have such problems with her high school students mainly because they were focused on trying to pass the university exam and therefore there was not much difficulty for her in terms of class management. In the first hierarchical focusing interview, she felt that in the young learner classroom she had to be a more active teacher in order to “establish the authority”. In the first post-observation interview, she said she felt that the impression she left when first entering the classroom was very important and that her “looks could be more influential” when she entered the classroom. During my classroom observations, especially in the beginning of the year, Sevda sometimes hit the teacher’s desk, a student’s desk or the black board with her hand to draw their attention and get them to be quiet. This is a typical way of managing noise in high schools in Turkey. Sevda might have used this technique because she was unfamiliar with other techniques suitable for young learner classrooms.

Very early in the year, Sevda began using strategies to reinforce positive behaviour (see the second, pink ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.4). One of the first strategies she used was to choose a student of the week, based on how well children behaved in class. She put a boy’s and a girl’s name up on the board at the end of the week. She then expanded the technique of choosing the best student or best group of students for the week by introducing a framework

for this. She drew a tree poster and she started hanging names of students on that tree on post-it notes at the end of each week. She thought that this was a successful strategy because every time she reminded the children of this tree she could get them to behave well. She added that this strategy was much more effective than shouting, “be quiet” or “sit down” all the time. In the following excerpt she talks about how well choosing a student of the week worked.

It's very effective, it's made a big change, because they want it so much. I mean, I check and the ones who don't get it become very sad and then the ones who get it become very happy. (PO7:066)

Sevda also tried to put the children's work up on the walls to reinforce positive behaviour, not only according to whose work was the best in terms of learning, but also according to who worked in a well behaved way; not interrupting his/her friends, not being too noisy and not moving around too much.

A method she used to reinforce positive behaviour later in the year was drawing frowning faces and making these faces smile each time the children behaved well in class. Also, towards the end of the year, she talked about giving certificates to the children who were well behaved. She ended up giving all the children certificates thinking that this helped them behave better in class. She explains this method in the following excerpt.

We gave them a certificate at the end of the semester, they were crazy about that, crazy. I said I will come and give you your certificates with the report card. (PO5:078)

Sevda also used puppets to reinforce positive behaviour. She told the children that she would let a puppet sit next to them if they behaved well. She said the following about how well this method worked.

That just stays next to the ones who behave good, they really love it, you know, to touch it, to hold it, to squeeze it, actually I sent two of the puppets home with students. They will bring them home today, that's how it was. I mean besides that they role-play with it, it seems like a toy to them, like letting it sit on their desks. (PO7:016)

According to my observations, this strategy worked very well in terms of getting the children to behave well. At the same time, however, the children were often too distracted by the

puppets to actually follow the lesson.

Finally, Sevda used a lot of praise in her first grade class. She said she never used to praise her high school students because if she did, they “would be laughed at by their classmates”. She expressed that she found praise to be a very important tool in young learner classes because, “when you say well done they stay quiet, in order to get a ‘well done’ from the teacher”.

In the first post-observation interview, Sevda expressed some concern over how she would be able to deal with the children’s particular needs, like having to go to the toilet during lessons (see the two yellow bubbles in Figure 5.4). She did not like it that the children wanted to leave to go to the toilet one after another during the lessons. She said, “for example, I would’ve wanted to solve this problem, toilet is my biggest problem.” Sevda later mentioned that with time she could tell whether particular students actually needed to go to the toilet or not and she gave her permission accordingly.

Early in the year, Sevda also began to develop strategies that would keep the children involved in the lesson (see the fourth, red ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.4). She talked about precautions she could take to decrease the amount of movement in the class. One of these precautions was not to allow the children to share their colouring pencils. She explained this by saying, “sometimes they move around too much, that’s why I don’t want it.... They wait for their friends to finish, they get bored while they wait, they have to have their own colouring pencils”. For a similar reason, Sevda also sometimes got the children to sit with their arms folded in order to get them to calm down. This is a technique which is common practice in most primary classrooms in Turkey. It is possible that she may have acquired this from the classroom teacher or from her own memories of being a primary school student. Another way in which she tried to bring some organisation to her lessons was by seating the children in particular ways. She explains this in the following excerpt.

I make D. [a student] sit at the front, I get D. and C. [a student] to sit at the front because D. is very active, I mean sometimes you cannot make her do what you want, she is such a stubborn girl. She’s always at the front. C. and the child next to him have to also be at the front. I need to keep track. They are always there, they never change seats, in my lesson both of them are at the front. (PO2:040)

In the fourth lesson that I observed, Sevda used an interesting technique to keep the children involved in the lesson. She seemed to use her creativity in coming up with this technique as it was not something I had encountered in any classroom before. She switched the radio to the

Medium Wave band (which resulted in a hissing sound) when the children started getting noisy and the children stopped talking. She explained what she did after the lesson in this transaction (S: Sevda, R: Researcher).

S: *Also, I call them warning sounds, they know that, they know that, you know when you open the radio there's a sound, a hissing sound, when I say if we get that sound three times that means we deserve a punishment, it's never been three till now.*

R: *Do you make those sounds?*

S: *On the tape, for example when I touch the M band slightly we get that sound. (PO4:086-088)*

Towards the end of the year, Sevda made use of a further technique for keeping the children involved when she was trying to teach some verbs. She seemed to do this in order to keep the children engaged in an activity that required a lot of action and movement. While trying to teach verbs like 'falling' or 'sleeping', through getting the children to act it out, she tried to pay attention to the order in which she got them to act out the verbs such that there would be as little commotion as possible. She explains this in the following excerpt.

About the verbs, I try not to leave falling to the end but it still happened a few times because after dropping that they throw themselves as well, did you notice? And then another new verb, after I gave sleeping for example, everybody was sleeping, in order to create silence immediately. There's a need for verbs like that. (PO6:054)

Sevda tried to introduce class rules early in the year (see the fifth, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.4). She felt that it was important for the children to get used to "the basic important rules". One such basic rule she described as, "standing up at the same time when the teacher comes in, sitting down at the same time, standing up when the teacher is leaving the classroom". These are common rules in Turkish schools. However, based on my observation notes, the children in Sevda's first grade did not follow these rules regularly. Moreover, Sevda did not complain about this to me at all, and she did not try to enforce these rules. It seemed that Sevda was more interested in the routines that eventually emerged in her classroom. She describes one such emergent routine below.

up and down's have settled very well, down, for example, if I am distributing

their books and I need time I tell them, down, after the books have been distributed or if I am giving out handouts, or a paper, they all lie down.
(PO2:070)

Sevda also talked about having devised criteria for how the children should behave in class. She told these criteria to the children as well. Below is one example of her criteria.

The ones who listen to the lesson nicely all week, the ones who don't upset their teacher, the ones who get along nicely with their friends, the ones who keep their books and notebooks neat and tidy, I told them all about it. They know now, they know what to do in which circumstance. I refer to these things during the lessons. (PO5:072)

Once having developed the criteria, Sevda introduced the idea of rewarding those children or those groups who behaved according to the criteria she set out (see discussions of positive reinforcement, above).

Finally, to deal with particularly active children who disrupted the class often, Sevda used the strategy of giving the children some responsibilities. She found that this strategy was effective in making the student 'calm'. She described the method she used in the following excerpt (see the blue bubble in Figure 5.4).

I had borrowed a friend's flashcard and I was going to send it back to her so I said Duygu, come, you would do this job best, and then I said you know my room of course, and she said, I know teacher, she took it there and she came back and said I took it there, and I said thank you, very good, very nice, when you say that she becomes very calm. (PO4:040)

Overall, Sevda expressed that the issue of class management was very important in teaching young learners, saying, that she would tell a newcomer young learner teacher that the most important task was to 'establish classroom organisation' and 'establish rules' before doing anything else.

Influences on the changes in Sevda's approach to class management

Sevda developed a variety of strategies to manage her young students. From her interviews, it did not appear that she used as many class management techniques in high school. One of the reasons for this may be the small number of students in her previous school. Her previous

high school students were also preparing for university, and this involves a lot of lessons with students working individually, doing practice tests.

It is difficult to track down reasons for the development Sevda showed in her class management techniques. She may have got some help from the classroom teacher in the beginning of the year, although she did not mention this explicitly. Nevertheless, she frequently talked about the classroom teacher, making remarks like:

And it's also lucky because their classroom teacher is very good, she's a very organised lady, everything is so practical with her. (PO2:058)

She seemed to respect the classroom teacher's attitude towards the children. The characteristics she mentions of the classroom teacher may be what she aspires to as a primary school teacher.

She's a very nice lady. ... She loves them but she's also disciplinarian, very nice and at the same time disciplined. (PO6:068)

Sevda's appreciation of the classroom teacher may have encouraged her to use similar techniques. She said she felt lucky that her class had this classroom teacher, which might suggest that Sevda thought one of the reasons she had a well-behaved class was due to the positive influence of the classroom teacher. Although she did not say this in so many words, she did say:

What would I say, one thing is important though, the classroom teacher is very important, I was very lucky actually, C. [name of classroom teacher] is a very organised teacher. (HFI 2:134)

Another reason for Sevda's development of strategies for class management could be related to her getting to know the children better. Towards the end of the year, in March, Sevda said that she "can feel" that she has got to "know the kids very well". She seemed to have come to an understanding that the children liked being praised and rewarded. In the quote below she describes how she approached the children, as compared to her high school students.

In the other school sometimes I would get angry, moments when I would really get mad but here you are calmer. I mean even if you do get angry you say after a while, this is only a child, he will do it anyway. I became calmer. (HFI 2:008)

Sevda also commented that it was important for the young learner teacher “to feel like a child” in order to understand them. The following quote expresses her feelings.

To be able to go down to the child’s level, I mean to be able to act like a child with them but to act rationally. I mean, I think it is necessary to act like a child from an adult’s perspective. (HFI 1:083)

She suggested that teachers should try to find out what their young students liked and to accept their characteristics. She commented, “They’re children at the end of the day”.

Finally, when Sevda was asked how she would advise a new teacher in her position (teaching young learners for the first time), she responded that:

She should know how to keep track of the whole class at the same time because they get hurt very easily. For example, few days ago I told one of them [a student] that her hair was very nice, another one didn’t talk to me the whole lesson, it never occurred to me for example that she would be cross with me because of that. And then at the end of the class she came to me, I still hadn’t realised, “you didn’t like my hair”, she said, and I said, “I didn’t say anything about your hair”, she said, “but you didn’t say it was pretty” (giggles). I have to be there for each and every one of them, but it didn’t occur to me, I never thought at that moment that she could be hurt by that. It’s really very important to be active, to be a child with a child, and not to hurt them at all because they can get hurt very easily, even with words ... she has to be a child with a child, that’s what I would advise her. (HFI 2:136)

This quotation shows the extent to which Sevda had got to understand the children in her class at the end of the school year.

Changes in Sevda’s approach to games

From talking about her experiences as a high school teacher, it appears that the general procedure Sevda followed in her high school lessons was to “give a grammar point”, give the students a handout explaining the grammar point, get the students to ask questions, ask the students some questions, and finally give students some worksheets through which they could practise the language structure. She talked about how important grammar was in high school and how it was a challenge for the teachers to use the ‘best’ techniques to explain grammar

(see Section 5.1.4).

*I mean a lesson like a lesson, within specific structures, like the lesson we know, I mean like teaching **tenses**, you give the vocabulary of the unit and then a general warm-up and then if there's a passage you read that or if you have a grammar subject you give that, questions about it, homework, correction of homework, it was always like that. (HFI 2:108)*

It seems that grammar teaching played an important role in her job as a teacher of high school students. However, when talking about the differences between the two age groups (see Section 5.1.4), Sevda mentioned that she liked the way the children in her class learned in a more natural environment, through games. However, it seemed that her understanding of games was a class activity that did not involve a systematic 'teacher asks questions, students answer questions from their seats' lesson format that she was accustomed to from her high school experience.

Figure 5.5 displays the ways in which Sevda talked about games across the school year.

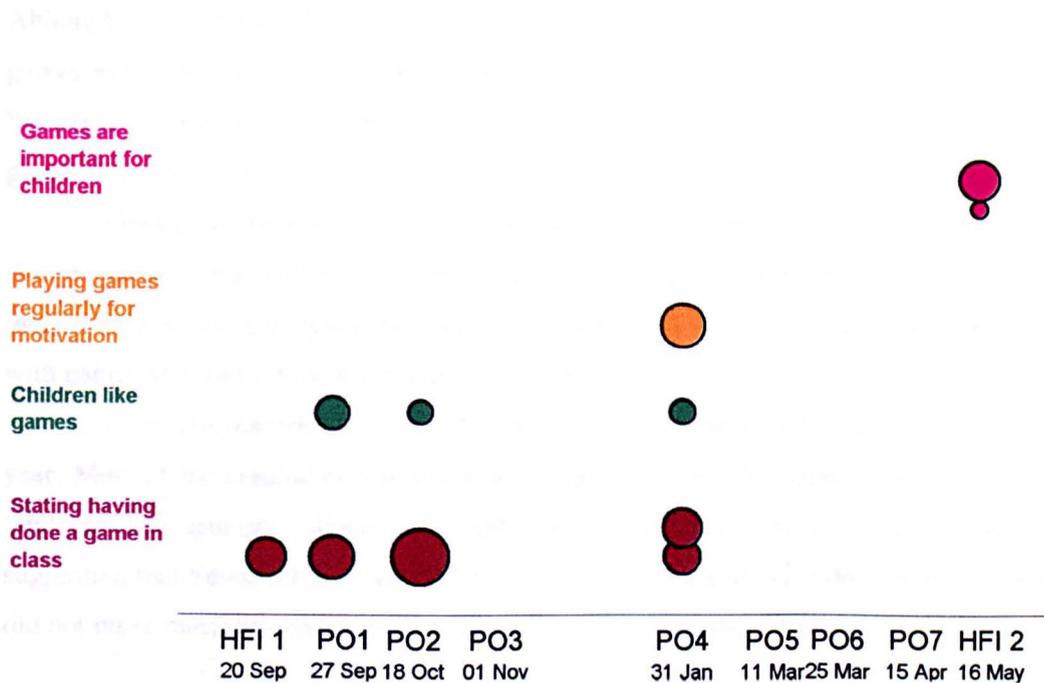


Figure 5.5: Sevda talking about games

As can be seen from the bottom 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.5, Sevda, especially in the first part of the school year, consistently talked about having used games in her classes. The

comments she made were descriptive, like:

Apart from that, again I would want to get the children to come up to the front, last week for example, we played 'up and down', I got them to get up on the teacher's stand, almost all of them came up, they hid themselves. (PO1:029)

She made other comments, in the first and second post-observation interviews about how much the children liked playing games, such as, "I would probably do those kinds of things [game-like activities] again because they love it so much, lots of games for them."

In the middle of the year, at the end of January, she mentioned how she tried to play games regularly, claiming that she wanted to do games because they motivated the children (see the yellow bubble in Figure 5.5).

They like games like that. That's why I would get them to play a game like this again, whatever topic it is, a game related to that. We did different games, we did games related to each topic on the days you didn't come too. (PO4:022)

Although she said that she regularly played games in her lessons, she did not play so many games in her first grade class while I was observing them. My observation notes suggest she has played games in two of the seven lessons I observed her. However, she may have used games in many of the lessons I was not there to observe.

Finally, at the end of the year, Sevda made comments that again showed that she thought games were important for children, saying, "games are essential", and that if she had more time with her first grade students, she would spend that time on playing games because with games she could show her students new things.

There did not seem to be much change in Sevda's approach to games over the school year. Most of the comments she made about games, as can be noted from Figure 5.5, like, 'children like games', 'games are important for children', were similar to each other, suggesting that Sevda did not change her thoughts about games over the school year. She also did not make much change to the way she used games over the school year.

Influences on Sevda's approach to games

When Sevda came to teach at primary level, the English textbook (a recently published international textbook which is based on activities) was a first indication for her that the structure of a lesson would be different from what she was used to in her previous high school classes. As such, the textbook may have been an important influence on her use of games in

the beginning of the school year. However, later in the year, she began to introduce her own games and used activities that were not suggested by the textbook.

Referring back to what she had said when talking about the differences between the two age groups, Sevda said that children learned languages through a more natural environment. The natural environment, she continued to say, consisted of games and activities. If Sevda understood the need for a ‘natural environment’ so early on, this may also have been a reason for her to use games and activities in her teaching from the beginning of the year.

It was important for Sevda to do what the children enjoyed in class. As the quote below suggests, she tried to “become like a child” in order to discover what excited them.

In the first grade you become a child yourself, you try to find things they will like, you say what should I do that will get their attention. (HF1 2:070)

She particularly felt that the children enjoyed games a lot, as can be seen in the following excerpt.

I would probably do those kinds of things again because they love it so much, lots of games for them. (PO1:029)

Her interest in getting their attention, pleasing them and doing what they like suggests that she is getting to ‘know’ her students.

Sevda made a lot of comments about how games were enjoyable for the children, but made very few or no comments about the language learning potential of games. Since the games Sevda played were mainly from the textbook, it is likely that the language focus was predetermined and all Sevda needed to do was to actually carry out the activities and games in her classroom. For a first-time primary school teacher, it may be a natural instinct to get the children to enjoy themselves and to like you before thinking about the educational merits of activities. Therefore, her motivation for using games with them would be to try to get the children to enjoy themselves and thereby to like English.

Despite using games a lot in the young learner classroom, Sevda also showed that she had not ‘forgotten’ about explicit grammar teaching. In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Sevda briefly mentioned the issue of grammar while discussing her fourth grade class. She said, referring to the textbook authors, “they’ve only given **simple, past simple, present simple, present continuous, future.**” This shows that the fourth grade textbook might have disappointed her because it did not cover as many structures as she would have

preferred it to cover. Coming at the end of the school year, this statement may suggest that explicit grammar teaching is still an important part of language education for Sevda. It may be that she has realised the first grade classroom is not so conducive to teaching grammar explicitly as the children do not know how to read or write yet. However, once the children began to write in the second semester, she said, “I am getting more relaxed, for example using writing is something very good for me”. This statement might mean that she is relieved that she can teach in a style that is more familiar to her. It may also suggest that once she has a class of children who can read and write fluently, she may consider a different style of teaching than using games and activities.

Changes in Sevda’s approach to revision

The issue of revision in the young learner class came up several times during Sevda’s interviews. Figure 5.6 presents an overview of all the statements Sevda made on this topic as well as, the ways in which Sevda’s approach to revision changed over the school year.

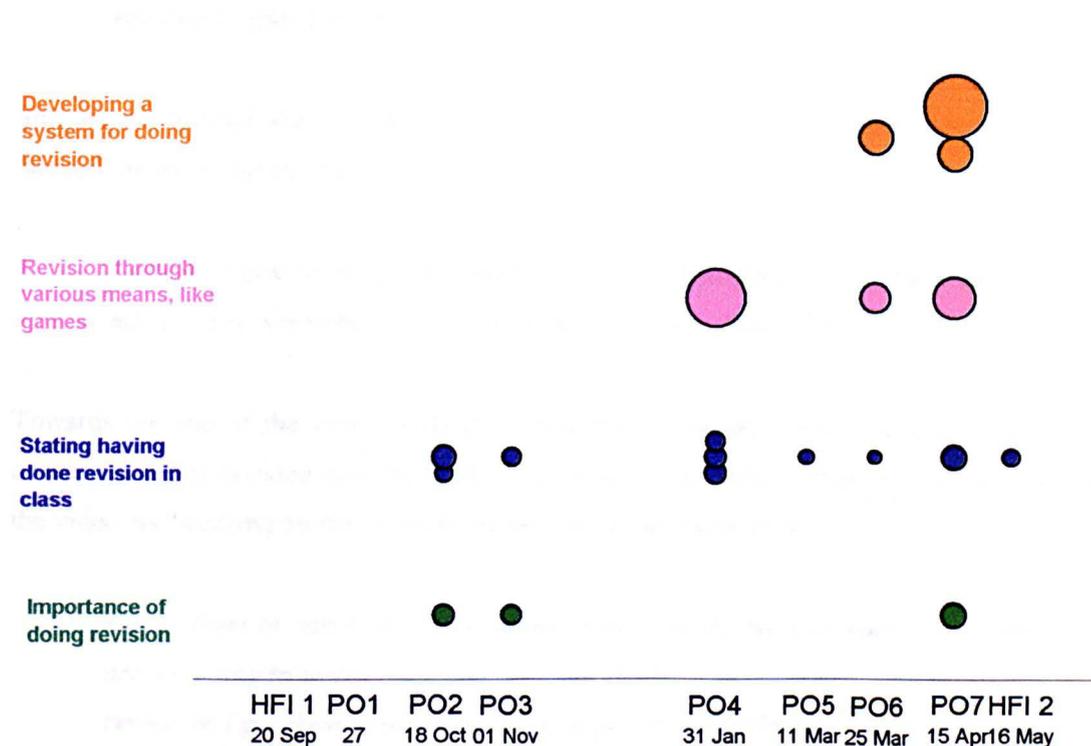


Figure 5.6: Sevda talking about revision

Figure 5.6 shows that Sevda did not say anything related to revision until the second post observation interview, which was held at the end of October. She may not have had a need for revision until that point if she had not progressed very far with the curriculum. In other words, there may not have been sufficient language points covered such that there would be a need

for revising them.

It can also be noticed, from the second, blue 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.6, that Sevda talked a lot about the specific instances she did revision in her class. She made simple statements like, "I did revision yesterday" or "I will revise these words next lesson". Based on my observations, I felt that she talked more about revision than actually engaging her students in revision in class.

Sevda talked about the importance of revision in the second and third post-observation interviews (see the first, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.6). The following quotes are examples of such statements.

Also revising is very important for them, the more they revise, the more they see, they get used to it. (PO2:070)

I do the revisions every lesson anyways, eventhough it's once in a while, revision is effective with them. (PO3:014)

She seemed to think that revision was important by helping the phrases or vocabulary to be 'settled' better in the children's minds.

I review. I give them again in between other things. Then it gets settled in their mind. They remember if I review them from time to time. (PO7:052)

Towards the end of the year, Sevda gave examples of various means which could provide opportunities for revision (see the third, pink 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.6), like watching the video and working on the funbook, as the following quote shows.

I want them to watch the video as much as possible because they always ask, are we going to watch the video, ... I am thinking, at least they will be able to review so I get them to watch as much as possible. (PO7:07)

In the final post-observation interview, Sevda talked about developing a system for doing revisions more efficiently (see the fourth, yellow 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.6).

Previously I have experienced this as well because when I give a lot it doesn't stay in their minds. When I give three by three I am more comfortable in the revisions. ... Now when I revise them once more ... it will settle better.

(PO7:050)

If I had given them three beforehand and three were new, if I ask them those six all at the same time, then I can get the answers but if I don't ask, if there's a lesson in between, then they start to forget them. (PO7:052)

That is, Sevda seemed to think that when she 'gives' the children a lot of words, it does not 'stay' in their minds, and that revision was more effective when she 'gave' the words three at a time. Once the children began to write (towards the end of the first semester), Sevda then used the strategy of getting the children to write the words three times in their notebooks for revision purposes.

In sum, the change in how Sevda talked about revision happened towards the end of the school year. Instead of talking about when she would do revision next or how important it was for the children, she talked about the types of activities and context in which she could engage the children in revision. She thought that colouring activities, the fun book and the video were good resources for revision.

I think colouring, the colouring book is better for revision, because when you are telling them what to do, you use the words, they do the same by looking at the words, that's why the more they work with the funbook the more it gets revised, I believe that. (PO7:052)

Influences on the changes in Sevda's approach to revision

Sevda's developing understanding of how the children in her class learn seems to have influenced her approach to doing revision. The approach she used at the end of the year, i.e., doing revision through the use of various means like games, is different from the approach commonly used in Turkish high schools where students are asked to do revision explicitly, in their workbooks, on worksheets, at the end of units in their books, and most commonly before starting a new unit. In the beginning of the school year, Sevda talked about doing revision in particular stages of the lesson, as can be seen from the following excerpt.

Yes, I did that as a final thing because I have another lesson with them tomorrow, I review the topic of animals again, I mean today that was it, tomorrow, revision, this week this topic will go like this, next week we'll pass on to a new topic. (PO4:056)

She may have been approaching revision like she did in high school at the beginning of the school year, but gradually she started to integrate revision into her class activities, where the children could revise through being engaged in games, watching videos, or through working in their fun books.

Sevda made an additional change to her approach to revision. She realised that if she tried to review too many vocabulary items in one lesson, the children could not remember them. She decided to make her revision more systematic by limiting her revision to three vocabulary items in one lesson. Sevda seems to have discovered, through experience, that there is no use giving the children too much information or demanding too much of them in one lesson. Instead, she tried to make her revision more effective by limiting the amount of vocabulary that she wanted the children to revise in one lesson. This, again, seems to be influenced by Sevda's developing understanding of how the children learn.

5.1.6 Summary

In her first year of teaching in a new teaching context, Sevda went through changes in how she talked about teaching at primary level and what she did in class with young learners. The most obvious change was in her attitude towards teaching children. Whereas in the beginning of the year she was quite reluctant to teach at primary level (it had not been her choice), at the end of the year she said that she had made up her mind about staying at primary level. This information served as evidence in making sense of the changes she went through over the year in different areas of teaching young learners.

Sevda was successful throughout the year in making use of extra materials in different ways, like involving the children in preparing materials, adapting materials she found on the internet and, at the end of the year, mentioned that she 'had to definitely have' colourful materials when going into a primary classroom.

Sevda went through different strategies to discover effective ways of getting the children to behave in her classes. The strategies she developed were mainly based on putting the best-behaved student's name up on the board, letting the children who behave themselves sit with a puppet, developing rules and criteria, making seating arrangements, and giving the children responsibilities.

In terms of her use of games, Sevda seemed to move from her past teaching techniques towards creating what she called 'a more natural environment' for teaching English, and this included the use of games and activities. However, Sevda did not show any change in how she approached games over the school year, nor did she make any comments about the opportunities games presented for language learning. She seemed to focus on the motivating aspect of games for the children in her class.

Finally, Sevda did revisions whenever she could in her first grade class and thought they were very effective for the children's learning. She changed her approach towards revision by trying to get the children to do revision through activities they enjoyed and by developing a system for doing revision.

In sum, it appears that Sevda has taken an initial step in adjusting to the primary context through her relationship with and understanding of the children in her class. She seems to have accepted the children as who they are, not trying to impose her own understanding of what a student should be like, or, in this case, what a young child should be like. The main drive behind her development in class management, use of extra materials and games, and doing revision seemed to be her positive attitude towards children.

To bring together all that has been presented regarding Sevda's change process in her first year of teaching children, and in an attempt to answer the first and second research questions, the following points can be made:

The three areas in which Sevda showed change over the course of a school year are in:

- extra materials;
- class management;
- revision.

The changes in her use of **extra materials** were:

- searching for extra materials;
- involving her first grade students in preparing materials;
- preparing her own materials;
- using extra materials independently from the textbook's suggestions;
- adapting texts from other sources.

The possible explanations for these changes, as supported by the data, are:

- her exposure to seminars;
- how her colleagues talked about or used extra materials;
- her recognition of children's interests and needs.

The changes in her **class management** were how she:

- used positive reinforcement strategies;
- found ways of dealing with children's needs;
- developed strategies to keep the children involved in the lesson;
- developed class rules and criteria for 'good' behaviour;
- started giving responsibilities to children.

The possible explanations for these changes, as supported by the data, are:

- what the classroom teacher did with the same class;
- general school rules;
- her getting to 'know' the children in her class better.

The changes in her **approach to revision** were how she:

- tried to do revision through indirect methods, like getting the children to work on the fun book and watch videos;
- developed a system for doing revision.

Possible explanations for these change may be:

- her getting to understand how the children in her class learned.

Sevda did not show change in her **use of games** over the school year.

Possible explanations for this lack of change may be:

- the influence of the textbook;
- feedback from the children telling her they enjoyed the games she used in class.

5.2 Imge

5.2.1 A portrait of Imge

At the time when I conducted my fieldwork, Imge was 24 years old and had only one year of experience teaching high school students before starting her job at her new school. She was assigned to teach four first grade classes. She did not teach any other levels. I was invited to observe one of these four classes. The choice of which class I would observe was made by the head of the English department. Imge stated that prior to teaching at primary level, she had not attended any seminars on teaching English to young learners.

Imge chose the profession of teaching because of her teacher in high school. She said that she was more inclined to go into fine arts but her teacher encouraged her to choose teaching, telling her that she had talent for this job. She added that her mother, being an English language teacher, might have had an influence on her decision as well. She seemed happy to be a teacher, explaining this in the following excerpt, where she refers to teaching at a real school as 'business life'.

They had scared me a lot about business life, they said it was like a crab basket but I don't see that in my department, and I also try to see the full part of the

glass. Little things will always come up, technical difficulties go hand in hand with business life but I am really happy in general. I can easily say that.

(HFI 2:028)

There is a quality in her that may explain why she would have chosen fine arts if she had not become a teacher. Based on my observations, she is a very good actor and she was never shy to act in front of the children, even when she first met them. She made a lot of use of gestures and miming when teaching them. She was very active during the lessons, modelling a lot of actions, and role-playing scenes for the children.

Imge is also a talented artist. She prepared a lot of materials for her first grade class and frequently drew pictures on the board. My personal view as an observer was that these drawings she made and the flashcards she prepared looked very professional and showed artistic ability.

Imge talked about the financial side of working in this new school and stated that she found it very satisfying. However, she also emphasised that she was not interested in the financial aspect of her job, saying, “it is not important for me, I am doing this completely for self-satisfaction”.

She did not seem to think that being a teacher required her to change her behaviour. She describes this in the following quote.

A person starts getting a teacher identity that is parallel to their perspective on life, with their own personality, and even though I am an inexperienced teacher yet, everyone has a soul that doesn't change much, I can't do something that is very very different from my style. (PO6:078)

In our first interview, Imge talked about her interest in developing herself further in her profession. She talked about how supportive her new school was in terms of allowing her to do a Masters degree while teaching. However, at the end of the year, she stated that she “forgot all of those aims” when teaching children.

I was thinking I would do something along the lines of graduate studies, university, it's like I forgot all of those aims when I am here. The minute I enter the children's world, I become alienated to the outside world in a strange way.

(HFI 2:002)

A striking characteristic of Imge was how she often criticised herself. She reflected on her

actions in class and tried to think of ways of improving herself. After a lesson that did not go as expected, she said, “I don’t know, I evaluate each day, about today I need to think a bit more”. The following excerpts show some of the areas for which she was self-critical.

For example, I found myself very bad at class management, I was like a teacher who shouts and no one cares in the classroom. (PO1:002)

The volume of my voice is generally high. I always criticise myself even when I am talking at home or when I am talking outside but it is something that takes a long time for me to overcome, tone of voice. (PO1:004)

Maybe this is a game that can be more effective with fewer people. (PO2:037)

Imge always came to class well prepared. For example, in one lesson, a student had spilled water on a magic wand that he had prepared. Imge had a spare one for him. She had foreseen such accidents and had brought some spares.

I observed that she put little ‘post-it’ notes everywhere in her teacher’s book. When I asked her about this she said, “I always write what I am going to revise in my notebook”. She said that these were for those activities she wanted to do in addition to the textbook.

In the beginning of the year, she said that she wondered to what extent she needed to follow the textbook, wondering how much initiative she should take. Towards the end of the year Imge stated that she did not follow the textbook as strictly any more. She said she had now become “more independent from the book”. She explained this in detail in the following excerpt.

In the beginning of the year I used to follow the teacher’s book much more strictly, it was the uneasiness of being new, I didn’t want to trust my own instinct actually and also it was a period of getting to know the student, it was a period, later it was overcome, now with the kids for example I do one game instead of two. (PO6:060)

In my observations I got the impression that Imge felt like a child when she was with the children. She seemed to take pleasure in playing games with them and involved herself as much as she involved the children in all the activities they did in the classroom.

5.2.2 A portrait of Imge's school

Imge's school was a big and an old school that was quite prestigious in Istanbul in terms of its education (the criteria for which is usually the number of students who are successful at the standardised university entrance exam). The classes taught ranged from kindergarten to highschool. The English department was also big, with around 50 English language teachers overall. I observed that there was a close relationship between colleagues within the department and they frequently spent time together out of the school environment. There was also a lot of professional cooperation among them. The head of the department was always supportive of the teachers and especially so of newcomer teachers.

Imge's school hosts a major conference in ELT (English Language Teaching) every year. These conferences bring together many English language teachers from around the country, as well as speakers from other countries. This may be a sign of the importance the school gives to English teaching. They also provided more small scale seminars and training for their teachers throughout the school year.

Imge described the students as coming from families who did not have financial problems and suggested that this allowed "the children to start from an advantageous position in terms of many aspects". She explained that the children were surrounded by 'comfort'. She thought that this 'comfort' gave them an advantage. The following excerpt describes her perspective.

That comfort reflects on their expressing themselves, that is, it reflects on their ability to think more freely, they see it as a right to ask something. However, this is not only for children who go to private schools but this generation is a different generation anyways. (HFI 2:018)

Another feature of the school that Imge found particularly helpful was the number of students in a class. She said that her classes usually consisted of 20 to 23 students and she thought this was "very appropriate for language learning". She also commented that the small number of students gave the class a "dynamic characteristic".

5.2.3 Imge's attitude towards teaching in primary school

In this section, I look at how Imge's attitude towards teaching primary school children changed over a year of working with them. In both the first and the final hierarchical focusing interviews, Imge was explicitly asked a question about her feelings towards teaching children (see Appendixes C and D). Imge also talked about her feelings towards teaching children in some post-observation interviews without being prompted. Figure 5.7 presents an overview of

all the statements Imge made about her attitude towards teaching children.

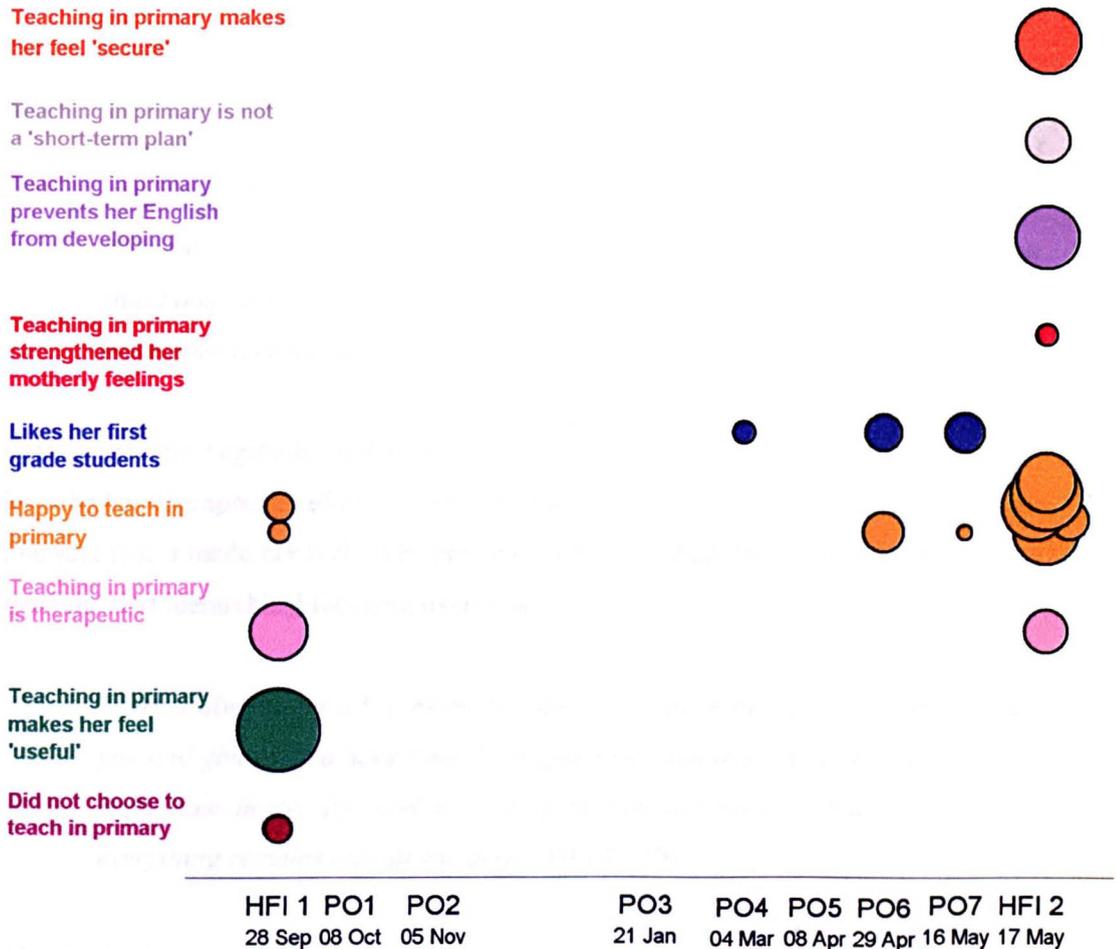


Figure 5.7: Imge talking about her attitude towards teaching children

Imge's reason for changing her work setting was to work in a private school. In her first interview she mentioned that she had not particularly wanted to teach at primary level (see the brown bubble in Figure 5.7). In the beginning of the year, Imge said that teaching at primary level made her feel useful in society (see the green bubble). She expressed this by saying, "I walk in the street with my briefcase in my hand, my students in my mind and I feel useful, this is a great feeling. I am creating things." She was also positively influenced by the nature of teaching in primary level, in that she was able to see the result of a learning process that she started. This also made her feel useful. She used a metaphor to describe this in the following quote.

I lit the light first, I have taught them something, even if it is very simple they

are not at the stage they had started. In this sense it makes me happy.

(HFI 1:048)

Another excerpt that shows how teaching at primary level may have helped Imge in feeling that she is useful is provided below.

I get tired but when I see a student of mine in the street I forget everything, I mean it feeds me very well emotionally, it's a very different feeling, it adds a different depth to a person. From time to time you go back to your own childhood, you look at certain parts, this makes you more careful at times, sometimes it makes you praise yourself for what you have done. (HFI 2:028)

Both in the very beginning and at the very end of the year Imge said that teaching at primary level had a 'therapeutic' effect on her (see the third, pink 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.7). She said that it made her feel "very positive". She described this in the following quote taken from the first hierarchical focusing interview.

There's always these key moments, special times in one's life, when life tries you and gives you a hard time, I am going through those kind of difficult times right now in my life and it is very therapeutic for me. When I am here everything remains outside the door. (HFI 1:030)

Also in the beginning of the year, Imge stated that she was happy to be teaching at primary level. As Figure 5.7 shows, Imge expressed this feeling of 'happiness' both in the beginning and at the end of the year, but more so at the end of the year (see the yellow bubbles). Examples of her talking about how working with children made her happy can be seen in the excerpts below.

There're lots of aspects about this place that I am happy with. I have got a lot of positive feedback, both from parents and from the children. ... I mean I am happy right now actually. (PO6:078)

For one, with this age group children, six or seven year olds, their innocence has not gone away yet. They understand that they are loved and they go about so many different ways of returning the same amount of love to you. In that sense I have taken a lot of pleasure. (HFI 2:002)

Imge mostly articulated positive feelings about her first grade students and talked about how much she liked them. As Figure 5.7 shows, she made all of these comments towards the end of the year, mostly in April and May (see the blue bubbles). She even seemed to find a positive explanation for why the children were being 'naughty' or misbehaved in class. She used a metaphor, in the excerpt shown below, to describe the change in their behaviour.

The class is in disarray. It's against this class's general - I mean maybe, the children have developed their own personalities within the time that has passed, they are all like sunflowers, one by one. (PO6:018)

At the end of the year, Imge referred to how teaching in primary level had "strengthened her motherly feelings" (see the red bubble in Figure 5.7). She seemed to have positive feelings towards the children in her class throughout the year. She commented on how her class was vibrant, how the children were cheerful and how "teaching them has something to do with love". At the end of the year she articulated that the reason she chose this profession, and why she was working in this school, was because she was "attached to the children".

She talked about one negative aspect of teaching English at primary level. She complained that all the things she had learned "suddenly stopped improving" (see the purple bubble in Figure 5.7). Whether it was her "grammar knowledge", or her "four skills", she said, "they have slowed down, they stopped improving". This was a worry in her mind even before she began to teach at primary, as she put it in the following quote.

I used to constantly ask myself, I thought I would do the same here, 'What am I doing here, I will forget a lot of my vocabulary, my English will deteriorate, what am I doing among the children?'. Many people thought I would have problems like this, me too, but after you get into the atmosphere the things you completely forget. (HFI 2:006)

However, as the above quote suggests, she did not mind this due to the 'pleasure' she was getting from teaching children.

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge also told me that even though she regarded teaching in primary as a short term plan in the beginning, she did not see it like that any more (see the grey bubble in Figure 5.7).

Again, in the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge talked about how she now felt more secure teaching at primary level compared to when she had first started (see the

orange bubble in Figure 5.7). The following excerpt describes this in her own words.

I feel more secure, actually, how can I put it, I love my job, I chose to do this because I loved it but there was the anxiety that was a result of inexperience, I am not going to say lack of self-confidence but there was anxiety, a little mistake you make, or if something is missing, it's like jelly, it shakes, but now it's not like that. (HFI 2:056)

It appears that although there may not have been much change in her overall attitude towards teaching at primary level, Imge developed more confidence in herself over time. She seemed to stop seeing teaching at primary level as a short-term experience. This was different to the way she felt about teaching in primary when she first started to work in her new job.

5.2.4 Differences between primary and high school teaching

In this section, I discuss the differences between older (high school) and younger (primary school) students, and teaching these two groups, that Imge identified. The topics that are identified are combined with a frequency analysis of all the topics Imge talked about over the school year, to arrive at the topics that will become subject to in-depth analysis in the next section.

All the quotes provided in this section are from the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews. In both the first and the final hierarchical focusing interviews Imge mentioned the same areas as being different across the two age groups she taught. The differences between teaching children and teaching older learners that Imge pointed out were that: 1) with teaching children it was necessary to use a lot of extra materials, 2) class management in young learner classes was different compared to high school classes because children had needs that older students did not have and that children were not as self-sufficient as older learners, 3) it was necessary to use L1 in her primary classes more than it was necessary to use it in her high school classes, and it was necessary to make simpler sentences, even in L1, in order to communicate with the children, and 4) the teaching activities she used in young learner classes needed to be more game-oriented and involve more songs than the types of activities she used in high school classes. These areas are discussed further with supporting quotes from Imge's interview data.

Extra materials

One of the differences between teaching children and older learners that Imge mentioned both in the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews was how it was necessary to use extra

materials in young learner classes but not so much in high school classes. By extra materials, Imge referred to flashcards, pictures, puppets, and posters. She said that in high school most of the extra materials she used were worksheets, which were not in any way colourful or motivating but were designed for the purpose of practising language structures. She classified these as completely different types of materials from what she used in her first grade classes. She added that she very occasionally, prepared picture puzzles and word puzzles for her high school students. She commented that whereas the materials she used in high school classes served the purpose of practising the language, the extra materials she used in her first grade classes mainly served the purpose of creating enthusiasm and motivation in the classroom. She also commented on how she enjoyed using and preparing extra materials for her young students, saying she felt like a child herself when working with so many extra materials. The following excerpt, taken from the first hierarchical focusing interview, describes her feelings about using extra materials in her first grade classes.

Other materials I use, more pictures, more flashcards, more cutting and pasting activities, it is a bit more game-oriented. It is very enjoyable for me, because a part of me never grows I also do cutting and pasting with them, it's very enjoyable for me! (HFI 1:058)

Class management

Imge felt that the difference between children and high school learners that influenced her class management most was that children had needs, such as going to the toilet, drinking water, being praised and complimented, that her high school students did not have. She stated that such needs of children often 'interrupted' the lesson. She felt that her high school students were more independent, "self-sufficient" and that they had developed a "self-concept", and therefore, she did not use to give as much an effort to class management as she did in her first grade classes.

However, despite difficulties in class management, Imge seemed to enjoy working with children because children were more "naive" and their love for the teacher was "pure and unconditional". She found that her older learners did not have such qualities. The following excerpts show Imge's feelings about both age groups.

The children and me, there's an amazing bond. It was the same there [at her old high school] as well but the love of primary first grade children, I don't know, the positive energy reflects on me a little bit more. (HFI 1:030)

Their [children] love is very naive. The teacher-student conflict that happens in the coming years, especially in high school as far as I have observed, does not happen here. You are their everything and they can't judge you critically at that age. (HFI 1:056)

Use of L1

Imge frequently brought up the issue of using L1 when talking about the differences between teaching children and older learners. She felt that she could use English more when teaching in high school and that she 'missed' this. She explained this in detail in the following quote.

When I was trying to explain something I didn't need to use so many pictures, flashcards, real objects, because for example, I would say, 'borrow', 'to take something for a temporary time', I mean I would be able to explain it in a simplified way, and they could understand this. (HFI 1:018)

She referred to how, at primary level, English did not “get out of the **subject to study** situation”, whereas in high school it was “a language for communication”. She commented on how her high school students would speak English with her in the breaks and she found this particularly useful because “it got students to think in English” and so it didn't “allow them to take the easy road”. Her thoughts about the use of English in her classes and the difference in this sense between the two contexts she worked in can be seen in the following quote.

*In the class there [high school] you talk English all the time about any topic, whether they understand or not, by explaining little by little, it's like this, for example, I explain a word, one student says the Turkish and then it spreads around, a mild Turkish wave and then we would pull it together and go back to English. Here [primary school] it is more **subject to study**, it can't get out of that, for now at least. (HFI 1:062)*

Teaching activities: Use of games and songs

Imge recognised that teaching in young learner classes was “a bit more game-oriented”, whereas in high school teaching English was “more writing based”, with a focus on “grammar and four skills”. She felt that at primary level there were more “songs, games, contests, colouring, [and] matching” involved and that this was necessary for children to learn. She also commented on how the textbooks were different in terms of their content. The textbooks

she used in high school gave much more emphasis on writing and reading texts, whereas the textbook she used in her first grade class had game-like activities, mainly based on listening.

The books used are different in terms of their content, songs, games, contests, colouring, matching, these are more common here, in high school it's more writing based, grammar, four skills. There is a difference like that. (HFI 2:034)

Another difference Imge mentioned between teaching her younger and older students was that whereas she could attract high school students' attention easily by engaging them in discussing current topics, this was not possible with her young students because they got distracted from such discussions easily. She emphasised the need to try to find interesting topics for children so that she could attract their attention to the lesson.

*Here you need to go down to the child's level cognitively as well, there you could talk about current issues. I mean if you're going to do a **warm-up**, here you don't have much of a chance to do a **warm-up**, the subject gets distracted immediately, and there's no **warm-up**. (HFI 2:034)*

Frequency Analysis and Summary

The following is a frequency analysis to check how the above five topics, selected on the basis of what Imge identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners, relate to the full range of topics Imge talked about in the various interviews across the school year.

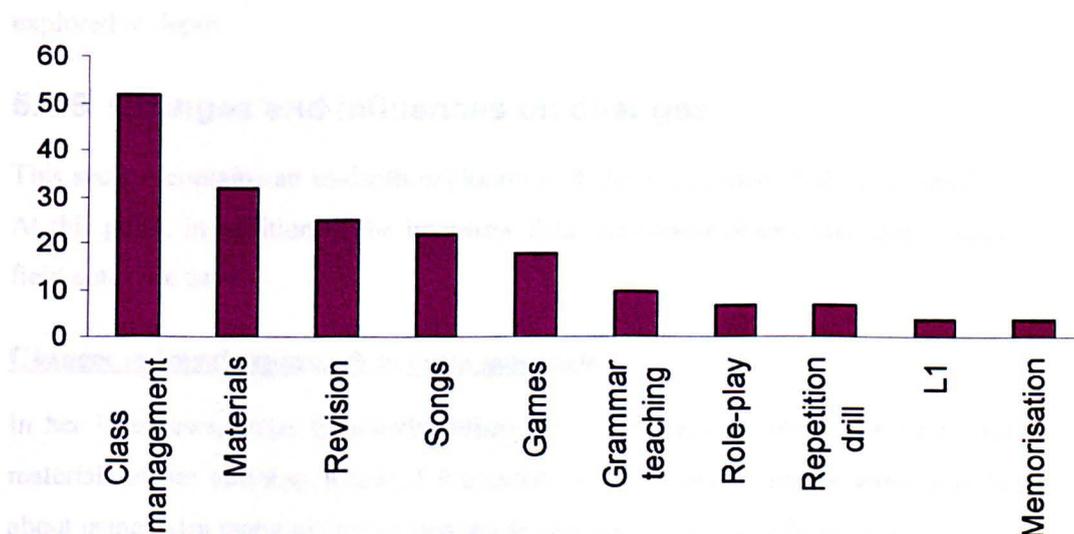


Figure 5.8: Frequency of statements in the ten topics Imge talked about most

Figure 5.8 shows this analysis for the ten most frequently talked about topics. The vertical axis represents the number of statements made on each topic. The figure shows that of all the topics talked about by Imge in the interviews four of the topics she had identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners (i.e., extra materials, class management, games, and songs) were also topics she spoke about very frequently. However, the analysis in Figure 5.8 shows that Imge did not talk much about 'Using L1' during the school year. The topic of 'Using L1' was nevertheless included in the in-depth analysis for change because Imge mentioned it as a difference. The analysis also shows that Imge talked about 'Revision' quite frequently, and this is therefore included in the in-depth analysis in the next section.

Based on the differences identified by Imge, between older and younger learners and teaching them, as well as the frequency analysis in Figure 5.8, the following topics were selected for in-depth analysis.

- extra materials;
- class management;
- use of L1;
- games;
- songs;
- revision.

In the next section, changes in Imge's approach to the use of extra materials, class management, her use of games, her use of songs, use of L1 and approach to revision is explored in depth.

5.2.5 Changes and influences on changes

This section contains an in-depth exploration of the topics identified in the previous section. At this point, in addition to the interview data, classroom observation data, documents and field notes are used.

Changes in Imge's approach to extra materials

In her interviews, Imge frequently talked about the ways in which she made use of extra materials in her teaching. Figure 5.9 presents an overview of all the statements Imge made about using extra materials in her first grade classroom over the school year.

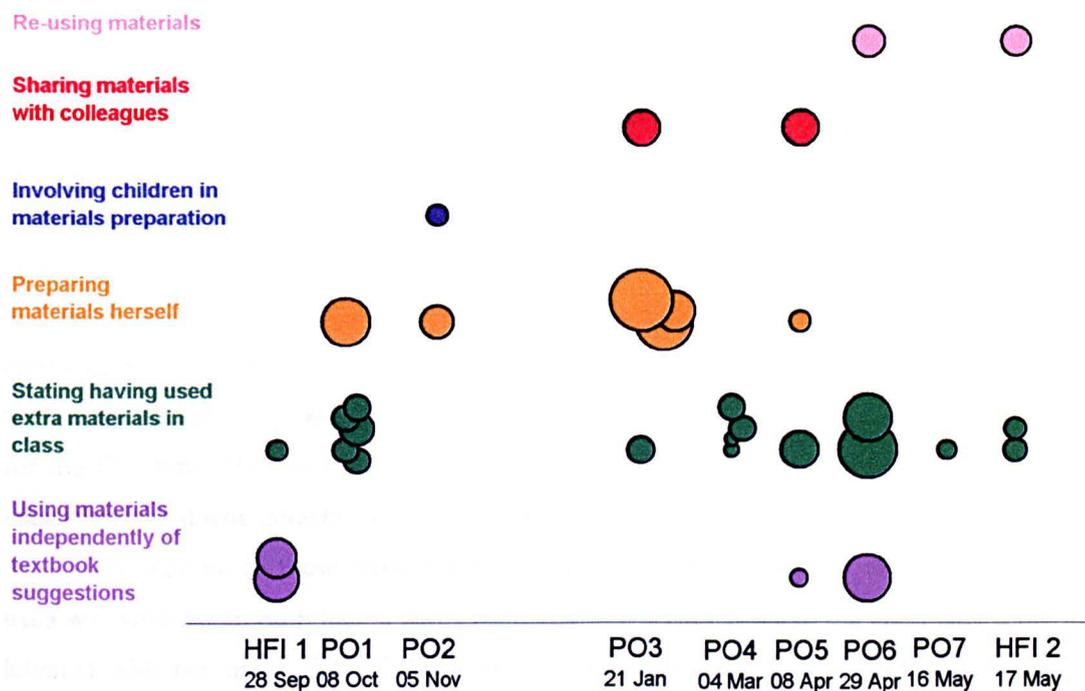


Figure 5.9: Imge talking about extra materials

From the beginning of the school year Imge talked about using extra materials independently of textbook suggestions (see the first, purple ‘layer’ in Figure 5.9). That is, she talked about how she brought her own materials and how she prepared her own flashcards whenever she felt that it would help the children’s learning. Imge said that she was someone who wanted “to create her own things” and that she wanted to do extra things in class. She said she did not always find the textbook sufficient. She talked about this in the following excerpt.

The book [textbook] is very rich, both in terms of the activities, and in terms of guiding the teacher, it provides many alternatives, at the back of the book, I mean you don’t have to prepare any materials, if you follow this book from the beginning to the end it would be a very rich lesson but this is not enough for me either. (HFI 1:024)

Based on my observations, Imge also made a lot of creative use of the materials that were provided by the textbook. She extended the use of these components of the textbook, like posters, and puppets, by using them in different situations. She also took some components of other textbooks (e.g., flashcards, puppets, and posters) to use in her lessons if she thought they were appropriate.

From the beginning to the end of the year, Imge consistently made statements about the types of extra materials she used in her class (see the second, green 'layer' in Figure 5.9). In the beginning of the year she had mentioned that she used to prepare and use extra materials like worksheets, picture puzzles and word puzzles in her previous high school. She said she prepared them "to make sure the topics settled well" or, put differently, so that the students could have the opportunity to practise the language. In the beginning of the year, she pointed out that she used worksheets in her primary level classes as well. This is confirmed by my observations of her lessons where giving worksheets seemed to be an important component. This is also evident in the comments she made as advice to a hypothetical new teacher who might be in her position the following school year, i.e., teaching young learners for the first time. Her advice for such a new teacher was to give students "lots and lots of class sheets and worksheets, homework every weekend".

In addition to these worksheets, the variety of other types of extra materials Imge used was striking. In each lesson that I observed, she would come to the class with a big box, labelled with her name, full of flashcards, 'picture puppets', 'realia' and posters. When I pointed this out to her she said that using a variety of materials made her teaching "satisfying". There were incidents where although she had plenty of extra materials she thought if she only had yet other types of materials for the particular lesson she would have been more successful in her teaching. This can be seen in the following excerpt.

When teaching new vocabulary I could have brought a necklace to get away from the monotony of flashcards, and the monotony of picture cards, it just occurred to me during the lesson. I didn't think of it. I could have brought realia. (PO6:026)

Imge seemed to think that using only one type of extra materials, e.g., picture cards, all the time would be boring for the children in her class, so she tried to use different types of materials to keep up interest in her lessons.

Early in the year, starting in the first post observation interview, Imge began talking about how she enjoyed preparing her own materials (see the third, yellow 'layer' in Figure 5.9). After a lesson I observed in November, I asked whether she had prepared the flashcards herself and she said, "I drew them ... I drew them all by looking at the book". All the materials she prepared looked professional.

Particularly, at the end of January, she made a lot of comments about preparing her own materials. One of these comments was about preparing materials for a song she was going to teach. This preparation involved creating flashcards for certain vocabulary items in

the song and putting these up on the board while the children listened to the song. In her view this was useful in that it helped the children to 'feel' the song.

I do this every lesson, I make certain items in the song into pictures, and I put them on the board and I sing the lyrics one by one but by acting out, by using pictures, for example, I hear a cat meow, I hear, I mean, I stick the cat, meow meow meow I say to one of them, like I gave them cat pictures, cat cat I say, meow, I walk around the class, I say, I hear a cat meow, I hear a rat squeak, I hear a dog bark, I see, see, to look, I see, I understand, to see to see, I do it until they can feel it. (PO3:059)

During the same interview, Imge reflected on how she could have made her lesson more colourful and more attractive for the children. Her suggestions mostly consisted of using and preparing more materials, as can be seen from the following excerpt.

The cake and flowers, I could have drawn them on flashcards actually, why couldn't I think of that, I thought I'd just draw it on the board, but it was a bit rushed, cakes and flowers. There could have been a wolf costume, I could have made something like a mask, it would have been more effective. Wolf costume, cakes and flowers flashcards. What else could there have been, for what big eyes, I could have drawn huge eyes on cardboard, what big ears, what big teeth. I could do these until Wednesday, I think I can still make up for it! (PO3:035)

Imge also involved her students in preparing materials. She mentioned this briefly in the beginning of November (see the single blue bubble in Figure 5.9), saying that the children had prepared the materials that they had used in the game I observed that day. My impressions from observing her lessons was that she always tried to keep her young students busy by giving them materials to prepare, to do cut-outs from their fun books or to colour flashcards she had prepared. In this way, she shared the responsibility of preparing materials with the children.

Towards the end of the year Imge talked about sharing the materials she had prepared with her colleagues, as well as borrowing materials that her colleagues had prepared (see the red 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.9).

The enlarged version of the pictures in this poster, B. [her colleague] had used

it, she gave it to me, she had coloured them. (PO3:029)

Towards the end of the year, she also talked about re-using the materials she had prepared in various activities (see the top 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.9). One example of this can be seen in the following quote, where she explains the process of preparing materials and re-using them.

Now I can do things much easier. In the beginning of the year I would prepare materials until the morning, now I can use the same materials in different ways. (HFI 2:042)

Based on her comments, one of the main changes Imge seemed to have experienced in preparing extra materials over the school year was that she could prepare them and then share the materials with her colleagues and also reuse them herself. She also seemed to show some change by involving the children in preparing materials.

Influences on the changes in Imge's approach to extra materials

One of the main influences on how Imge changed in her use of materials over the school year seemed to be her love for fine arts. She commented, on numerous occasions, that she enjoyed preparing materials for the children and that she went back to her childhood days when she prepared materials. She was often proud of the materials she prepared, making comments like, "I liked the materials, the children liked them too".

Another influence on Imge preparing materials and using materials in addition to what was offered in the textbook, may have been her getting to know what her students enjoyed. She seemed to recognise that children got motivated when they saw colourful materials. As mentioned earlier, Imge gave importance to children enjoying the English lessons.

Yes, maybe the visuals may have been effective there [in an activity she did in class where she used flashcards], the number of students who are visual are more in this class. For example, they notice that the poster is torn even if it is this tiny. (PO3:037)

She seems to recognise the children's ability to pick out visual details and, therefore, she tries to include more visual elements in her teaching. This shows that she takes account of the abilities of the children in her class and tries to adjust her own teaching to these abilities.

Imge thought it was important to get the children to like her and the English lessons. This is also one of the reasons why she wanted to prepare and use as many colourful materials as possible.

As I said, in this class there's not too much need for me to do a lot, it's not because of my fantastic class management, okay maybe they like me, maybe something to do with that, and I think that I have managed to, I mean the most important goal in the first grade is to get them to like the lesson and I think that has been achieved. (PO1:078)

Her understanding of how much the children enjoy hands-on activities seems to have led to her involving the children in preparing materials. However, Imge did not appear to use the opportunity of children preparing materials to introduce or review any language. In other words, she seemed to be focused on the pleasure the children got from working on hands-on activities but did not seem to be thinking of the language learning opportunities this created.

Imge also acknowledged that she learned a lot from the seminars she attended. Since most of the seminars Imge attended were provided by publishers, it is likely that they would suggest practical ideas. Therefore, Imge will have walked away from these seminars with information about how to prepare and use materials, like flashcards and puppets, in her first grade classroom.

Another influence on how Imge's approach to using extra materials changed was her colleagues. One of the changes she experienced was that she started talking about sharing materials with her colleagues, towards the end of the year. There was one colleague who was also teaching young children English, but she had started teaching children the previous year so she was more experienced than Imge. She often offered Imge the materials she had prepared for children the previous year and they discussed how Imge could make use of the materials. Soon after, Imge also offered her colleague some of the materials she had prepared herself. Imge often commented on the important role collaboration among colleagues had in her adjustment to teaching children.

At the end of the year, Imge started re-using the materials she prepared. It may be that Imge realised that she spent too much time preparing materials. She made a practical change to her approach, re-using the materials she had prepared, rather than preparing new ones all the time.

Changes in Imge's approach to class management

Figure 5.10 presents an overview of all the statements Imge made about class management

over the period of a school year.

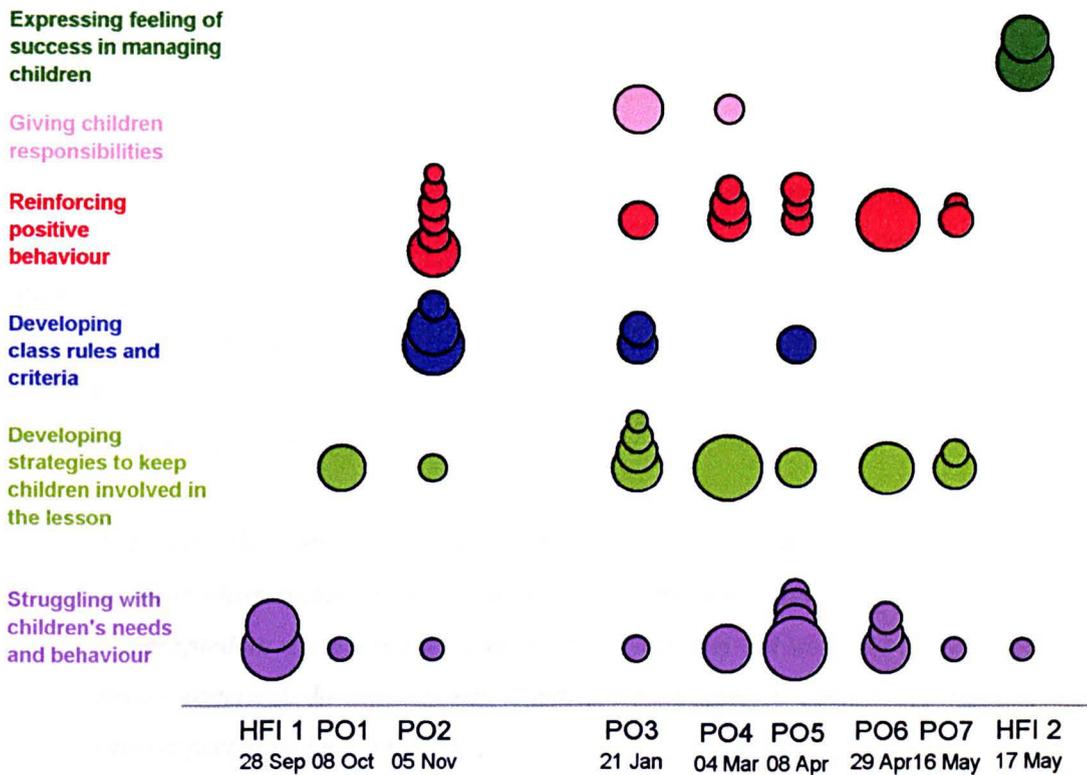


Figure 5.10: Imge talking about class management

Figure 5.10 shows that throughout the school year, Imge talked about her struggles in dealing with the needs and behaviour of the children in her class (see the first, purple ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.10). She was particularly concerned about the use of time in her lessons, because she frequently had to allow the children to go to the toilet, or to go out to drink water, or she had to wait for the slower students to finish their colouring. She thought that all of these were “a waste of time” and that this prevented her from completing what she had planned for the lesson. However, she did not think that these needs of children would persist for long. In her mind, they would only last until the children became more mature and got used to the rules of the school.

Especially in the beginning stages of the year, she complained about not being able to understand why some children acted in the way they did. The following excerpts provide a few examples of this.

There's also this in children, they play, they fight, they tear, like whatever it is about getting a new sheet, is it that his is now new, I don't understand.
(PO2:085)

The feeling of revenge doesn't leave them, they have to take revenge, especially when there's harm to something they love, like for example magic wand. It will all settle probably, I want it to settle. (PO4:098)

As Figure 5.10 shows, Imge talked extensively about her struggles with the children's behaviour in the fifth post-observation interview. The reason for this, based on my observations, was related to an unsuccessful attempt at getting the children to play a certain game. She said she found it particularly difficult to keep the noise level down in her lessons, and to keep the children from moving around. She expresses her discontent with her class management skills in the following quote.

You know the general situation of the classroom, I mean I am not happy in terms of class management. I am not sure of the atmosphere. The lesson gets interrupted so much. We are aware of the situation but we can't solve it, we aren't practical. In other words, I haven't been able to achieve the result I have expected so far. (PO5:039)

Her discontentment seems to be related to her impression that the children, over the school year, have changed in their behaviour, becoming noisier and misbehaving more.

I mean, there's this thing in the class now, everyone talks. The students who behaved well are talking now as well. There's almost no one who stays quiet. (PO5:023)

In the same interview, she added that her class was becoming a "difficult class". As mentioned earlier, these comments were made after a lesson in which she had got the children to play a game that involved them moving around, and she had great difficulty in suppressing their excitement after the game was finished.

Her complaints about the children's behaviour continued in the sixth post-observation interview, when she said "this is one of the classes who talks the most and who I have to warn by saying 'shhh' all the time". She also talked about the physical effects dealing with the children had on her in the following excerpt.

I am serious, when I leave the class my stomach muscles, even my diaphragm is tired. ... Well, I mean, they don't really know the limit, where to stop. They just

go on and on. (PO6:016)

As early as the beginning of October, Imge started to talk strategies to keep the children involved in the lesson (see the second, light green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.10). She tried to arrange the children's seating so that there would be as little disruption to the lesson as possible. She did this by seating the children who misbehaved on their own and at the front of the classroom, as she mentions in the following quote.

Yes, I make him sit alone on purpose, I sometimes made him sit in the back so that my lesson wouldn't be- he fools around so it was a good thing to make him sit at the front. (PO3:063)

At the end of the year, in the final post-observation interview, Imge talked about another way of keeping the children engaged in the lesson. She said she noticed that introducing difficult language content when she had a lesson at the end of the day or when she had a lesson right after the children's Physical Education lesson was not very effective because students 'drifted off' easily. She, therefore, paid attention to the time of the day and even the day of the week when she planned to do more serious language work with the children.

Also nowadays they have been rehearsing for shows, they are very tired, so if I am going to introduce difficult topics I always do that in the seventh period. (PO7:003)

Another way in which Imge tried to manage her students was by introducing general class rules and rules for games she got the children to play. In addition, she also created criteria for "good behaviour" (see the third, blue 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.10). According to my observations, Imge was careful about giving the children the rules of the game they were about to play in detail before she started the game. She talked at length about what she said to the children before they played games, in order to make them understand the purpose of games, as she explains below.

After the game the children become very noisy, they make fun of each other, and sometimes there are arguments which go on into the break time. I say that when we play a game our aim is to learn. We will have fun while we are playing and while we are having fun we will show respect for the other group's rights, like we will listen to them just the same as they listen to us when we

come up to the board. We won't whisper among ourselves, we won't give out the answer but rather give hints, we won't laugh if they don't know the answer, we won't make fun. If he did it to you would you like it, you wouldn't, then you won't do it as well, so this is not a nice thing. (PO2:051)

Imge's games usually caused a lot of commotion, partly because most of the games she got the children to play involved a lot of physical action and the boys in the class soon got out of control. Therefore, even though Imge talked to the children about the rules of games, how they should behave, the nature of the games I observed were such that it looked like the children forgot about these rules once they got into the game.

In the beginning of November, Imge set criteria for "good behaviour" in her classes. This involved the children doing homework regularly, behaving well in class, having all their materials ready, raising their hand before talking. She initially enforced these criteria by giving the children stars.

Well, we decided on certain criteria, I increased the criteria gradually, the ones who abide by them were chosen as stars, the first one is to stand up when the teacher comes in, in order to greet the teacher, the second one is that our materials are complete, scissors, glue and paint is the top of the list. (PO3:043)

Later in the school year she turned this into choosing star students of the week. In the third post-observation interview, she introduced the notion of setting the criteria together with the children, thereby giving them responsibility (see the fifth, pink 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.10).

Imge also began to talk about strategies she used to reinforce positive behaviour early in the year (see the fourth, red 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.10). One of the main methods she used to reinforce positive behaviour was mentioned earlier, choosing star students of the week. She continued doing this for a long time and the children seemed to respond to it well. My observation notes from her lessons suggest that whenever she said "star" the children got quiet and sat in their seat, folding their arms. She even planned out how she would deal with the 'Star of the week' strategy for the children who had already been chosen as stars. This is what she had to say.

And I also indicate that whoever is good can be written again, and if they start misbehaving because they have been chosen already, their names can be

erased. So you have to evaluate your behavior all the time. (PO2:065)

Later in the year, Imge expressed that this method was getting old, saying “Earlier when I said star they would sit like a statue, now it’s getting old a little bit. They get used to it, and maybe it brings a disadvantage with it.” However, she tried other ways of reinforcing positive behaviour like giving them ‘well done’, ‘thank you’ notes on colourful note paper. The children kept these during the school day, showing it to their classroom teacher and their friends from other classes. Imge explains in detail what the children did with these notes in the following excerpt.

These notepads you see, they were really useful. I write, ‘very good’, ‘thank you’, and I write their names, I put the date, I sign it, and I give it to those who behave well. I even managed that kid, S. [name of the student], the naughty boy who sits at the front, in this way. Why, because they take these home. Two of the children have put it on their walls when they had guests over, I didn’t expect that. The sticky part had got worn out, the stamps had faded, always the same figures, buy a new one, I found a new notepad, I bought it immediately and it was very useful. (PO3:009)

At the end of the year, in the middle of May, she tried a new method in cooperation with a colleague. She described this in the following excerpts.

The other day we talked with S. [her colleague], now we are doing, you know the name tags, I will do those tomorrow. (PO7:066)

The stars, the stars. I will put them up on the board outside and I had also drawn stars, I had coloured them, I am going to put them in them and they will put them around their necks, they will carry them around. (PO7:068)

During the middle stages of the school year, Imge talked about how effective it was to give the children who were misbehaving responsibilities. She got the children to bring her some materials she forgot from the teacher’s room, or to hand out some materials to their classmates. She talks about her experience with a particularly ‘difficult’ student in the following excerpt.

And also, so that he [the student in question] doesn’t feel bad, I say, you are my

assistant, last week he helped me as an assistant. Actually I did that so that I wouldn't let him leave my side, being an assistant, I would say, "assistant, what should we do today", you should see how he runs in the classroom, and his Turkish is also a little uhm, that's how he became motivated, he says, "it's really important to be an assistant, it's an important job". (PO3:065)

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge expressed a feeling of success in managing the children (see the top, dark green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.10). She pointed out that she knew how to treat her first grade students now and that she could get "better results". She describes her situation in the excerpts below.

There's a common language now, the children have understood my personality, they have got to know me. ... I mean everyone knows each other now, the limits are drawn even though they are not directly aware of it, we didn't cross each other's borders. Maybe they did this unconsciously but I didn't have difficulties. (HF1 2:038)

Now they are better, they are settled more, everyone is clearer. I know how to treat them now, better results. In the begining of course I was trying, should I do it like this, should I do it like that. (HF1 2:048)

Influences on the changes in Imge's approach to class management

The class management strategies Imge developed over the school year seemed to be influenced by her love for the children in her class. Imge seemed to struggle with the needs children had and their behaviour through the whole school year. However, she always had a positive attitude towards them. She almost seemed to think it was normal for them to behave the way they did. The following quote describes how Imge felt towards the children even when she experienced difficulty in managing them.

The class is in disarray. It's against this class' general characteristic, as it was in the beginning of the year, I mean maybe, the children have developed their own personalities within the time that has passed, they are all like sunflowers, one by one. (PO6:018)

The use of the 'sunflower' metaphor suggests that Imge still had a positive attitude towards the children and regarded their unmanageable behaviour as part of their development process.

She got to know the children better over time. She stated that whereas in the beginning of the year she could not understand some children's behaviour (like why they wanted to get revenge so much, or why they would tear things), at the end of the year, she had got to know the children better and could now react to their behaviour in more appropriate ways.

Imge's feeling of success at managing the classroom may also have been influenced by the care she gave to the children in general. In my observation of her classes, Imge seemed very close to the children. She often went next to individual children to help them and talk to them. She bent down next to them and sometimes hugged them. She commented that she could not "raise her voice to a child". Her justification for this is given in the following excerpt.

At the end of the day if a person cannot control his/her anger, how can he/she control the class. I mean if I cannot suppress myself, it seems very utopic to create some control over my classroom. (HF1 2:012)

When asked about the advice she would give to a teacher who would be in her position the following year, she suggested that the new teacher try to get to know about their young students "in order to be able to communicate with them". Her other advice for them was to "spend a lot of time with the children in the breaks, outside the class time".

Imge had a personal quality that seemed to influence the way she used different class management strategies. She was often self-critical after her lessons, especially after those in which she had class management problems. In one of the interviews, she said, "I found myself very bad at class management, I was like a teacher who shouts and no one cares".

In addition, she seemed to have cooperated, especially with the classroom teacher, on class management and interaction with the children.

We also made an agreement with their classroom teacher, she called me once, S. [name of student] was by my side, she called him to her side and said, 'Look Miss Imge, he didn't upset me and if he doesn't upset you either I will have a surprise for him. (PO3:065)

She may, therefore, have been influenced by the classroom teacher in developing new class management strategies. It gave her some reassurance that the classroom teacher was also having problems with certain students that she herself was having difficulty communicating with, as the quote below shows.

In fact, we talked about this with some of the classroom teachers the other day, I mean the problems I had with one or two difficult children, the classroom teachers were having the same problems as well. I mean there hasn't been something particular to me that I couldn't solve. (HFI 2:038)

Changes in Imge's approach to using L1

Figure 5.11 shows the statements Imge made about using L1 in her first grade classroom over the school year. She did not talk about using L1 much over the year but there seems to be a change in her approach.

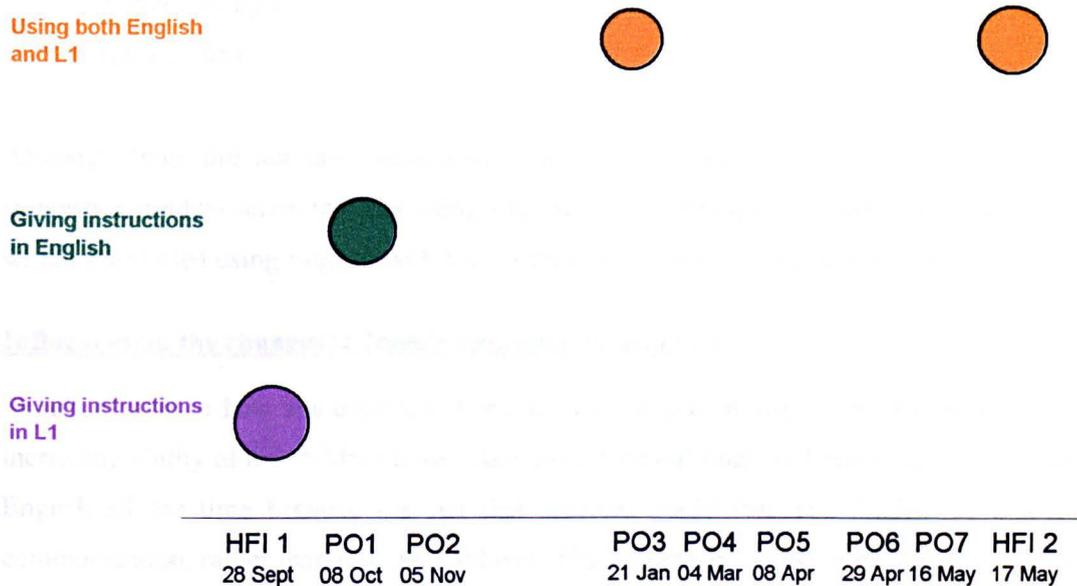


Figure 5.11: Imge talking about using L1

As Figure 5.11 shows, in the first hierarchical focusing interview Imge said that she mostly used Turkish when giving instructions (see the purple bubble). She stated that she tried to avoid using Turkish by using her body language but that this was not always successful. It seemed that the suggestions from the teacher's book she used were a factor in her using Turkish in the classroom, as the excerpt below suggests.

*I mean I give most instructions in L1, the things that the book suggests, sometimes I drift away from that, I use the **target language** in some classroom actions, some classroom objects, those kind of things. (HFI 1:052)*

In the beginning of October, she talked about how she started giving some instructions in

English (see the green bubble in Figure 5.11), as for example, “Open your books”. She said that she always said the page numbers in English and did not revert to Turkish if the children did not understand but simply pointed at the numbers.

At the end of January, Imge referred to an incident in class where she talked about a picture using both Turkish and English. She also mentioned this in the final hierarchical focusing interview suggesting that she tried to use English and Turkish together as much as possible (see the yellow bubbles in Figure 5.11), as can be seen in the following excerpt.

In class we try to use L2 and L1 together as much as possible, I mean it's not possible to have a fulfilling interaction because the Turkish explanation usually follows straight away but slowly slowly we have got the kids to get used to it.

(HF1 2:006)

Although Imge did not talk much about using L1, the evidence from her interview data suggests a gradual move towards using English in her first grade classroom and the way in which she started using English with her young learners was through classroom instructions.

Influences on the changes in Imge's approach to using L1

Imge's change in how she used less Turkish over the school year seemed to stem from the increasing ability of the children in her class to understand English. Imge believed in speaking English all the time because she felt that students could then see English as a tool for communication, rather than only as a subject. The importance of using the target language as a tool for communication came up a number of times in Imge's interview data. She stated that for this reason she only used English with her previous high school students for this reason. Because in Turkey children could not hear English much outside the classroom, she thought that opportunities should be maximised inside the classroom. She said she never even spoke to her high school students in Turkish during the breaks. One of her complaints about teaching at primary was that English could not “get out of a ‘subject to study’ situation”. This seemed to bother her, which may explain her desire to gradually decrease her use of L1 in her first grade classroom.

Changes in Imge's approach to games

Figure 5.12 provides an overview of all the statements Imge made about using games in her first grade classroom over the school year.

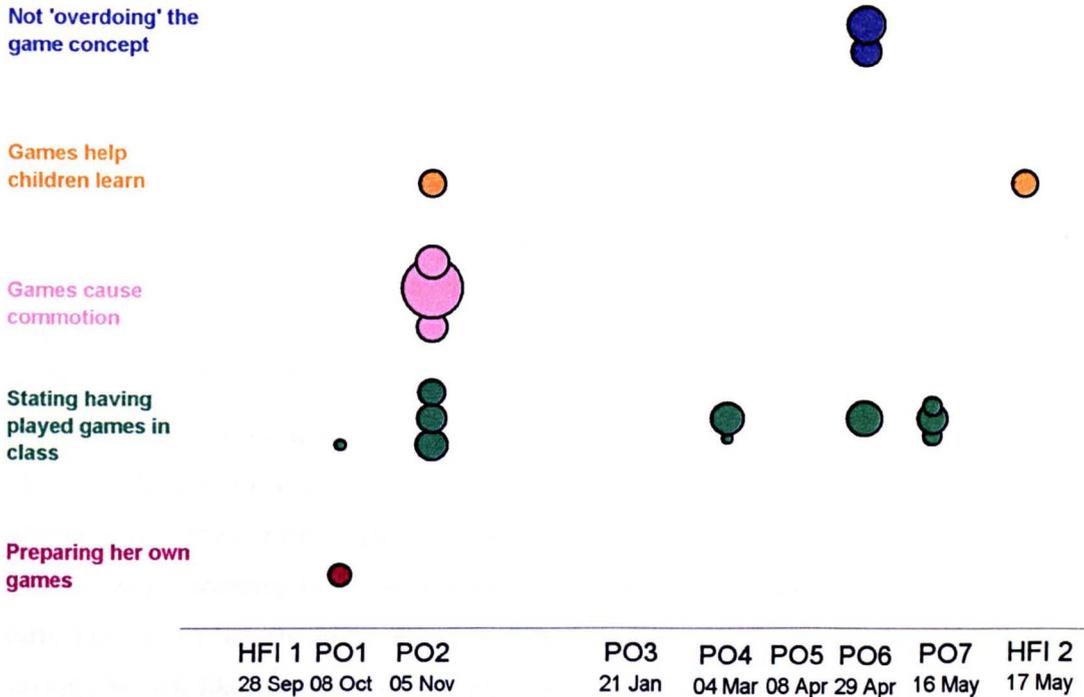


Figure 5.12: Imge talking about games

Imge used the term ‘game’ to refer to activities which involved active participation by the children. To her, games were not always competitive in nature.

In the beginning of the year Imge talked about how she prepared her own games. She said they were similar to the ones given in the textbook, but they were her own ideas. The following quote represents what she said about this.

Sometimes I prepare extra games, like in the book, whether it is in the curriculum or not. (PO1:072)

When it was time to play a game, I observed that in most cases Imge talked to the children before the game about the rules of the game and how she expected them to behave. She specifically emphasised that winning was not important; what was important was that they have fun.

As can be seen in Figure 5.12, Imge made frequent statements about having played games in her classroom (see the second, green ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.12). These statements were mostly descriptive, and did not reveal what Imge’s understanding of playing games was. An example of such a descriptive statement is, “Last Friday, we had one lesson, I got them to review this 'vocab', I got them to play the game, on the board by giving each of

the groups a transport thing [flashcard]”. Based on my observations, Imge included a ‘game’ in each of her lessons and in her statements about the games she played in her lessons, she referred to a variety of game types. Some of these were, ‘instruction game’, ‘guessing game’, and ‘mind game’. It seemed very important for Imge to play a game in each lesson. She sometimes complained about not being able to play a game because there was no time left.

In the beginning of November, Imge talked about games in a negative way for the first time (see the third, pink ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.12). In the second lesson I observed, she got children to play a game where some children pretended to be cars, and other children pretended to be policemen and women. This game was suggested in the main textbook. The policemen and women held traffic lights that they had prepared themselves in class and the game involved practising the language, ‘go’ and ‘stop’, as the policemen and women raised their traffic lights to stop cars, and let them go. The boys in the class got carried away pretending to be cars and Imge started to raise her voice to get their attention. In turn, this led to her shouting. She described her disappointment with her own behaviour saying she “felt like a teacher who shouts and no one cares”. At the end of this lesson, in the post-observation interview, Imge said she did not get “any pleasure from this game” and the “level of success was below zero”. She thought that the reason the game was not successful was because she had introduced the game the previous week but that she had not spent enough time preparing the children for the game and the rules of the game. She said:

Because the children know this game very little from last week there was a mess and we couldn't get much out of it actually. (PO2:099)

In the same interview she also commented that games helped the children in her class learn. As such, although she had a difficult experience with a particular game, it did not appear as though she gave up on the idea of games.

At the end of April, Imge again voiced concerns about using games, this time pointing out that she would use fewer games in her lessons. She said:

Now with the children for example I do one game instead of two, I use one game for another topic. It's also important not to overdo the game concept. (PO6:060)

She repeated her opinion that games were useful for learning in the final hierarchical focusing interview. That is, she may have used games less towards the end of the year, but this did not mean that she valued games less.

Influences on the changes in Imge's approach to games

Imge's developing understanding of her young students' learning seem to have influenced her approach to using games in the classroom. In her first grade classroom, Imge used a variety of activities. She talked about some of these activities as well as her general approach to teaching young learners, in the following excerpt.

I want everything to be settled well, I'll make it colourful like this, I'll make it a nice shape like that, the content, make it something the children enjoy, get them to learn by having fun, get it to remain in their minds for a long time, with games and songs, using body language, I mean so that it can also settle better in their brains through pictures, and the ones who have stronger hearing abilities remember things from songs, the ones who are kinesthetic through movements, I try to integrate all of them. (HFI 2:028)

She mentioned that the children were “in a more concrete stage”, that “their brain is shut to most abstract notions” and so the teaching “should be more concrete”. She described the activities she used in her first grade class as involving “hand, eye, mind coordination, lots of drawing”. She went on to describe her lessons in the following excerpt, suggesting a more cross-curricular approach to teaching.

Art, music, physical education, actually it's a combination of all of these, they are sprinkled in our lesson like sweet spices! (HFI 2:024)

This statement shows the value Imge placed on the children learning through engaging in a variety of activities for their development as a whole.

Early in the year, Imge talked about how she created her own games. She said she created games that were similar to those in the textbook. This suggests that she might have changed some of the activities suggested in the textbook to the needs and interests of her students. It appears that even from the beginning of the year she was not afraid of drawing on her own creativity. Her attitude towards teaching seemed to be to make the children happy and get them to like English, and this may be why she prepared extra games in addition to what the textbook presented.

Imge's approach to games changed to where at the end of the year she played less games with the children. Imge, in my observations, used a lot of games in her lesson, and most of the games she got the children to play were ones where the children needed to be active. This inevitably caused some class management problems, as the children got excited

playing these games and it became difficult for Imge to calm them afterwards. The main reason Imge decided not to “overdo the game concept” was because of these class management problems.

Changes in Imge’s approach to songs

Imge talked quite often about using songs in her lessons. Figure 5.13 presents an overview of all the statements she made about songs over the school year.

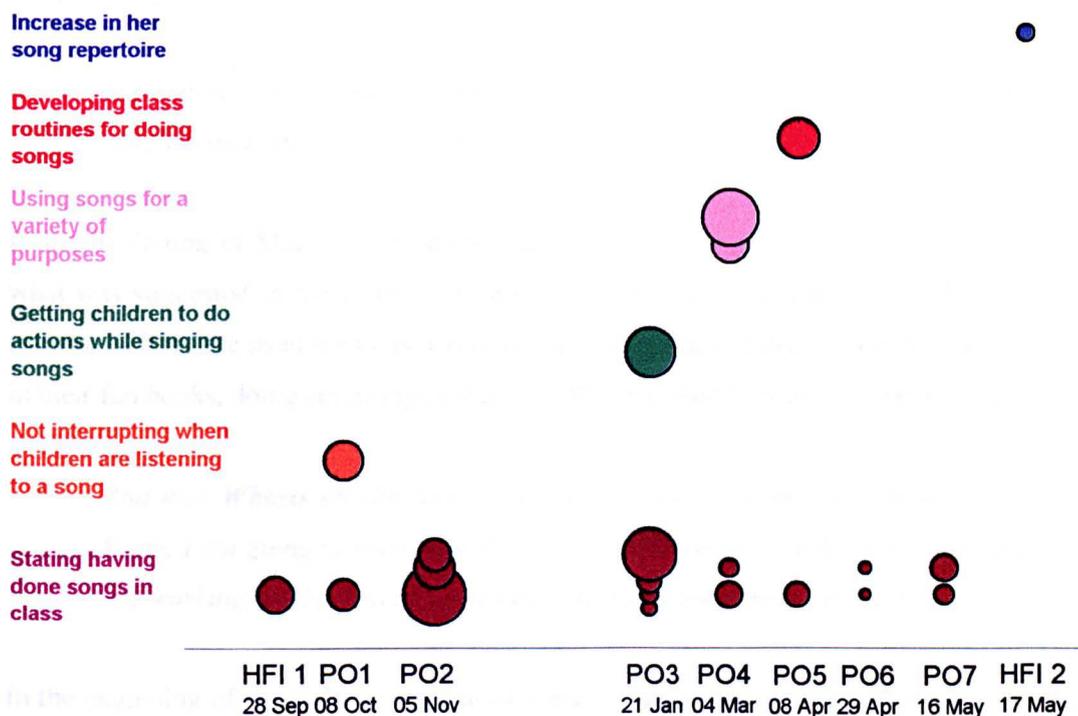


Figure 5.13: Imge talking about songs

Imge made a lot of statements about having done songs in her lessons (see the first, brown ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.13). Similar to her statements about games, these were mainly descriptive like, “I got them to listen to the wolf song twice” or “On Wednesday I am thinking of getting them to listen to the song”.

In the first post-observation interview, she talked about how she did not find it necessary to pause songs to clarify words or to check understanding (see the orange bubble in Figure 5.13). As the excerpt below suggests, she claimed that the children lost interest if she started pausing the cassette.

I don’t need to pause ... and get them to listen and show from their books because these are students who can understand. They got bored there for

example, there was a bit of a wandering off there, that was not necessary.
(PO1:016)

Later in the year, Imge introduced the idea of using actions with songs (see the green bubble in Figure 5.13). This involved the children doing actions that matched the lyrics of the song. She spent time on teaching the children some action words she picked from the song and then let them practise the actions for a while. After that, she expected them to stand up and do the actions as they heard them in the song. She describes this in the following quote.

We listened to the magic wand song, we show the colours, like wave your magic wand, they wave their wands. (PO4:036)

In the beginning of March, Imge started talking about using songs for purposes other than what was suggested in the textbook (see the pink bubbles in Figure 5.13). She specifically mentioned how she used songs as a way of motivating the children when they were working in their fun books, doing colouring or drawing. She explained her idea in the following quote.

And also Wheels on the Bus. I am going to record them on a blank tape at home, I am going to make that the cassette I get students to listen to while they are working, I think it'll be more fun. I had promised them. (PO4:088)

In the beginning of April, Imge thought of some class routines to use with songs. She talked about how she had come up with the idea of having a “song position”. This meant that whenever she asked the children in her class to get into the “song position”, the children would stand up next to their desks and expect to listen to a song. She developed this routine especially for those instances when she involved children in doing actions while listening to the songs. She explains this in detail in the following excerpt.

Song position, listening position. In song position they stand next to their desks. It is like, you stand in front, let me go in front, some of them want to be in front and I said everyone stand next to their desks, so there's no colliding with one another. (PO5:045)

Imge seems to have thought of organisational issues when coming up with the idea of ‘song position’, trying to ensure that there would be as little commotion as possible while the children did the actions.

Finally, in the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge said that since the beginning of the school year her “song repertoire increased” and that she had no knowledge of children’s songs before she became a primary school teacher, and that now she knew so many. She seemed to see this as an addition to her skills as a teacher.

Influences on the changes in Imge’s approach to songs

One of the main influences to the changes Imge made to her approach to songs over the year seems to be her getting to know about the needs and interests of the children in her class. For example, she felt that pausing the song to ask the children questions or to check their understanding led to them losing interest. Imge’s making use of songs for more motivational reasons towards the end of the year also suggests that she was getting to ‘know’ her students better. It appears that Imge was aware of the enjoyment children got from listening to songs. On several occasions, Imge made statements like, “the most important goal in the first grade is to get them [the children] to like the lesson”. Getting the children to listen to songs as much as possible may have been a way for her to get them to enjoy the English lessons.

Imge also recognised the children’s need for being physically active. That is, in order to prevent the children from dancing and moving around too much while a song was playing, she decided to introduce a routine to the songs. This involved getting the children into a ‘song position’, whereby they stood up next to their desks whenever they listened to a song. In this way, if the children wanted to dance they could do this without “colliding with one another”. They could be active, releasing the energy built up in their body, but they would be active in a more organised way.

The teacher’s book that Imge followed may also have been an influence in her change in using songs. Imge always came to the classroom having read and underlined relevant parts of the teacher’s book for the particular lesson. As the excerpt below shows, from the very beginning of the school year she wondered how much weight she needed to give to the activities in the textbook.

In addition by following the textbook word by word I am wondering how much initiative I need to use on my own and how much I should rely on the textbook.

(PO1:010)

In the teacher’s book, some of the songs were presented with tips about what actions to get children to do that were related to the lyrics of the song. She tried out the suggestions of the textbook and said that the children “got into the mood better” when action was involved. This may have been the reason why she then included actions in all the songs she did during the

year. Sometimes these actions were suggestions of the teacher's book and other times Imge invented actions to go with the lyrics of the songs.

At the very end of the year Imge mentioned that her song repertoire had increased. This also seems to be a direct consequence of the main textbook she used, as most of the songs she learnt were those from the textbook.

Changes in Imge's approach to revision

Figure 5.14 represents all the statements Imge made about revision in her first year of teaching young learners.

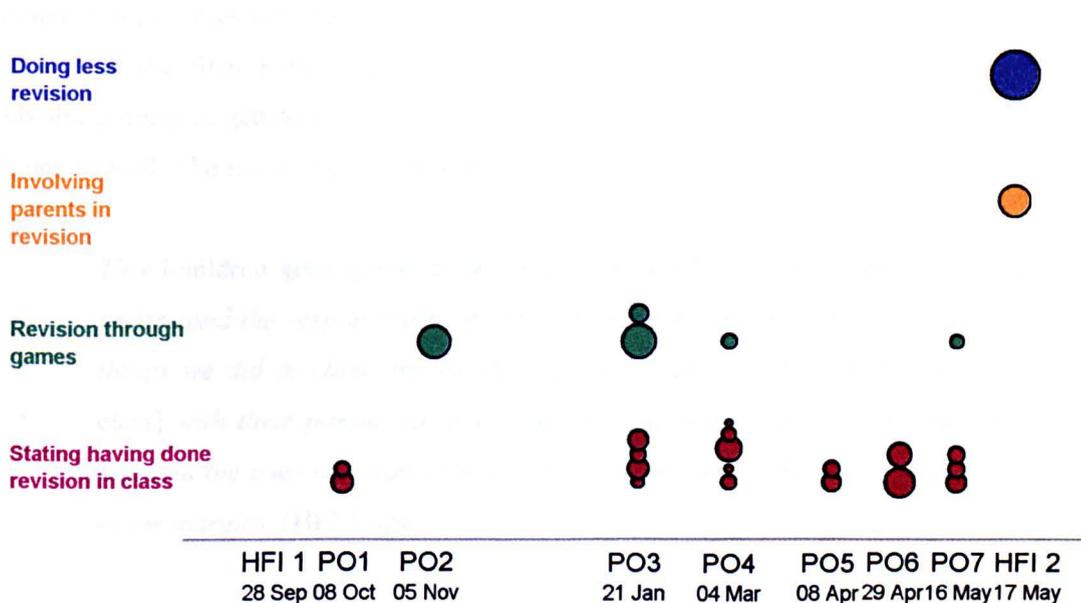


Figure 5.14: Imge talking about revision

Most of what Imge said with regard to revision were simple statements about having done revision in her lessons. An example of this is provided in the following quote.

*We did it Friday, I reviewed the colours, **revision**, colour revision.* (PO4:030)

During various stages of the year Imge talked about doing revision within games (see the second, green layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.14). The excerpts below show how Imge made use of games to do revision in her lessons.

Last Friday, we had one lesson, I got them to review this vocab, I got them to play the game, on the board by giving each of the groups a transport thing, I reviewed it by giving a vehicle name, lots of repetition, games. Like we would

throw the ball, like I would ask, 'What's this?'. We did quite a lot of revision.
(PO2:005)

And we also played a guessing game, we hid an object behind our back, we divided the class into three, is it a pencil, yes, no, so that way we reviewed that as well. (PO4:028)

At the end of the year, in May, she mentioned doing a revision of classroom actions in the form of a 'mind game'. My observation notes from Imge's lessons suggests that the most common types of games she used for revision were guessing games.

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge talked about how she tried to involve parents in getting the children to do revision, so that the children could do revision at home as well. The following excerpt represents Imge's view on this.

This [children getting homework every weekend] started by getting them to understand the responsibility of doing homework, and then it was a review of things we did in class, the children do these [review of what they learnt in class] with their parents at home, the ones [parents] who know English help out, and the ones who don't know look words up in the dictionary and write it in the margins. (HFI 2:024)

From talking with Imge, as well as the other teachers in her school, it appeared that most of the parents were well educated and knew some English. This means that the majority of the parents had, at the least, basic communication skills in English and grammatical knowledge of the English language.

An interesting development happened at the end of the year, when Imge started to take a more practical approach towards revision. She said that "before, whenever they wrote something wrong, or couldn't read something, or couldn't answer properly, I would say, this hasn't been understood, let me do a revision tomorrow". And she felt that this was like they were "going one step forward, two steps backward". At the end of the year, she thought that she should go faster with the units in order to keep up with the curriculum. She suggested the following to be able to achieve this.

If the child has understood seventy eighty percent we need to go quicker because in any case they get to review them in the following unit. And when there's the opportunity for revision in that sense, the other twenty percent of

the students grasp it as well. One by one, each and every one, they also get bored, so it's better to leave it at the right dose. (HFI 2:044)

It appears that, at the end of the year, Imge changed her mind somewhat on the amount of revision she should do with her first grade class. She felt that she was doing too much revision and that she needed to learn to stop once the children had grasped what was being revised. She talked about two reasons for this. One had to do with concerns about timing and a need to keep up with the curriculum and the other reason had to do with trying to prevent the children from getting bored.

Influences on the changes in Imge's approach to revision

The changes in Imge's approach to revision over the year, such as doing revision through games, involving parents in revision, seem to stem from Imge getting to understand how the children in her class learn. Imge talked about the importance of revision for children's learning, saying that, "after we do the words by reinforcing them with acting and pictures they really get a good idea about it." This statement may indicate why Imge consistently talked about having done revisions in her lessons throughout the year. She commented that because children forgot what they learned more quickly than adults did, revision was more important in young learner classes.

The reason why Imge talked about involving parents in helping their children revise what they learned may also be related to her getting to know the needs of the children in her class. She seemed to feel that if the parents were involved in their children's revision, they would spend more time with children at home. Imge felt that, the continuity between the home and the school gave the children more security.

It gets the parents to give an effort as well. This is something nice, although it is based on keeping track of what the children are doing it gets them to pay attention. They can keep up the English environment created here at home. (HFI 2:024)

At the end of the year, Imge decided to do less revision and approach revision in more practical ways by doing it only when she felt that the children really needed it. She felt that in this way, she would save time and be able to keep up with the curriculum. The influence behind this decision seems to have to do with time pressure. She felt that if she spent a lot of time on revision she could not move quickly enough through units in her textbook. In my observation, I did not feel that she was 'overdoing' revision. I did, however, observe that she

decreased the time she spent on revision towards the end of the year. It was not possible to observe the effects of this as she began to do this towards the end of the school year.

5.2.6 Summary

Imge's efforts to adjust to the new age group she started teaching seemed to be mainly facilitated by her positive attitude towards the children in her class and her love for and talent in fine arts and acting. She was also supported by her colleagues and head of department and given encouragement by the head of department to be creative in her teaching. This support seemed to give her confidence in her first year of teaching.

There were various ways in which Imge made use of extra materials throughout the school year. She added materials to the ones provided by the textbook, prepared her own materials, and involved the children in preparing materials. She talked about sharing materials with her colleagues and started re-using materials she had prepared previously.

In terms of class management, although Imge articulated many times that she was struggling with the children's needs and their behaviour, she developed strategies for managing them. For example, she developed strategies to engage the children in the lesson, developed class rules and criteria for 'good behaviour' and developed strategies for reinforcing positive behaviour. She also gave responsibilities to those children who were disruptive in class. At the end of the year, she expressed that she had experienced success in managing her young students.

Imge gradually used less Turkish as the school year progressed. She especially tried to use English with her class instructions. She felt that as children understood more English she could use more English with them.

Imge used games consistently during the year, preparing her own games, and talking about many instances in which she played games, whilst making the point that games helped the children learn. However, at the end of the year she gave a different viewpoint, saying that she should not "overdo the game concept".

Imge also talked about and used songs all through the year. She used songs in a variety of ways. For example, getting the children to do actions while listening to songs, and using songs in different contexts in order to motivate the children. At the end of the year, she claimed that her repertoire of songs had increased considerably.

Early in the year, Imge introduced the notion of doing revision through games. At the end of the year she talked about how she involved parents in helping their children revise at home, and also, she pointed out that she needed to be more practical with revision by only engaging the children in revision when she thought it was necessary.

To bring together all that has been presented regarding Imge's change process in her

first year of teaching children, and in an attempt to answer the first and second research questions, the following points can be made:

The areas in which Imge showed change over the school year are:

- extra materials;
- class management;
- use of L1;
- games;
- songs;
- revision.

The changes in her use of **extra materials** were:

- using materials in addition to the existing textbook materials;
- preparing her own materials;
- involving children in preparing materials;
- sharing materials with colleagues;
- re-using materials.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her personal talent in, and love for, fine arts;
- her getting to know what the children in her class enjoyed;
- the influence of publishers' young learners seminars;
- interaction with and support from colleagues.

The changes in her **class management** involved:

- developing strategies to keep children involved in the lesson;
- developing class rules and criteria;
- reinforcing positive behaviour;
- giving children responsibilities;
- experiencing success at managing her class.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her love for the children in her class;
- her getting to 'know' the children in her class better over time;
- her interaction with the classroom teacher.

The change in her **use of L1** was:

- using L1 less towards the end of the year.

Possible explanations for this change are:

- children's increasing ability to understand English.

The changes in her **use of games** were:

- preparing her own games;
- decreasing the number of games she got children to play.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her recognition of what children's interests and needs are;
- her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned;
- concerns about class management.

The changes in her **use of songs** involved:

- not interrupting the song while children were listening;
- using actions to accompany songs;
- using songs for variety of purposes;
- developing class routines for songs;
- increasing her repertoire of songs.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her getting to know the needs of the children in her class over time;
- the textbook.

The changes in her **approach to revision** were how she:

- did revision through indirect means like games;
- involved parents in revision;
- started doing less revision and approached revision more practically.

The possible explanations for these changes are:

- her developing an understanding of how the children in her class learned;
- her getting to know the needs of the children in her class;
- her concerns for time (keeping up with the curriculum).

5.3 Gamze

5.3.1 A portrait of Gamze

At the time when I was conducting my fieldwork, Gamze was 31 years old. She had nine years experience teaching high school students (aged 17-18) before she started her new post as a primary school English language teacher. She taught in her previous school for three years, before she joined her new school. She was teaching first, fourth and sixth grades in her new school. The first grade was chosen for research purposes as it constituted the biggest contrast, in terms of age, with her previous experience of teaching high school students.

Gamze started to get some training in teaching young learners in her new school through a specific programme the school was administering at the time (details about this programme is described in section 5.2.2). Before she came to this school, she said she attended a ‘Teaching English to Young Learners’ seminar at the British Council, which lasted one month. However, she said she was not able to attend all the sessions as she was ill for some part of it. She says that she also attended some seminars in her old school, but as the quote below suggests, it appears that she expected more from those seminars.

You learn by living and those seminars, you only see the way they are done but actually there are more things to learn. (HFI 1:136)

She may be suggesting that she did not find it sufficient to see how some activities were conducted. She said that she was “a person who tries to learn by discovering” and that “when you enter a system you learn by living it, not by words”.

One of the reasons she left her previous school had to do with being evaluated by the administration. She describes the experience as follows.

I wanted to change my institution because the institution I worked in had a policy, thirty-three people were made redundant. The reason for that was they wanted to administer an exam, even to their employees who had worked for nine or ten years and I, being a teacher for nine years, wondered why they would want to put me through this exam so I didn't do that exam. I didn't believe that an exam similar in nature to TOEFL exams would be representative of my skills as a teacher. That's why, just like many of my friends, I left my job. (HFI 1:002)

In the same way, she also talked about how in the other school, “the teacher always felt she

was being inspected” and how “the feeling that she is being inspected by someone above her was very discomfoting”.

Gamze is a teacher who wants to be independent in her decision-making. She realises that there are some school rules but she prefers it if the teachers were encouraged to use their creativity. She stated that her new school allowed her to be creative and this made her feel more ‘comfortable’.

I mean when I am coming, I am not like I am coming to school. When I come I first think of my students, not like, will the principal be at the door when I come, will he ask if I am there on time, check his watch. I had this feeling in the other schools but here what you do is more important. (HFI 1:120)

For me it is very comfortable. It's like an atmosphere I would like to work in. Your creativity is not hindered ... They give you the materials and they tell you to cook it, but the way you cook, everyone adds something, everyone adds some salt, some pepper, some spice. This is how it is. (HFI 1:084)

Her desire to make her own decisions can be seen in what she had to say about the more specific context of using the textbook (R: Researcher, G: Gamze).

R: To what extent do you use the textbooks?

G: We don't follow it very closely, ... I give the fifth page first, then I give the fourth page. It depends on my desire at that moment and the children's moods that day, if they are more active than my plan requires, then I prefer to teach the song first, so that they relax, or if I think that they are getting bored. (HFI 1:121-122)

At the time of data generation, Gamze had a two-year-old son. She saw her job of teaching young learners as an opportunity to help her in raising her own child. This seemed to create a lot of motivation on her part to find out about children and their characteristics. She said that this would help her to understand her own child when he reached the age of the children she was teaching (this issue is dealt with further in section 5.3.3).

Finally, Gamze seemed to view education as involving more than subject teaching. She stated, with a positive attitude, that the aim of her new school was to “give them [the students] some social and behaviour skills rather than just knowledge”.

5.3.2 A portrait of Gamze's school

Gamze's new school was particular in that the principal (also a language teacher) was keen on rigorously implementing the Primary Years Programme (a programme offered by the International Baccalaureate Organisation; henceforth PYP). The website for this programme introduces the PYP, as follows:

The Primary Years Programme (PYP), for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child, in the classroom but also in the world outside, through other environments where children learn. It offers a framework that meets children's several needs: academic, social, physical, emotional and cultural. (International Baccalaureate Organisation, no date)

Gamze's school was a pilot for this programme in Turkey and had been using the programme for a few years before my research took place. Gamze described aspects of this system in the interviews. Below is an example of what Gamze thinks of the PYP.

They have a system that they take as a guide, called the PYP system. They put the teachers through an orientation programme to get the teachers to use it ... They told me already that it is a system that is learned by experience. At the beginning I was a little nervous because everyone was talking about theoretical words. I saw that the things I thought I knew were expressed by different words. For example, when they describe the information list one teacher gives the other teacher as indication table, it seemed like a word in space. (HFI 1:056)

My observations in this school allowed me to observe several elements of the programme myself. In my view, the PYP 1) encouraged learner involvement (mainly through project-work), 2) encouraged learner creativity, 3) helped learners to become critical thinkers, and 4) encouraged sharing and thinking about others. One feature of this programme was that there were no bells to mark the breaks between lessons. This is an unusual feature for a school in Turkey.

As a requirement of the PYP, all the teachers were attending seminars regularly during my fieldwork period. The teachers were expected to implement everything they learned from the seminars and they were expected to do this in unison such that general school principles could be established. One of the ways in which these school principles were established were through what is referred to in the PYP as 'rubrics'. Gamze often used rubrics

in her lessons for class management purposes as well as in trying to establish a positive interaction between herself and her first grade students. In my first class observation, I noticed some rubrics hanging on the wall. They consisted of a list of criteria for the class (e.g., Let's not talk in class; let's warn our friends who talk in class). After the class I asked Gamze about these criteria and she said:

The classroom teachers have arranged those rubrics, for the children to evaluate themselves, according to how nicely they sit, they have set certain rules in the class, they make their own flowers according to those rules. We will actually make a rubric for English as well. (PO1:076)

Another feature of the PYP is that it involves parents in children's school work. The children are expected to demonstrate their work to their parents in the form of a portfolio presentation three or four times each school year.

According to Gamze's opinion, one physical characteristic of the school that might make the PYP function effectively was the limited number of students in one class. She also talked about the effect of their seating arrangement.

The classes consist of fifteen students, fifteen, sixteen. At most twenty. And because they put them in groups, it seems like they are fewer in number and more reachable. (HFI 1:052)

Seating, here it is more arranged towards doing group work, more towards doing projects, they sit in groups. ... Here from the beginning, when you go in, from beginning to end, I think, they sit in groups, in order to encourage sharing. (HFI 1:016)

A further physical characteristic that made Gamze's school different from the other schools I observed was the regular use of the overhead projector in lessons. She most commonly brought in the overhead projector when she planned to do project-work. The children would write their presentations on transparencies and each individual or group would get the chance to present their work on the overhead projector.

When they are learning to read and write they use the overhead here. In other schools, for example, there is no such thing. The reason is because the classes are only fifteen students here. (PO2:046)

An additional note in terms of the use of technology was that the video lessons were always conducted in the auditorium where there was a cine-vision system. The school included a number of such innovations that I had not witnessed in other schools I had been in contact with.

5.3.3 Gamze’s attitude towards teaching in primary school

Figure 5.15 presents an overview of all the statements Gamze made about her attitude towards teaching young learners.

When asked about her attitude towards teaching at primary school, Gamze stated that she had not chosen to teach young learners when she first came to this school, but that she accepted them as a responsibility. The reason for this not only had to do with her view that “a teacher should be able to teach all age groups”, but also because she ‘loved’ children and was a new mother.

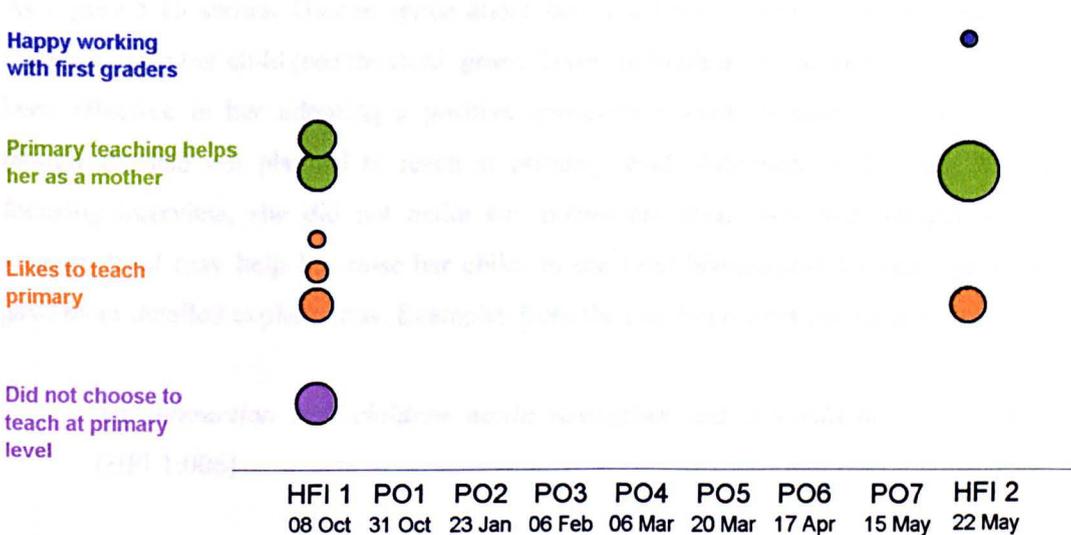


Figure 5.15: Gamze talking about her attitude towards teaching children

Gamze talked about how she liked teaching at primary level from the beginning of the year. In other words, she explained that she had not chosen to teach at primary (see the purple bubble in Figure 5.15), but at the same time, she felt happy to be teaching children (see the second, yellow ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.15). When she talked about the reasons why her new school made her ‘happy’, she seemed to go into more detail at the end of the year as compared to the beginning. Two excerpts, one from the first hierarchical focusing interview and the other from the final hierarchical focusing interview, are given below to exemplify the difference.

I am very happy to be working here, firstly, when I first came in, the structure

of the building was exactly like I had imagined. It is very pleasing in terms of being able to use my creativity. I am very happy with my friends. (HFI 1:090)

Here, of course one feels like they are at university. Like the children-you are a part of life, and plus you are not going to a school, you and the children are adding something to that life, together. I am in the teaching profession but I don't come here with salary worries, of course everyone has some salary worries in their own way, that's why they work, that's different but apart from that, I feel like I contribute something with the students. ... They [her new school] put more emphasis on how children transfer the behaviour and attitude and knowledge they learn to real life. This, of course, gives someone an enthusiasm to work. (HFI 2:011)

As Figure 5.15 shows, Gamze spoke about how teaching at primary level helped her as a mother raising her child (see the third, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.15). This may have been effective in her adopting a positive approach towards working with children, even though she had not planned to teach at primary level. Although, in the first hierarchical focusing interview, she did not make any comments about how she thought working at primary level may help her raise her child, in the final hierarchical focusing interview she gave more detailed explanations. Examples from the two interviews can be seen below.

My interaction with children would strengthen and it would help my child. (HFI 1:006)

Their approach to things, how little things make them happy, the feeling that my son will be able to do the same one day, this makes me happy. (HFI 1:094)

Because I love teaching, teaching young ones and older ones, for me there isn't any decrease or increase in the love or the desire but I saw that I got more emotional satisfaction with young ones, maybe because I am a mother, a new mother. As I said, that A. [her son] is going to be their age one day, to find out what kind of desires he will have. To know how I will behave when A. reacts to things in the same way these students do. This allows me to compare and it makes me look at them more objectively. (HFI 2:041)

Again, as can be noted from Figure 5.15 (see the blue bubble), at the end of the year, Gamze stated that she was happy to be working with her first grade class. Her attitude remained the same from the beginning of the year until the end. However, towards the end of the year she made more detailed comments about why she liked teaching at primary, how she thought teaching at primary level was good for her and why it made her 'happy', as can be seen from the above excerpts.

5.3.4 Differences between primary and high school teaching

In this section, I discuss the differences between older (high school) and younger (primary school) students, and teaching these two groups, that Gamze identified. The topics that are identified are combined with a frequency analysis of all the topics Gamze talked about, to arrive at the topics that will become subject to in-depth analysis in the next section.

Gamze only talked about her attitude towards teaching young learners in the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews. In both interviews, Gamze talked about the same differences. She did, however, mention that children's interests were different from her high school students' interests in the first, but not in the final, hierarchical focusing interview. The differences she mentioned had to do with 1) class management and how the children in her first grade class needed to be approached in a more delicate manner than her previous high school students, and 2) the activity types and how teaching in young learner classes revolved around more project-work compared to high school classes. Each of these is discussed in the following sections with supporting excerpts from the interviews.

Class management

In talking about class management, Gamze focused on the differences in how to talk to older learners and younger learners. She talked about the importance of taking into account the 'vulnerability' of young children. She also emphasised creating rapport with children by showing interest in their needs, their likes and dislikes and the general characteristics of their age. She provides a detailed account of her thoughts in the following excerpt.

Children in high school and children who are in first grade of course understand different things from the way you talk. ... Through experience, you should go into class knowing which age group will be embarrassed by what, or what they will find discomforting. Older students, whose personality is beginning to shape, take everything you say personally. In lower levels, when it's important to create that love bond, they think that you don't love them, and the other one thinks you are insulting him. The lower level can't interpret it as

you insulting them, their fear is that the teacher doesn't love me. That's why you have to talk very carefully. (HFI 2:033)

From what she says in the excerpt below, Gamze seems to feel it was more difficult to deal with her former high school students than her young students because the high school students were going through the period of puberty.

Students who are undergoing puberty are very difficult. I taught high school students literature, you can't compare their psychology and those of first grade children here for example. They thought they were grown-ups but actually they had very childish ideas and they can make out a different meaning from everything you say. You have to learn those. (HFI 1:020)

However, in the same interview, she also suggested that dealing with young learners was more of a sensitive issue. Her attitude towards children seemed to be more affectionate than towards her older students.

For example, you can get angry at high school students or you can protest at that moment in your way, 'I'm not giving it', or you threaten with grades. Of course there's nothing like that, it's wrong but you can react differently to them from how you react to children. With young children, the frown on his face reflects on me, how can I make him laugh, how can I make him happy, I feel this as a responsibility. (HFI 1:100)

Every stage has a different interaction, for example if I tried to create the interaction I create with first grades with older students that would be funny. They [older students] would say, are you talking to a kid. ... You are their friend but also their teacher and also because you are preparing them [older students] for real life, you need to approach them through more logic. ... Sometimes you need to talk real to them. (HFI 2:031)

In the excerpt below, Gamze seems to be making a clear separation between the job of teaching children and the job of teaching high school students. From what she says below, she seems to think that high school teachers are simply 'explainers' of the subject, whereas primary school teachers, in addition, have a responsibility to create an emotional bond with the children. She might also be suggesting that high school teachers should also communicate

with their students and create that bond.

There [at high school level] it's the job that is important, the act of teaching and learning. There, actually, if the teacher doesn't communicate with children who are going through puberty, or doesn't care about their problems, doesn't solve family problems to a certain extent, she's just someone who explains, not a teacher. Actually we are just explainers, like, if the child does not open up then I can't be a teacher, I mean in an environment where the act of learning does not take place, the teacher is not a teacher, just an explainer. I mean I can explain, I can explain to the wall but when you create some sort of communication with the child, when you form an emotional bond, then you become a teacher. Not everything is theoretical knowledge. Then the child opens up to you. (HFI 1:106)

Teaching activities: Use of project-work

Gamze pointed out that one of the main differences between teaching older and younger learners was that in high school the students' aim was to prepare for the university exam. This made the teaching more focused. Gamze commented on this in the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. The following quote reveals her reaction towards an exam-based education.

There [in her previous school] - firstly we were running against time, it was like a race, and there were exams, ... there was this directing the students towards exams. It was like a tradition ... because it was so exam-based, the children had exam stress. (HFI 1:040)

At the end of the year, she talked about how she felt about working in an environment where there was no exam stress for the students.

I mean at least I don't find myself in the stress of preparing an exam. I pay more attention to whether the child transfers what I have taught to real life or not. In my previous schools, I was more under pressure in terms of exams and grades, but the policy of our school is such that ... There's no worry over grades, and the children don't live this, neither do the teachers. (HFI 2:011)

In the following excerpt, Gamze describes the difference in terms of the types of activities

both groups would want to be engaged in.

The older ones, it's different of course, I mean teaching techniques is different because their age is different, their interests are different. If you say to them, using cardboard, describe an event that you have lived, the holiday you have had, they would answer by laughing and they would make fun. ... Because that's not their area of interest. I mean, to do it like colourful is childish for them. For them, maybe getting them to write a composition about the holiday they have had, making them feel that they are going to go on to some serious work is more appropriate. (HFI 1:098)

She seems to make the point that creating colourful projects, with the use of materials like cardboard, and crayons would be very childish for her previous high school students. In the same light, she feels that older learners would not want to do project-work as much as young learners. She explains this in the following excerpt, by claiming that 'colourful' activities are not appropriate for older learners.

When you are teaching older learners you do fewer projects, you use less colour because the older ones may think that lots of colour is not appropriate for their age, they turn a little bit more towards black or white. (HFI 2:029)

Frequency Analysis and Summary

The following is a frequency analysis to check how the above two topics, selected on the basis of what Gamze identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners, relate to the full range of topics Gamze talked about in the various interviews across the school year.

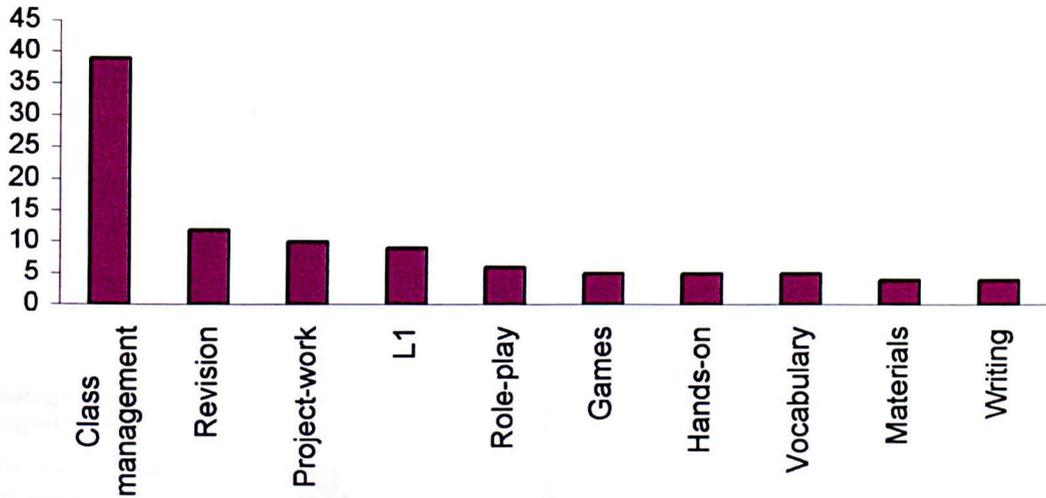


Figure 5.16: Frequency of statements in the ten topics Gamze talked about most

Figure 5.16 shows this analysis for the ten most frequently talked about topics. The vertical axis represents the number of statements made on each topic. The figure shows that of all the topics talked about by Gamze in the interviews, the two topics she had identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners were also two topics she spoke about very frequently. However, the analysis also shows that Gamze talked about ‘Revision’ and the ‘Use of L1’ quite frequently. Beyond this, the remaining topics seem to have been talked about less frequently. For this reason, both ‘Revision’ and ‘Use of L1’ have been included in the in-depth analysis.

Based on the differences identified by Gamze, between older and younger learners and teaching them, as well as the frequency analysis in Figure 5.16, the following topics were selected for in-depth analysis.

- class management;
- project-work;
- revision;
- use of L1.

In the next section, changes in Gamze’s approach to class management, project-work, revision and use of L1 are explored in-depth.

5.3.5 Changes and influences on changes

This section contains an in-depth exploration of the topics identified in the previous section. At this point, classroom observation data, documents and field notes are used, in addition to

the interview data.

Changes in Gamze's approach to class management

Figure 5.17 presents an overview of all the statements Gamze made about class management over the school year.

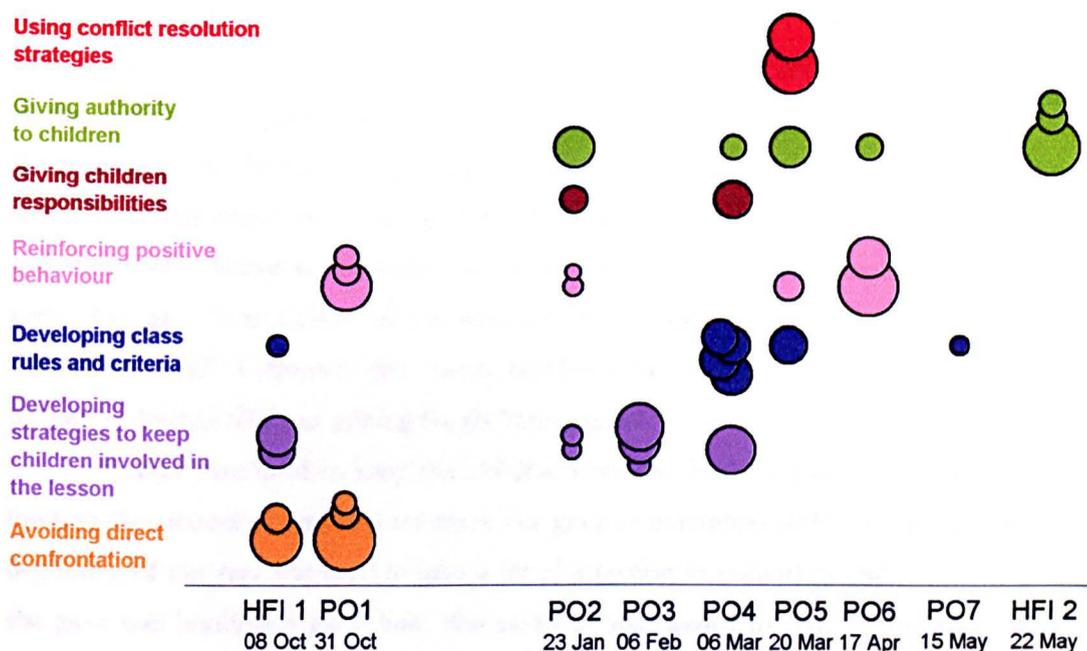


Figure 5.17: Gamze talking about class management

In the beginning of the year, Gamze tried to avoid situations that required direct confrontation with the children (see the first, yellow 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.17). One of the strategies she mentioned, initially, to avoid this kind of confrontation, was to make use of a puppet. She described the strategy in the following anecdote.

BB puppet. ... I told them there was a camera inside him and that he was watching them everyday from his keyhole. ... For example today, their classroom teacher tells me what they have done, like, this and this child was naughty and disrupted the class, I say immediately, BB has seen you, I watched from BB. In that way they don't get cross at me for anything, BB judges them.
(PO1:098)

Also in the beginning of the year, Gamze started developing strategies in which she could keep the children involved in the lesson (see the second, purple 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.17). One of her strategies was to keep changing the activities so that the children would not

get bored and she could keep their attention on the lesson. She also changed class management strategies often, which can be noticed from her remarks like, “ the smiley faces have lost their effect, that’s why I will find something new”.

Another way in which she managed to keep the children focused on the lesson was by trying to keep the noise level down and by keeping the children calm. One of the ways in which she did this was by not raising her own voice. My observations of her lessons also support this. She came across as a teacher who tried to solve problems by talking to children or by giving out signals rather than shouting or getting angry. In fact, based on my observation notes, she hardly showed any anger while in the classroom throughout the whole year. She talked about one instance where she came to the class to find them all disorganised and she simply waited at the door until all the children noticed her and went back to their seats. She said, “it is a class who is sensitive to this and because of that I did not prefer to warn them aloud”. I observed this lesson, and her strategy of going out and then coming back in had the desired effect of getting the children seated.

Gamze also tried to keep the children involved in the activities they were doing by limiting the amount of personal attention she gave to individual children. She said that in the beginning of the year she used to give a lot of attention to individual children. One example she gave was braiding a girls’ hair. She said that she needed to “put the distance, otherwise the whole lesson could pass with braiding hair”.

As Figure 5.17 shows, in the fourth post-observation interview, Gamze talked quite a lot about the class rules and the criteria she developed (see the third, blue ‘layer’ of bubbles). She developed these rules and criteria so that the children would behave appropriately in class. She was very careful about sharing these criteria with her students and also to get them to understand why they had these rules and criteria. However, she also suggested that she was not as strict about these rules. The following quote describes her feelings about this.

I mean it's of course important to stand up and sit down when the teacher comes but I hadn't specified that as a primary rule. It's a bit too harsh that for them, they have to do it but it's not like an important criterion. (PO4:028)

However, one of the class rules that Gamze thought was important had to do with the children raising their hands when they talked. She felt that if she was not strict about this rule, then the children started talking at the same time and this created a lot of noise.

Another class rule, which Gamze used when the children got noisy, was to lift her hand up and whoever saw her hand would stop talking and then raise their own hand. This continued until all the children raised their hands and the class was quiet. Gamze thought that

this class rule worked very well, and this is confirmed by my observations of her lessons where the children, in general, obeyed such rules.

Early in the year, Gamze began talking about how it was important to reinforce the positive behaviour of the children (see the fourth, pink 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.17). Her feelings about this can be seen in the following quotes.

Yes, yes, but usually there's smiling faces, we don't get frowning faces, in order to reinforce positive behaviour actually. (PO1:080)

It is important to praise positive behaviour rather than to always punish bad behavior, so that others model the good behavior. (PO6:007)

She used several methods for reinforcing positive behaviour, one of which was to use smiley faces, which she reported as being very effective with the children. In the fifth post-observation interview she introduced the idea of giving children stickers.

I will buy stickers, I will stick them on the students who behave well. I will see if that works. For a while I will try this. (PO5:020)

She seemed to see the sticker idea as a short-term plan as the following quote suggests (R: Researcher, G: Gamze).

R: When did you start the sticker?

G: Last week, not last week but the week before, I used them because I chose some example groups for the reading festival. But I hadn't chosen the individual ones, and this is to praise students who behave well students. But only for a few days because if I start buying stickers everyday I will go into a financial crisis (laughs). (PO6:023)

Following the stickers, Gamze started talking about using stars. Gamze mentioned how the star idea worked with a particularly 'difficult' child in her class.

And in the second lesson, N. [name of student] said, I behave like this but why don't I get a star, and started to compare herself. And this means that she has become aware of such a thing. (PO6:007)

Gamze also tried to keep the children who misbehaved under control by giving them some

extra responsibilities (see the fifth, brown 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.17). She talks about this in the following excerpt.

I keep it in my mind, which of my students are more perceptive towards this or that and I give them other responsibilities, I give them secret responsibilities.

(PO2:054)

Gamze often gave responsibilities to particular children who were very disruptive to the class environment. My observations of her lessons and my informal conversations with her suggested that she gave these children responsibilities like handing out books and going to the teacher's room to collect something for the teacher, so that the children would feel important and not try to attract attention by behaving disruptively.

In the beginning of February, Gamze began talking about giving some authority to the children (see the sixth, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.17). She praised the PYP for allowing students to have more say. In my observations of her lessons, as well as her behaviour towards the children out of class, I noticed that Gamze often tried to explain things to children. She did not just 'tell' students what to do, rather she gave them explanations for why she wanted them to act in a particular manner, or why they needed to do a specific activity. She also sometimes involved children in the decision making in her classes. One of the ways in which she did this was to involve them in developing criteria for their classroom behaviour. In the following excerpt, taken from the beginning of March, she talks about how she and her students established the criteria together.

We combined what I expect from them with what they think I should expect from them and we put together the criteria. (PO4:026)

Gamze asked her first grade students, when, for example, they should have a 'sticker day'. They all decided together and they then named a particular day as 'sticker day'. In this way Gamze did not have to bring stickers to class on other days and children did not complain when she did not because the decision was taken together. In the final hierarchical focusing interview, she commented on the influence of giving the students authority in their learning. The excerpts below reflect the change in her views on 'control' and authority'.

You are not the boss, you give them the authority as well, student authority is emphasised, it's that kind of an education system. It gives a chance to the student to have a word, not only the teacher. (PO5:048)

Not only teacher but also student authority, both is necessary for learning to take place. To be able to give the student a say in things, to ask them...establishing authority and giving them a chance to speak at the same time. (HFI 2:035)

Towards the end of the year, Gamze talked about something she had learned through PYP training which involved making 'cause-effect' inferences for 'conflict resolution'. An example of this can be seen in the following excerpt.

And another resolution method is cause and result, if you don't listen to me you won't understand the lesson, if you don't understand the lesson you won't be able to learn English, if you can't learn English your teacher would be upset, your teacher won't give you a good grade, if your teacher doesn't give you a good grade your mother will be upset, if your mother is upset she won't give you a present, if she doesn't buy a present and this goes on like that. You need to explain this with it's reasons to the child. (PO5:052)

Influences on the changes in Gamze's approach to class management

According to Gamze, the primary role of a teacher was to establish effective communication with her students. She said she was very adamant about this in her previous school and she seemed to carry on with the same attitude in her young learner class. She gave children choices, involved them in decision-making, used a lot of praise and she dealt with each child individually.

Gamze also tried to establish a good balance between being strict and having good interaction with the children. In order to get the children organised for learning, she developed a lot of class rules and criteria. These rules and criteria were commonly used by other teachers as well. This meant that Gamze might have been influenced by school rules and regulations in developing her own class rules and criteria.

One of the most visible changes in Gamze's class management was how she talked about giving the children authority at the end of the year. The PYP seminars she attended may have influenced the way she approached the issue of children having some say in the classroom environment, as allowing children some authority and some role in sharing the decision-making process was one of the elements of the PYP training that Gamze talked about frequently.

The following excerpt shows how Gamze was convinced that the PYP offered an effective education system for young children (see Section 5.3.2).

I would say it is a school that follows the Turkish education curriculum in a systematic way but alongside this I am working in a school, which I believe has reached European and American standards. (HFI 2:009)

Another influence on the changes Gamze made in how she managed her classroom seemed to have to do with her getting to 'know' about the children in her class. The fact that Gamze had a two-year-old son at the time may have had an effect on her willingness to find out about children's needs and their interests. She mentioned how she was happy that she had the opportunity to see what her child would do and how he would react to things when he reached the age of her students. She believed that she would be able to help her child better by having this experience as a primary school teacher.

Because I love teaching, teaching young ones and older ones, for me there isn't any decrease or increase in the love or the desire but I saw that I got more emotional satisfaction with young ones, maybe because I am a mother, a new mother. (HFI 2:041)

When asked what advice she would give to a teacher who was in her position the following year, she focused on the element of 'love' when teaching children.

Firstly try to form the love bond, I would say... I would tell her that to tie a student to her [the teacher's] lesson is actually to tie him [the student] to yourself by creating a love bond and to get them to like you. And to get them to like you and English. (HFI 2:055)

Gamze also showed change in how she began to talk about technical terms like conflict resolution strategies towards the end of the year. These strategies seemed to have been enforced by the school administration. Evidence for this is Gamze mentioning that classroom teachers were also using the same conflict resolution strategies in their classes. However, even before Gamze talked about using conflict resolution strategies, she seemed to be using the idea of conflict resolution without having 'learned' about it through the PYP seminars. Based on my observations, from the beginning of the school year, she gave the children the opportunity to share the decision-making with her and help her in creating criteria for 'good' behaviour. She told me that she gave children explanations for why she reacted to them in the ways she did, and encouraged them to reflect on their own actions and behaviour. This may

suggest that as a teacher, in general, she found it important to create a mature relationship with her students. Towards the end of the year, she talked about class management in a more 'professional' manner due to the terminology presented to her through the PYP training.

Gamze may have also learned some class management strategies from her colleagues. She talked about how she liked the atmosphere where she could share ideas with her colleagues and how everyone was open to each other about what they did. She expresses these feelings in the following excerpts.

It's very organised and in order to get people to reach each other there are frequent meetings and there's more sharing. ... They [her colleagues] don't say, I am doing this in my class, I will close my door so that my class learns better. There's nothing like this. (HFI 1:058)

And when I share something, my friends don't just listen to it but they say, you could do it this way or that way, there's a sharing of ideas, and this is very nice. Both positive and negative criticisms are made openly. (HFI 1:070)

In the same way as her being influenced by things she learned in seminars and what she heard from her colleagues, Gamze also seemed to take pride in having influenced the classroom teacher (of her first grade class). She said that the classroom teacher began to use a display system that Gamze had created (which was putting a string from one wall to the other and hanging the projects like one would hang clothes on a line) when they had run out of wall space.

Changes in Gamze's approach to project-work

In my observations of her first grade class, I noticed that Gamze got her young students to prepare projects very often. She also talked about using project-work in her first grade classes throughout the school year. Figure 5.18 represents an overview of the statements Gamze made about using project-work in her lessons over the school year.

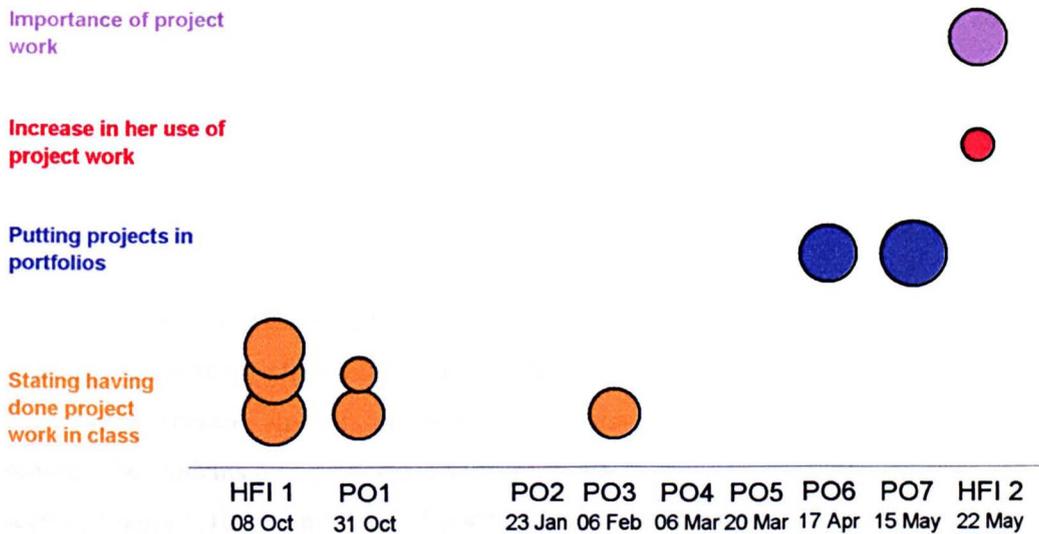


Figure 5.18: Gamze talking about project-work

From what Gamze said about her high school experience, it appears that she tried to create some projects for her students there as well but this was not a common procedure among her high school colleagues. According to Gamze, teachers in her old school were simply expected to follow the textbook. However, Gamze said she did some activities that were not in the textbook “so that what the students learned would settle”. The excerpt below exemplifies her understanding of the word ‘project’ in the high school context (G: Gamze, R: Researcher).

G: Yes, of course we had a specific textbook. I would take the textbook as a base and do projects that I created on my own, projects.

R: Can you give some examples of those projects?

G: Let's say-describe a holiday you have had, describe with pictures, erm, write a story. (HFI 1:032-034)

Figure 5.18 shows that Gamze talked, consistently over the school year, about how she involved children in project-work in her lessons and my observations of her lessons support this (see the first, yellow ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.18). One example of what she referred to as project-work in her first grade class was getting the children to make objects out of play-doh. These objects belonged to a vocabulary group she wanted to teach them, namely, classroom objects. She seemed to have a very clear conceptualisation about what project-work was and she shared this with her students. The excerpt below reflects her understanding of project-work (R: Researcher, G: Gamze).

R: So your plan for today was the play-doh.

G: Yes. And in this way, because it was the first real project we did, so I told them what a project is, what is done in projects, what is important, and in between we also talked about sharing and all. (PO1:010)

Other examples of what she called project-work during the year were: 1) getting students working as a group to prepare a menu consisting of their favourite food, writing this on transparencies and presenting this to the rest of the class on the overhead projector, and 2) creating animal shapes from play-doh to be displayed in the class later on.

The projects students did were always displayed on walls or in other parts of the school. The students also prepared portfolios in which they included their projects. As can be seen in Figure 5.18, the mention of portfolios appeared towards the end of the year (see the blue bubbles). Using portfolios was a school policy and it was a component of the PYP. The students would collect some of their favourite or most successful projects in their portfolio and present this to their families every month. Gamze may have felt the pressure to do project-work because, as she put it in the quote below, she wanted them to have something to put in their portfolios.

So that they have a project to put in their portfolio, I handed out transparencies and they listed the food names they learned. (PO6:003)

At the end of the year, Gamze stated that she had begun to use more projects (see the red bubble in Figure 5.18). In the last interview, she talked about the importance of project-work and what made it different from other teaching techniques (see the purple bubble in Figure 5.18).

More based on project, tasks they can apply to daily life, the aim is not to teach grammar, the aim is how they will use the two words they have learned in their daily life. It's important for me that they reflect all their inner world in their work. (HFI 2:043)

Although there were quite a few instances in which Gamze talked about doing project-work in the beginning of the year, only towards the end of the year did she talk about the importance of project-work for children.

Influences on the changes in Gamze's approach to project-work

The main influence on changes in Gamze's use of project-work seemed to be the school itself. In other words, it seemed that she used project-work in her young learner classes because this was what was done in the whole school. When talking of the PYP she related her use of project-work directly to this system, saying, "it [PYP] has of course influenced my teaching techniques, more project-work has been added to it". She was happy that her school supported these kinds of activities.

I mean, I could, on my own, get them to do projects but I am happy to work in a school that has its whole education system based on projects. (HFI 2:003)

Children adapting what they learn to their daily life but apart from this of course, no bells, things that our school has employed which are appropriate to the PYP programme, like changes in behaviour and attitude. Of course this has influenced my own life. (HFI 2:007)

Although Gamze seemed to be using project-work mainly because this is what the curriculum requires, she also seemed to have a positive attitude towards using projects in her class. Furthermore, she seemed to believe in their use for the children's learning. She even characterises herself as a teacher who does project-work, as can be seen in the excerpt below.

What kind of a teacher am I? Based on project-work, likes talking, aims to teach English by talking, if this is the type of teacher I identify myself as, I take this and try to use it in the class as much as possible but of course my main objective is what the school aims to do. ... Here, the objective is the same, everyone runs towards the same objective, the paths are also given to us. The creativity you will use on those paths belongs to you. (HFI 1:060)

Gamze also talked about a portfolio system toward the end of the year. Although this was a PYP procedure used within the whole school, she only began talking about it towards the end of the year. This may have to do with the increase in project-work towards the end of the year, when these projects were placed in portfolios to be presented to parents.

Gamze's positive attitude towards using projects and portfolios might also stem from her willingness to learn new things. She seemed genuinely excited by the new information she gained through the PYP seminars, and she often tried out new things in her lessons.

To work in a new system, to work in a new school begins the process of change in you anyway, also to work in a small school starts some changes, to work in a class of fifteen as well, you can deal with every individual one by one. PYP has a lot of influence, to learn a new system, to be learning it begins to change you. You try to keep in step with the system and you change in this way, not changing, I don't want to say change, but to add to myself. (HFI 2:047)

In her comments about her own development as a teacher, Gamze seemed to be positive towards learning new things. The following quotes represent her feelings towards self-development.

I would learn new things and because I wanted to add to my own abilities I am happy now. I learn something new each day, I refresh my old knowledge, I build on new things to that. (HFI 1:006)

I mean, it's very nice to be learning together with the students. I mean in this school I feel like a university student. We are constantly in a learning process, no one says, I know this very well. (PO2:064)

I am feeling the happiness of learning new things. At least, I am adding to myself, I am adding my CV a new attribute, I learned this as well. I am a part of a new system. (HFI 2:005)

Changes in Gamze's approach to using L1

In many of the interviews, Gamze mentioned that she used L1 in her young learner classes. Figure 5.19 provides an overview of all the statements Gamze made about using L1 in her classes over the school year.

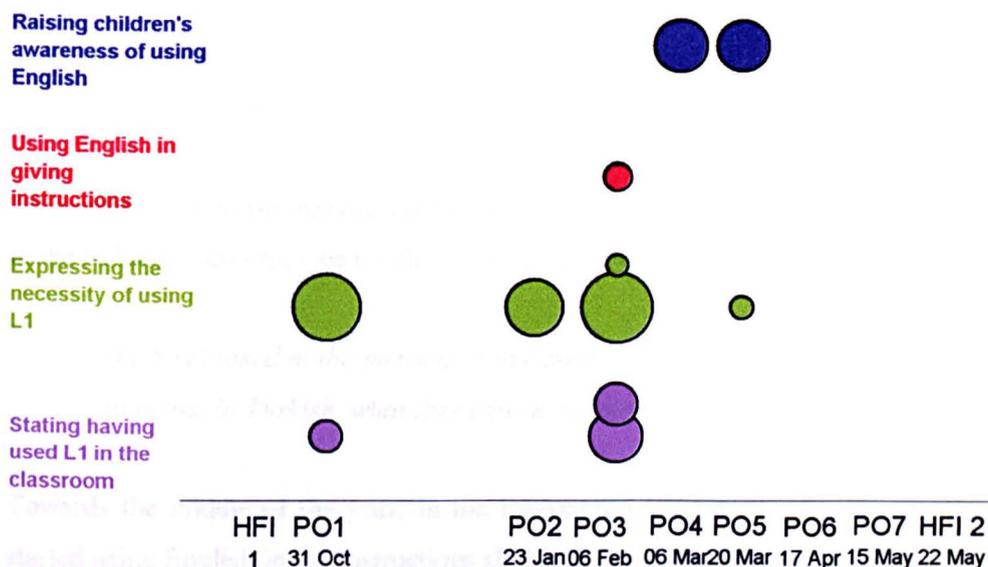


Figure 5.19: Gamze talking about using L1

As can be noted from Figure 5.19, Gamze talked extensively, especially in the first three post-observation interviews, about the necessity of using Turkish in her young learner classes (see the second, green ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.19). An example of this is provided in the following excerpt.

Here, our white mouse's name is this, and this is our black mouse, they go to this and that place, that's how I explain it. I explain in Turkish of course, or else they wouldn't be able to make the connections and they would get bored. And then when I get them to listen to the English they laugh, they like it.
(PO1:110)

Gamze felt that if she did not explain, for example, a listening text, in Turkish before the children listened to it, the children would not be able to understand the English and they would get bored. So, it appears that Gamze was trying to use Turkish for the purpose of keeping children’s interest in the activity. She also did not feel it was a good idea to use a lot of English at the stage when children were trying to get used to the school environment. As they were only in first grade, she seemed to be thinking that although she wanted to use English she could offer the children emotional support by speaking in Turkish. Her feelings are expressed in the following quote.

Of course in the first grades you may be forced to speak Turkish. You can give the commands in English but in most cases you are in a difficult situation, when you can't explain to them because they are getting used to the school psychologically. (PO2:052)

An example of Gamze making statements about using L1 in her first grade class can be seen in the following excerpt (see the first, purple 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.19).

We had looked at the pictures in our books with the children and I wanted them to guess, in Turkish, what they saw in the pictures. (PO3:004)

Towards the middle of the year, in the beginning of February, Gamze mentioned that she started using English in the instructions she gave to the children (see the red bubble in Figure 5.19). In the excerpt below, taken from the third post-observation interview, Gamze does not seem to agree with the school administration's request that teachers use English with their students. She still thinks that the children are too young to be spoken to in English, but she suggests that she use English only for giving some 'commands' or instructions.

Now, in the lesson, in first grade, I mean how am I supposed to say the rules in English to them? I say things like, 'now we are playing a game' and all the PYP messages in Turkish but sometimes in the commands I want to give I use English. Maybe I will start using it more in the second semester but they are still too young for that. (PO3:072)

Both in the beginning and at the end of March, Gamze began to talk about ways in which she could communicate to her students that talking in Turkish in English classes would not continue much longer, thereby trying to raise her students' awareness of the need for using English (see the fourth, blue 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.19).

The children, of course, don't know English well, so there are certain instructions that are impossible for them to understand, I use Turkish but it is important to get them to understand that our aim is no Turkish. (PO5:024)

Influences on the changes in Gamze's approach to using L1

One reason for Gamze to use Turkish in the beginning of the year may have been her understanding of the need for support of the children in her class. Her opinion was that "you

have to support the first grades more”. She felt that children, especially those who had just started school were more vulnerable because they had just left their home environment, and that they would need a lot of support from the teacher. She explains this in the following quote.

It's important to take care of the young children, especially for kindergarten and first grade children. Having just left their mother's lap they ask themselves the question, where are we, who are these people, why are they here.

(HFI 1:104)

She added that when a teacher forms “an emotional bond” then they “become a teacher”. She said she tried to support her students’ understanding by using a lot of gestures, miming and also some visual aids like flashcards whenever she used English so that they do not feel lost and insecure. Using L1 may have been another way Gamze thought she could support the children’s understanding, make them feel more secure, and create that “emotional bond”.

Gamze’s decision to make the children in her first class aware that they would need to, at some point, get used to a ‘no Turkish’ rule in the school may have had to do with school policy that she needed to follow. She said, “I use Turkish but it is important to get them to understand that our aim is **no Turkish**”. In this above statement, “our aim” possibly refers to the school’s aim. Gamze may have attended department meetings where teachers were told to speak as little Turkish as possible. Gamze often talked about how, whatever was decided as a common practice, the whole school was expected to implement it.

Changes in Gamze’s approach to revision

A further issue that Gamze talked about often during the school year was revision. Figure 5.20 provides an overview of the statements Gamze made about revision over this period.

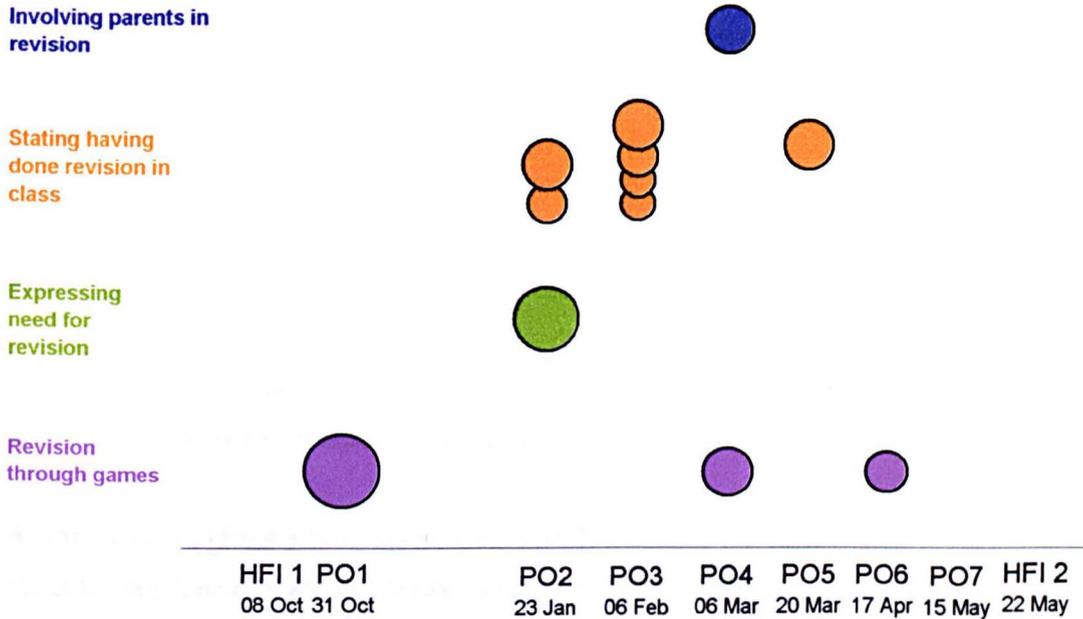


Figure 5.20: Gamze talking about revision

Gamze started talking about revision very early in the year. As can be noted from Figure 5.20, from the beginning of the year, Gamze seemed to make use of game-like activities to get children to revise what they been taught (see the first, purple ‘layer’ of bubbles). Examples of this can be seen in the following excerpts.

*I put a notebook in front of me, and those **classroom objects**, first I asked them and then without them looking I dropped them and they guessed what it was. ... It is good to review them in this way. (PO1:062)*

While I was showing the flashcards I was holding behind my back, I gave them the opportunity to get excited, to give them a few chances to say the right guess, and while they were guessing out loud, they reviewed the others in their mind and then they said what they were. If I had only put the chocolate flashcard and asked what the chocolate picture was, I would have got only one answer but by getting them to guess I got them to review many items at one go and I tested how much the students knew and had learned. (PO6:007)

Note that the two excerpts above are from early in the year (the first one) and late in the year (the second one). It seems that Gamze was more elaborate in her explanation of the game she

used for revising vocabulary at the end of the year as compared to how she described the game she used in the beginning of the year. That is, she seems to be talking in more detail about the activities she did as the year progressed, reflecting, later in the year, more on the responses she might get from children while planning the activity.

Towards the middle of the year, Gamze talked about how she felt she needed to do revision with children, especially with vocabulary. She expressed her thoughts in the following quote (see the green bubble in Figure 5.20).

Like from time to time if I feel that it is necessary, when I am teaching vocabulary for example, I need to revise. (PO2:056)

As can be seen in Figure 5.20, again in the middle stages of the year, Gamze made statements about having done revision in her first grade classes (see the third, yellow 'layer' of bubbles). These were descriptive statements like, "They didn't see it for the first time, they were doing revision. They learned them yesterday". She made a number of these statements in the second and third post-observation interviews, which may suggest that she focused on revision a lot at this time of year.

In March, Gamze talked about how helpful it would be if the children's parents could help them revise what they learned at home (see the blue bubble in Figure 5.20). The background for this was her observation that even though she asked children to review what they had learned they did not always do this. She seemed to want to involve the parents to improve this situation.

Some children still haven't reviewed, at home, even though I gave them, at least they could give to their mothers and review with them. (PO4:014)

In sum, Gamze seemed to gradually emphasise revision more and more over the year, talking about the need for doing revision so that children would not forget what they had been taught, and also wanting to involve parents in children's revision so that the children could do more revision when they were at home.

Influences on the changes in Gamze's approach to revision

In her interviews, Gamze made remarks about how she had noticed that the children in her class forgot what she had taught them quickly, and that this was the main reason for why she focused on revision. She was fairly consistent throughout the year in trying to make use of games as an indirect way of getting the children to revise what they had learned. She may

have felt that the methods she used for revision were effective, leading her to use similar strategies throughout the year.

The main influence on Gamze's gradually increasing attention to revision may have to do with her getting to understand how the children in her class learn. That is, in my observations of her lessons, she used a lot of revision in indirect ways. In one lesson she mentioned that she turned on some songs for the children to listen to while they were doing individual work. She did this so that the children could revise vocabulary while they were working on colouring or cutting and pasting.

Towards the end of the year Gamze talked about involving parents in revision. This may have been a result of her developing understanding of the role of different stakeholders, or participants, in supporting children's learning. In the following excerpt she talks about the united effort of the English language teacher, the classroom teacher and the parent in the children's learning.

It is not sufficient for me to tell them to bring their play-doh. Their classroom teacher has to tell them at the same time and I need to get them to write it in their notebooks, maybe their mothers would see it and put it in their school bags. (PO1:014)

5.3.6 Summary

This section looked at the changes in Gamze's approach to class management, use of project-work, use of L1 and approach to revision in her first grade class over the period of a school year. The main influences for Gamze over the one year she taught young learners seemed to be the PYP which was rigorously followed by all the teachers, and which had "influenced her own life", her understanding of the children's needs, her willingness to learn new things and being open to new ideas. She was especially happy about being able to share ideas with other teachers.

Over the school year Gamze gradually developed ways of reinforcing positive behaviour and new class rules and criteria. She also changed her class management by giving the children responsibilities and including the children in decision-making.

Gamze used a lot of project-work throughout the school year. Later in the year she introduced the notion of portfolios and collecting the projects the children did in these portfolios. At the very end of the year she stated that there was an increase in her use of project-work and she made comments about the importance of engaging the children in such project-work.

Gamze started the year talking about the necessity to use L1 in her first grade

classroom. However, at the end of the year she mentioned how she tried to get the children to understand that the aim of the school was to not use L1 at all during lessons.

Gamze's approach to revision showed slight changes in that she focused more on revision over the school year. In addition to talking about doing revision, she also talked about the need for revision for the children's learning and made remarks about parents getting involved in doing some revision with their children at home.

To bring together all that has been presented regarding Gamze's change process in her first year of teaching children, and in an attempt to answer the first and second research questions, the following points can be made:

The areas in which Gamze showed change over the school year are:

- class management;
- project-work;
- use of L1;
- revision.

The changes in her **class management** were:

- developing strategies to keep the children involved in the lesson;
- developing class rules and criteria;
- developing ways of reinforcing positive behaviour in children;
- giving children responsibilities;
- giving children more authority;
- making more use of PYP principles such as conflict resolution strategies.

The possible explanations for these changes are:

- the influence of PYP training;
- her recognition of children's needs and interests;
- being a mother of a young child herself;
- her interaction with colleagues and their support.

The changes in her **use of project-work** mainly happened in the way she:

- stated there was an increase in her use of project-work;
- talked about the importance of doing project-work;
- talked about using a portfolio system for the projects.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- the influence of PYP training;

- school policy;
- her willingness to try new things.

The changes in her use of L1 were:

- using English to give instructions;
- raising children's awareness of a 'no Turkish' policy in the school.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her recognition of the needs of the children in her class;
- school policy.

The changes in her approach to revision happened in the way she:

- talked about the need for revision for children's learning;
- involved parents in helping their children revise.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned.

5.4 Tomris

5.4.1 A portrait of Tomris

At the time when I was conducting my fieldwork, Tomris was 30 years old. She had studied to become an English language teacher. However, after graduating she did not work as a teacher, instead she started working in 'public relations'. After five years in 'public relations' she decided to "try" teaching. She taught English to adult students in a language school for one year and then, as I started the fieldwork, changed her teaching context to primary school. In her new primary school she was assigned to teach at two levels; she had a third grade class and a fifth grade class. I observed her third grade class since they were younger than her fifth grade class. The reasons for choosing the younger class are explained in section 4.4.2.

Tomris did not explain why she did not begin teaching straight after university. However, in her interviews, she often mentioned that she was happy to begin teaching and that she had finally "found her profession".

Her initial choice of studying to become an English language teacher was based on her childhood. She explained this saying:

When I was in primary school I would say, in the future I will be an English language teacher, ... my two aunts were English language teachers and I was

envious when I was a kid. (HFI 1:002)

Tomris emphasised, on a few occasions, that she did not do this job for money. She described herself as an “idealistic” person. She also stated that her “career plans were not so important”. She describes her emotions about teaching in the following excerpt.

The minute I enter the classroom everything becomes different, I forget everything, my biggest problems. ... I realised that I am happy with my life, I have certain problems but the most important thing for me is my job. My job takes up three fourth of my life anyway, everything is great. (HFI 2:002)

Her reason for starting to work in her new school was to make a change in her life.

I am a person who likes taking risks, I mean coming to this school, everything was a risk because I was happy with my other job, but I had to change certain things in my life, I needed to make a start somewhere and at thirty years of age I made this decision. (HFI 2:054)

Tomris did not get any young learner training before she started her new job. She was particularly excited about the training opportunities her new school provided her. She pointed out that she wanted to develop herself further in the area of NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming; one of the areas that the teachers in her school got training in). She found the training useful as she could use what she learned in her own teaching. She describes this in the following quote.

Now there's a new topic, interaction, we will learn interaction for eight weeks. Also we learn by living it, otherwise nothing stays in our heads, they show us and we use what we see in our classes, that's really nice. (HFI 1:086)

The school Tomris worked in also provided PYP training, and in addition, Tomris attended some publishers' young learners seminars. This is described in the next section.

At the end of the year she commented on the importance of experience, saying that a teacher could read as much theory as he/she wanted but if they did not go into the classroom it would not be the same.

There were quite a few instances where Tomris criticised herself about her teaching. These comments were usually made after a lesson that I had observed. Two examples of her

self-criticism can be seen in the following excerpts.

There's a problem like that with me in general, I can't accept that my students are young, I mean I feel like they have to understand everything. If I can accept that they are children the problem will be solved. I act as if they are adults sometimes. I get angry at myself. (PO3:085)

This is my general fault, I do it a lot, I extend the warm-up part of the lesson way too much. ... I really need more class management, I know I have a lot of things I don't know about that, I just go on and on a lot, if I could pull it [the lesson] together I believe that we will be able to go faster with our lessons. (PO4:032)

Tomris seemed to be a very active person, and this showed from the way she took on a lot of responsibility in addition to teaching her classes. She commented that the administrators in her new school had realised that she was a very active person, and therefore often said, "Tomris, you can do this." This led to Tomris having to do a lot of work. Although she sometimes complained about this, my impression was that she seemed happy to have all these responsibilities. In one interview she mentioned that although she got quite tired she was happy.

Tomris showed many characteristics of a confident person. Although it was her first year of teaching young learners, she was at ease with having the head of department observe her classes. In fact, she once mentioned that she asked the head of department to come and observe her class so that she could give Tomris feedback about her teaching.

5.4.2 A portrait of Tomris' School

The school Tomris started to work in was founded only two years before the fieldwork began. Tomris describes some physical characteristics of the school in the following excerpt.

Our school, although we have three hundred students there are seventy four classrooms, it's a school that can hold up to one thousand five hundred students. There's a big difference between this school and other schools I see, this school looks like a school. I mean really, in terms of architecture, in terms of investment it's a great school, it can endure against earthquakes, an earthquake of ten. It has a lot of characteristics actually. (HFI 2:010)

She also mentions that the school has a conservative aspect in the following excerpt.

This school is also a bit of a conservative school, like Christmas, there's a topic about special days like that, like Thanksgiving, they [the students] say, what are these, why are we celebrating Christmas, Christmas is not that, it's not that, I mean when you say something wrong there's problems. (PO4:028)

When asked about the student profile, Tomris explained that the parents of the students were not very 'educated' but that "thankfully they want their children to be a little educated". She also described the parents as being "rich", but that the students did not "have this spoiled from money attitude".

A further aspect of the school was that it provided training for its teachers. Tomris felt that "teacher development can only happen in private schools" and that "all the private schools are a step for teachers to develop themselves". She was particularly happy about the training offered. She expressed her feelings as follows:

I compare my situation now with the old times, when I was a student in high school, and our school was one of the top schools of our times, there weren't really any more private schools then. First, it's the education system, I mean I have realised that we were behind, I learned that the teachers are actually hungry for certain things, and this school showed me this. That the school has few teachers and that it invests in its teachers has taught me a lot of things. ... I think I am one of the more lucky ones [teachers] in this respect. (HFI 2:006)

In Tomris' school, the main training took place through the PYP (Primary Years Programme), an International Baccalaureate programme that the school was integrating into its system (same as in Gamze's school; see details of the programme in Section 5.3.2). The PYP training occurred systematically throughout the school year. Tomris talked about the PYP in detail. She seemed to agree with its philosophy and tried to use it in her own classes as best as she could. She described the PYP in the following quote.

We have a curriculum programme called PYP. Our curriculum depends on the Ministry of Education as well as on PYP. ... This is a programme where the student thinks, the teacher is only a guide, only and only a guide, where the students learn on their own, that is it's a system they learn how to learn. It's a system where the teacher is in the background as much as possible, research

work is given to students and the students' creativity is emphasised more.

(HFI 2:018)

The school also offered some courses for parents on “family education”. This was integrated within the PYP.

In addition to the PYP training, Tomris' school offered the teachers courses in a personal development programme called Neuro Linguistic Programming (henceforth NLP). These NLP courses were offered as one-off seminars during a two month period in the middle of the school year. During this period, Tomris made a number of comments about how these courses had helped her develop as a person and as a teacher.

Tomris mentioned that the school had won several awards in Istanbul (she did not specify what type of awards), mostly associated with the school's Science department. She also added that her school “came second in Istanbul for how well the PYP was applied”. She commented that although they were a new school they “got really good feedback” from parents.

5.4.3 Tomris' attitude towards teaching in primary school

In this section, I look at how Tomris' attitude towards teaching primary school children changed over a year of working with them. In both the first and the final hierarchical focusing interviews, Tomris was explicitly asked a question about her feelings towards teaching children (see Appendix C and D). Tomris also talked about her feelings towards teaching children in some post-observation interviews, without being prompted.

Figure 5.21 presents an overview of all the statements Tomris made about her attitude towards teaching at primary level.

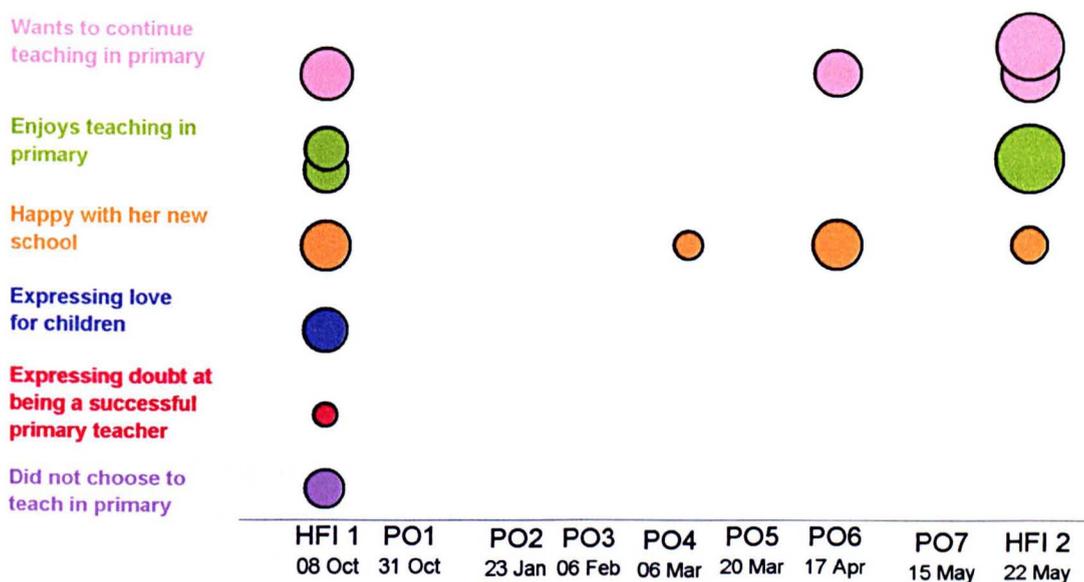


Figure 5.21: Tomris talking about her attitude towards teaching children

In the beginning of the year, Tomris pointed out that she had not chosen to teach young learners in her new school (see the first, purple ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.21). She said it was the decision of their head of department that she teach the third and fifth grades. However, also at the beginning of the year, she stated that she was “proud of her decision” to change schools, that “everything was going great” and that she was “very happy with her life” (see the green bubbles in Figure 5.21). These statements may suggest that Tomris started off teaching children with a positive attitude.

Tomris expressed some doubt in the beginning of the year about whether she was a suitable teacher for primary level or not (see the red bubble in Figure 5.21). Again, in the first hierarchical focusing interview, she talked about how she was “a person who didn't like children so much” until she started working in her new school. She commented that she was saying to herself, “either I will hate children altogether, or I'll love them” and added that her feelings now were that she “loved children” (see the blue bubble in Figure 5.21).

In the first hierarchical focusing interview, as well as later in the year, Tomris said that it had been nice to work in the language school but not as nice as working in her new school (see the fourth, yellow ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.21). The following is what she had to say.

I always say this, here, I mean maybe it is something to do with the institution as well, it's very different to be a part of an institution.. There you're more free, you don't need to report to anyone, it's much more comfortable [at her previous language school] but here it's very different. (HFI 1:034)

It appears that Tomris found the culture of the primary school to be very different from the culture of a language school. In a few instances she mentioned that being part of a primary school led her to take on more responsibility and that this gave her the feeling of “being a member of a family”. Later in the year, Tomris was still very enthusiastic about teaching in her new school. In an interview in April (see the yellow bubbles), she said that she was “really learning a lot”. She went on to explain this in the excerpt below.

I don't think I will be able to learn a lot in big schools. I mean everything, I learn management as well. I do everything, that's nice. I can show myself here. I mean I don't know, I am also happy here. I am really happy. (PO6:006)

As can be noted from Figure 5.21, on four occasions, Tomris expressed her desire to continue teaching her third grade class in the following year (see the sixth, pink ‘layer’ of bubbles). She did not like the idea of a change of teacher for her class in the following year, saying that the children had “got used to her”. She had already, in the first hierarchical focusing interview, emphasised that if she stayed in this school, she would like to teach younger children. She said:

I am not considering teaching higher levels for now. ... That's why definitely younger children, I mean I am not thinking of going to higher levels again. (HFI 1:006)

In the final hierarchical focusing interview, she seemed determined not to teach older learners any more (see the pink bubbles in Figure 5.21). The excerpt below describes her sentiment.

Even if I come to class in the morning having cried all night, the electricity I get from them is so different, it feels like I will never get old, thanks to them. ... And especially young learners, I told my head of department, I don't think of going to any other level. I see what our other teachers go through in high school. I want to continue like this, I don't want to go further up. I am very happy... I am incredibly happy with my life. (HFI 2:002)

The excerpt below, also taken from the final hierarchical focusing interview, shows how much Tomris enjoys teaching primary (see the green bubbles in Figure 5.21).

I do everything with joy. I mean like preparing those activities, running around, rehearsals, everything is fun. I mean it reflects on my development completely because I don't do it as a job, I do something I like very much and on top of that I get paid for it. I really don't think of this as a job, because it's not a job. Just to get something back from them, to feel that they have learned something, that's it, I can be happy for a year with that. (HFI 2:004)

5.4.4 Differences between teaching primary school and adult students

In this section, I discuss the differences that Tomris identified between teaching older (language school) and younger (primary school) students. The topics that are identified are combined with a frequency analysis of all the topics Tomris talked about over the school year, to arrive at the topics that will become subject to in-depth analysis in the next section.

Tomris was asked about what she thought the differences between teaching adult learners and young children were in both the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews. She pointed out, more or less, the same differences between adult learners and children and teaching them in the first and final hierarchical focusing interviews.

In both the first and the final hierarchical focusing interviews, the differences between adult learners and primary school children that Tomris pointed out were 1) the need to prepare and use extra materials in young learner classes, 2) the need to spend more time on class management in young learner classes, 3) that she used more songs and games in young learner classes, and 4) the teaching of grammar could not be done in the same way in adult and young learner classes. Each of these is discussed in this section with supporting excerpts from the interviews.

Extra materials

Tomris expressed a need to use more extra materials in her primary school classes as compared to her language classes. She said that in her previous language school she “was going according to the textbook” and that she did not feel any need to find extra materials in addition to the textbook. This was mainly because in her previous teaching context she had never been asked or told to do anything with extra materials. All that she was responsible for was following the textbook she was assigned. In addition, she complained about not having been taught anything about young learners when she was training to become an English language teacher. She seems to also hold this responsible for why she did not know that she should make use of extra materials. She explains this in the following excerpt.

I was going according to the book there, I didn't know I had to find extra materials and activities. I mean we had methodology courses but no one told us anything about young learners. (HFI 2:038)

She then goes on to say that at primary level, she felt that it was not enough to just follow the textbook. She felt a need to support the textbook activities with colourful materials. She stated that the more variety of activities and materials the teacher could bring to the classroom, the better it was for increasing children's motivation towards learning English.

Class management

One of the biggest differences Tomris mentioned between adults and children was that children did not have “a sense of responsibility in them”. She found this to be an important influence on her management of their behaviour. She said that her adult students had their families and jobs. She claimed that in the same way they were responsible for their families, they also showed responsibility when it came to learning English. She explains this in the following excerpt.

The young classes have no responsibility, they don't have any responsibility on anything, notebooks, books, nothing. The others [adult students], some of them have families, they show the same responsibility for their lessons as they show for other things in life. I mean you give them homework and they come having done their homework, everything works out smoothly. (HFI 1:074)

Due to the sense of responsibility her adult learners had and the money they paid, Tomris said that she did not experience any class management problems with them. She said they were “people with certain goals” and they “didn't have issues like trying to fool around in class”. She explained this in the following excerpt.

There's even no need for class management there, the others [the other students] make that happen. If someone does something, they say 'What are you doing, we gave money for this', that's why I didn't have any problems in that area. (HFI 1:028)

She said that she “never turned around and said, 'please be quiet' to anyone” and in contrast to that she was “having a difficult time with the young children”. She thought that the children in her class “did not care” because they were not paying for their education themselves, it was

the families who were paying, so it was difficult for them to take any responsibility.

Language teaching activities: use of songs

In Tomris' words, one of the main differences between teaching methods across the two levels was that in primary, "you have to create activities". She commented on how she could not use songs in her language school classes. She explains this in the following excerpt.

You have to give lots of things at the same time there. You can't do anything with songs. It's not really appropriate to teach a man who is fifty-five years old the days, Monday, Tuesday with a song. (HFI 1:076)

It seems as though the reason why Tomris did not make use of songs was because it was not appropriate in terms of the adult learners' age, and also because she had to teach a lot of language content; possibly much more than at primary level and this did not leave much time for activities like songs.

Teaching of grammar

Tomris mentioned that when teaching adults she did not use any activities, that the teaching was more "grammar-based", and that it did not encourage the learners to do any "research" on their own about a topic. Tomris said that she was a "teacher like a teacher" in her old setting. The way she described this was by saying that she "wanted to be a serious teacher, like by giving some grammar and phrases". She said that this was not the case in her new school. Her own account of the differences can be seen in the following excerpt.

The differences are that with adults, ... I did not do activities. It was more grammar based because they had goals. They wanted to learn English in as short time as possible and to use this in their day lives. But younger students, they have a long time in front of them, they learn without even knowing why they are learning it. ... I mainly gave them [adults] handouts, worksheets but I couldn't sing a song with the adults for example, but if they gave me adults again now I would do that [do songs]. (HFI 2:028)

Her experience of teaching adults was in a language course where the adults were mainly business people or university students. She stated, on a few occasions, that they had to cover a lot of ground in a short time mainly because the learners had paid for this and were expecting quick results in terms of language learning.

In her first hierarchical focusing interview, Tomris made a lot of comments about how differently adults and children learned languages. She thought that “the best thing in lower levels” was that the children “took whatever you gave them”. She used the expression “take it” five or six times in that same interview. What she meant by this phrase became clear when she said, “Whatever you give them they learn it, I mean they are ready to take it”. She did not use this expression at all in the final hierarchical focusing interview, which may suggest that she may have gradually changed her understanding of how the children in her class learned.

Frequency Analysis and Summary

The following is a frequency analysis to check how the above four topics, selected on the basis of what Tomris identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners, relate to the full range of topics Tomris talked about in the various interviews across the school year.

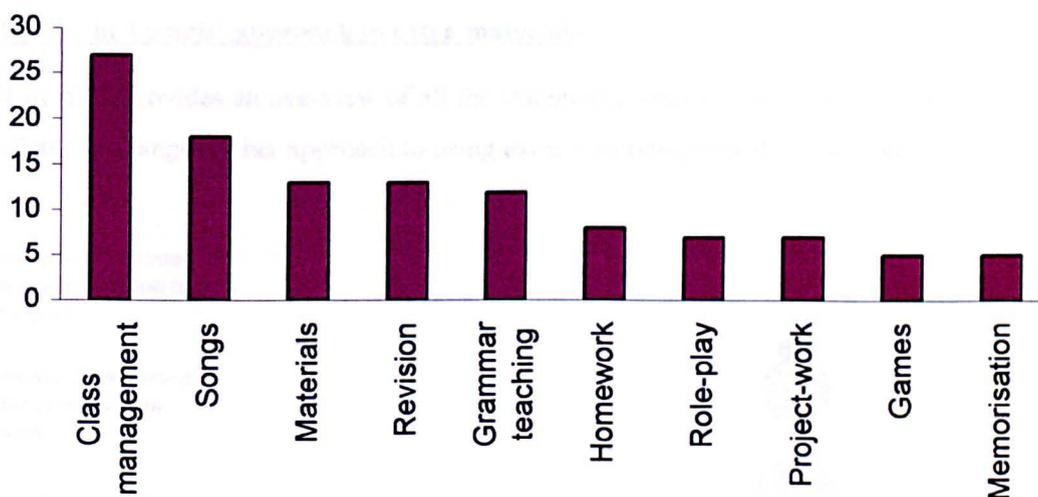


Figure 5.22: Frequency of statements in the ten topics Tomris talked about most

Figure 5.22 shows this analysis for the ten most frequently talked about topics. The vertical axis represents the number of statements made on each topic. The figure shows that of all the topics talked about by Tomris in the interviews the four topics she had identified as differences between teaching older and younger learners were also topics she spoke about very frequently. However, the analysis also shows that Tomris talked about ‘Revision’ quite frequently. Beyond this, the remaining topics seem to have been talked about less frequently.

Based on the differences identified by Tomris, between adult and younger learners and teaching them, as well as the frequency analysis in Figure 5.22, the following topics were selected for in-depth analysis.

- extra materials;
- class management;
- songs;
- grammar teaching;
- revision.

In the next section, changes in Tomris’ approach to the use of extra materials, class management, using songs, grammar teaching and revision is explored in depth.

5.4.5 Changes and influences on changes

This section contains an in-depth exploration of the topics identified in the previous section. At this point, in addition to the interview data, classroom observation data, documents and field notes are used.

Changes in Tomris’ approach to extra materials

Figure 5.23 provides an overview of all the statements Tomris made about extra materials, as well as the changes in her approach to using extra materials, over the school year.

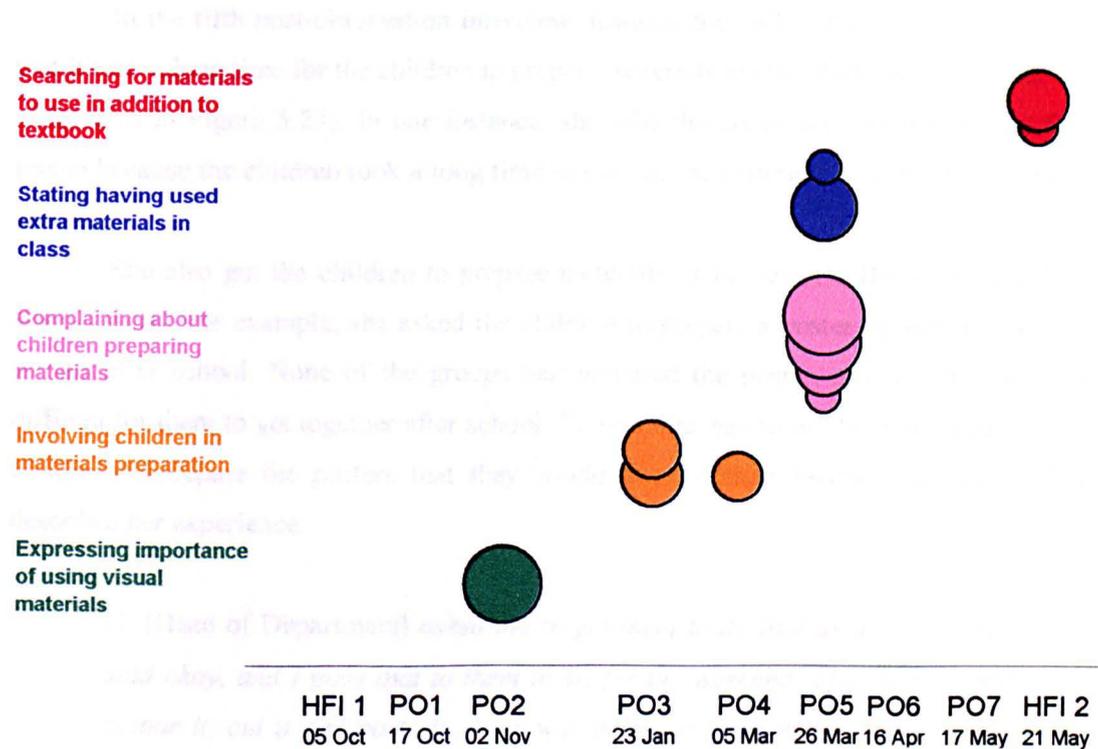


Figure 5.23: Tomris talking about extra materials

As can be seen in from Figure 5.23, Tomris started to talk about using extra materials in the beginning of November. In this interview (see the green bubble), Tomris criticised herself for not bringing any visual materials. She said that had she brought “something visual”, like “a poster”, to teach the seasons, she would have been able to talk about the seasons using the pictures, as she explains in the excerpt below.

I was looking for a poster that had both the seasons and the months. There wasn't any, I couldn't find any, I couldn't give something visual, the same thing happened the other time as well, because we did the seasons in the previous lesson. Okay they know but if there was a poster that I could talk about while showing them I would have been very happy personally.
(PO2:012)

Starting at the end of January, Tomris talked about the involvement of the children in her class in materials preparation (see the second, yellow ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.23). She said that instead of preparing all the materials herself, she now got the children to prepare the materials. For example, she got them to cut out and colour stars which she would then use as rewards.

In the fifth post-observation interview, towards the end of the year, she complained that it took a long time for the children to prepare materials in class (see the third, pink ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.23). In one instance, she said she could not follow her plan for the lesson because the children took a long time to cut out the materials required for her planned activity.

She also got the children to prepare materials as homework. However, this did not always work. For example, she asked the children to prepare a poster by getting together in groups after school. None of the groups had prepared the poster, possibly because it was difficult for them to get together after school. Tomris then had to use her class hour to get the children to prepare the posters that they would use for their lesson. The excerpt below describes her experience.

G. [Head of Department] asked me to get them to do that as a class poster, I said okay, and I gave that to them to do for the weekend. They were going to colour it, cut it and paste it, there was going to be some writing on it. They came yesterday and there was nothing, they hadn't done anything, two or three people. And then of course I had to spare all my lesson for that. (PO5:004)

Also in the same interview, she said that she did not particularly enjoy the lessons where the children prepared materials. She explains this in the quote below.

Yesterday I was bored, cut and paste for two hours, colour this, do this, do that. It's difficult. I get bored, the two hours don't pass, I mean because I can't do anything, because it's something they have to do. (PO5:052)

In my observations of the lessons where she got the children involved in preparing materials, I noticed that she mostly stood by the teacher's desk looking at the teacher's book. She did not walk around helping or monitoring the children while they were working.

At the end of the year, in the final hierarchical focusing interview (see the fifth, red 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.23), Tomris commented that she searched other places to get hold of extra materials. For example, she got materials from the internet, and she also used cut-out sections of resource books from the school library. Although she talked about trying to get hold of extra materials, I did not observe her come to class with many materials. However, she may have used extra materials in the lessons that I did not observe.

Influences on the changes in Tomris' approach to extra materials

One of the main influences on Tomris' use of materials seemed to be the PYP training she got in her new school. She stated that through PYP training, and also to a certain extent the NLP courses (see Section 5.4.1), she learned about different styles of learning, as she explains below.

You start thinking, how do I learn, if I learn like this then how does the student learn from me. NLP gives this as well but PYP emphasises it more, I mean it doesn't just leave it at kinesthetic, audio, visual, it categorises students further, divides them into colours, like yellow, blue, green, red. As I got to know the students I got to know myself as well. (HFI 2:060)

It seems that Tomris discovered different ways that she could teach her students through such training, and one of these ways was using visual materials.

Towards the end of the year, Tomris started complaining about the children preparing materials, claiming that they took too much time doing this. Tomris may have been pressed for time by trying to cover all the components of the curriculum. So although she was willing to involve the children in materials preparation, the time pressures she was under led her to give up on this. Her concern for not having enough time can be seen in the following excerpt.

What I would like to change is to have had more time, if I had more time there would have been more activities. (PO7:020)

Changes in Tomris' approach to class management

Figure 5.24 provides an overview of all the statements Tomris made on class management, as well as changes in her approach to managing children over the school year.

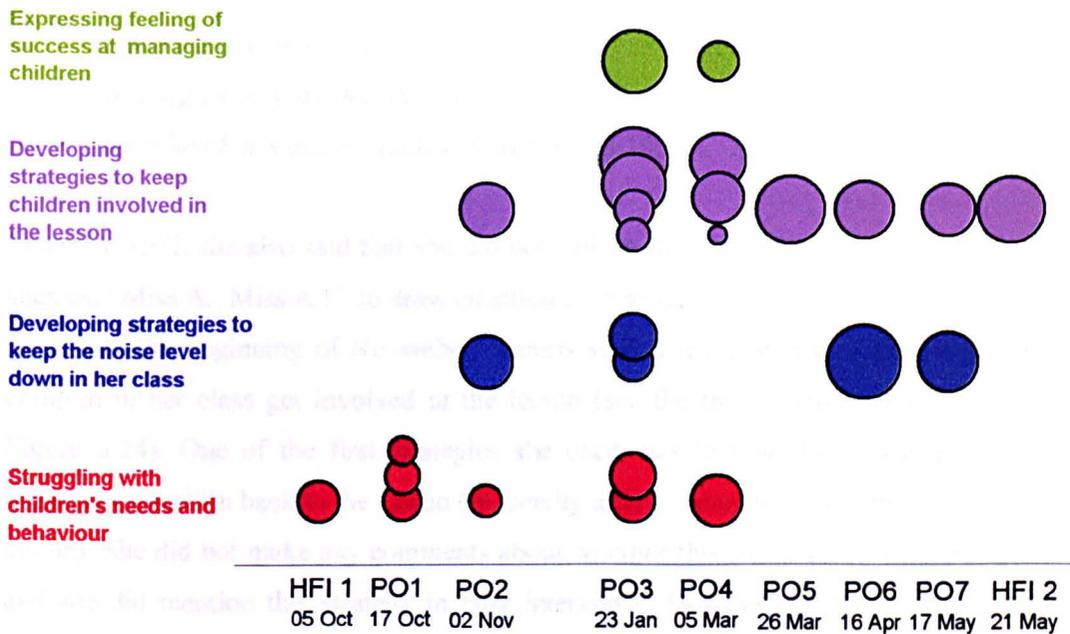


Figure 5.24: Tomris talking about class management

As can be seen from Figure 5.24, Tomris talked frequently about how she struggled with children's needs and their behaviour from the beginning of the school year until the end of March (see the first, red 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.24). One of the main issues Tomris mentioned in the beginning of the year was how the children in her class constantly complained about each other. She was not particularly pleased when they came to her to "tell on" their friends. She said, "In younger classes, it's like, oh, he pulled my hair, he kicked me on the leg, he did this and she did that and I constantly deal with that." She tried to ignore the children when they complained. She said that she did not "listen to them" and turned her head away. However, she said that this was not a very successful strategy, as it did not stop them from complaining. Tomris seemed to be struggling with the children's general behaviour as she claimed it was so different from her previous adult students' behaviour. As an example, she stated that her adult students would never complain about anything.

Beginning in November, Tomris tried out strategies to keep the noise level down in

her third grade classroom (see the second, blue 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.24). One of these was to hold up her hand and to keep it up until all the students noticed her and raised their hands. She said that the whole school used this strategy, as it was part of the PYP. She said she found this to be a useful technique compared to saying, "Be quiet!" all the time.

In an interview in January, she stated that she did not allow those students who raised their hands and called out "Me me!" to answer the teacher's question because this caused a lot of noise in the classroom. She talks about this in the following excerpt.

I don't allow those who just say "Me, me!" to speak up, I mean I tell them that as long as they do that they won't be able to talk. Now they wait after raising their hand, it's getting settled slowly. (PO3:103)

Later, in April, she also said that she did not call on them when they shouted out her name, such as, "Miss A., Miss A.!", to draw attention to themselves.

In the beginning of November, Tomris started using strategies that would help the children in her class get involved in the lesson (see the third, purple 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.24). One of the first strategies she used was to raise her voice in order to get children's attention back to the lesson (especially after a game or an activity involving a lot of action). She did not make any comments about whether this was a successful strategy or not, and she did mention this strategy in later interviews. However, in my observations of her lessons, I witnessed her raising her voice when she wanted to get the children's attention, and I saw her do this consistently throughout the year. It should be said, though, that she did not raise her voice in an angry manner, nor did she at any point shout at any of the students.

In January, Tomris used a few additional strategies to get children involved in the lesson. One of these was to take away those objects that children played with during the lesson, as she felt these distracted them from the language activities. In one instance, she took away a student's pair of scissors because he was constantly cutting things during the lesson. She told him that he could collect his scissors after the lesson. When I asked her about this incident she explained it as follows:

I thought they would cut them [some cut-outs from their activity books] during the break but there was a problem of lack of scissors, they don't give each other their scissors, you experience these things in younger classes unfortunately. They don't take on responsibility yet ...That's why I took the scissors at the end because they don't listen, they are so concentrated on cutting, so I said okay and I took the scissors from them. (PO3:033)

In the same lesson, she also took a student's tennis racket away after he threw it at another student. In talking about this incident she said:

I sometimes get angry at something like they have brought rackets or something and I take it away sometimes. The other day, because one of them threw the racket at the other kid's head - his head!- they're like that in the lesson. I still have a problem like that. (PO3:035)

Another strategy she used to keep children's attention on the lesson was to stick to a specific activity format if it worked. In other words, she did not change how she conducted a specific activity (like a certain game with its rules) if it worked well. Instead, she kept the same format but changed the language content. In her view, this helped her class management because the children did not 'get lost'. However, later in the year, she felt that if she continued with the same style of activity for a long time, the children got bored and "started to cause a lot of commotion". She talked about this situation in the following excerpt.

They are a bit distracted again, that's why you have to change activities very often, there's a situation like this in this classroom. At most five minutes, they start misbehaving after five minutes. (PO4:072)

Tomris also noticed that the time of day or what other lessons students had that day, affected her success at class management, as well as the extent to which the children remained focused. She explains this in the following excerpt.

They could have behaved better. I couldn't figure out why. Once in a while they get like this. Even though it is rare they can drive me crazy sometimes. Today they were a bit strange. We have to check what their first two classes were. It could be PE [Physical Education]. It's very difficult to pull them together when the first classes are PE. (PO6:039)

In January and March, Tomris expressed a feeling of success in managing her third grade class (see the fourth, green 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.24). She said she felt more at ease with her class, and that she "did not get as tired as she used to." The two quotes below present her feelings.

I used to get really tired earlier, they wouldn't listen to me at all but now they are listening a little bit more, it seems to me that it is going a bit better. I don't get as tired as I used to, my throat doesn't hurt as much as it used to. Slowly slowly, I see changes in them. (PO3:039)

They are a bit better, they were very good at the end of the semester, there was no chaos, no noise, they were calmer, they concentrated more on the lesson. (PO4:070)

Influences on the changes in Tomris' approach to class management

In developing strategies for managing her class, Tomris seemed to be using what she learned from the PYP training. She was particularly consistent in her use of a PYP strategy to keep children quiet. This was by raising her hand and waiting for all the children to stop talking and raise their hands. According to Tomris, this was a strategy used in the whole school.

They do this [raising hands] in other lessons because in our schools almost every teacher does this, it's something we got from the PYP programme. U. [PYP trainer] would raise her hand in our meetings when there was a little noise. Everyone has taken it on board, one of them raises her hand when she feels uncomfortable, they have all got used to it. They raise their hands. (PO3:053)

As part of the PYP training, Tomris also attended sessions called 'classroom climate'. According to her description, these sessions were mostly about how to create organisation in the young learner classroom. She talked about the benefits of 'classroom climate' both in the beginning and at the end of the year.

You talk very nicely to them and then they get spoiled, you really don't know what to do. This classroom climate is good for us but we have just started it yet. (HFI 1:084)

We took classroom climate, for eighteen weeks, three hours a week, it was a very intense programme for us. In classroom climate everything is student-centred, I mean if the student does this the teacher should do that, etc. (HFI 2:058)

In the following quote she talks about the combined impact of the ‘classroom climate’ and NLP course, on her development as a young learner teacher.

When I first came here, when I first went into classes, I had no idea about classroom climate, NLP, nothing, I thought I would use my techniques from back there [the language school she taught in previously]. The things I saw, in those PYP seminars, and other courses, I said to myself, I have to go a new direction now if I am going to teach young learners. ... I mean not everything you read is right, but with the things I read and I learned I could create more effective communication with the children.

(HFI 2:048)

Tomris’ desire to get the children in her class to like her may also have had an influence on her success in managing her class. Tomris gave the impression that she enjoyed teaching young learners. She often made comments similar to the one below.

We seriously love each other, I love them [the children] and they love me. We walk around like a tail in the school the whole day. I mean, our electricity has sparked so well, I get a lot of pleasure from the lessons. (PO5:048)

She said that she felt as though she was their sister or their friend rather than their teacher. She claimed that if the children loved their teacher they would automatically love the lesson. She stated that her love for the children had an equal influence on their learning as their textbooks did. The following quote describes her feelings.

If they can see you as one of them, a friend, if they really love you, they will love the lesson automatically. Okay they like English, it’s one of their favourite lessons, in fact it’s their favourite one but I believe that I have as much influence on this as the activities and the textbook because I have fun with them as well and I can be a child. They can feel that, like a singer goes on stage and if she is having fun the crowd has fun, if she just takes the microphone and sings hmm hmm hmm, I mean the psychology of a crowd, if I am having fun in the class, they will have fun as well, if I am giving an effort for them to have fun I can feel that they are learning anyway. This happens whether you want it or not. If they didn’t like me nothing would happen. (HFI 2:036)

When I asked Tomris what advice she would give to a hypothetical new teacher who might be in her position the following school year, she focused on the importance of ‘being your natural self’ with the children, saying the children were very perceptive about such things. She said the following.

I would advise them to get to know their students, at least in the beginning stages of the year, ... get to know the students through some activities, to get to know how they learn, to get to know the things they like and to approach them in the light of such information. (HFI 2:072)

Changes in Tomris’ approach to songs

Throughout the school year Tomris made a lot of comments about using songs in her young learner classroom. Figure 5.25 presents all the statements that Tomris made about using songs and the changes she experienced over the school year in her approach to songs.

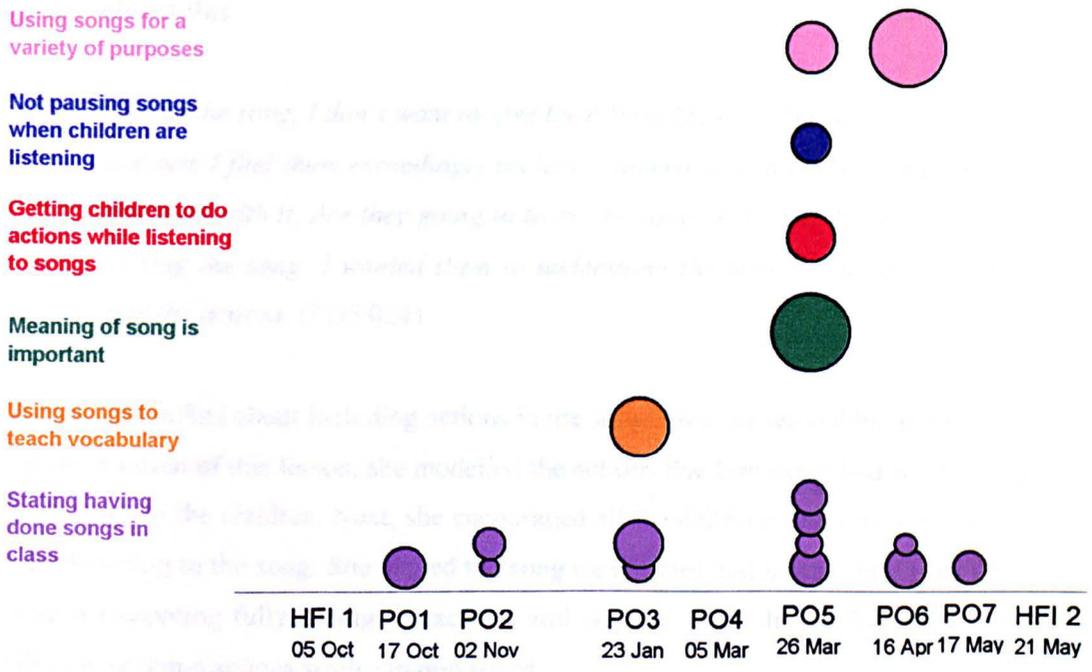


Figure 5.25: Tomris talking about songs

Most of what Tomris said about songs were statements about having done songs in her third grade class (see the first, purple ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.25). Examples of such statements include: “Today we are going to do a song, Christmas song, twelve days of Christmas” and “They’ll learn the song, I can teach the whole of it this lesson.”

In the third post-observation interview, in January, she talked about how songs were useful to teach children vocabulary (see the yellow bubble in Figure 5.25). She said:

Because in PYP our topic is our organs, how we use them, what use are they and because I had to teach it with something related to English. The easiest was the song. (PO3:013)

In the above quote it appears that Tomris views songs as a medium for language learning.

As can be noted from Figure 5.25, Tomris talked about songs the most in the fifth post-observation interview, on the 26th of March. The plan for this day was to teach the song, 'Twelve days of Christmas', as suggested by the textbook Tomris was assigned to use. Many of the statements she made about songs in this particular interview were descriptive statements about teaching the song, such as, "they're listening to it for the first time today" or "it's very lively, we learned another song like this the other day". She also talked about how understanding the meaning of the song might be more important for the children than focusing on individual words in the song (see the green bubble in Figure 5.25). The following excerpt shows this.

Yes, in the song, I don't want to give them [vocabulary in the song] on purpose, because I find them exceedingly useless. I looked at it at night, to see what we could do with it. Are they going to learn the song or the words, are they going to sing the song, I wanted them to understand the meaning by only listening and the actions. (PO5:024)

Tomris also talked about including actions in the songs (see the red bubble in Figure 5.25). In my observation of this lesson, she modelled the actions that best described what was going on in the song to the children. Next, she encouraged all the children to do the actions while they were listening to the song. She played the song three times and by the third time the children were participating fully; doing the actions and singing along. In the following excerpt she talks about doing actions while singing songs.

For me, it's that they can sing the song with the actions. Vocabulary is not that important, in any case they have given them what to learn through the actions. (PO5:064)

With this statement, Tomris argues that vocabulary knowledge is not very important to understand songs, and that by including actions she overcomes many problems that may arise from children not knowing the meaning of words.

In the same interview, Tomris also talked about how she did not interrupt the children when they were listening to the song (see the blue bubble in Figure 5.25). She thought that this was important for them because this way the children would feel they had accomplished the task of listening to and understanding the whole song. Her position on this, then, emphasises the importance of children having a sense of achievement.

In mid April, Tomris talked about how she had started using songs as a warm-up, especially when her lesson was the first lesson of the day (see the sixth, pink 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.25). She commented that songs helped the children to become more motivated for the lesson and to 'wake up' early in the morning. Her using songs as a warm-up for her lesson suggests that she may have started to recognise that songs can have broader uses than only introducing or practising the target language.

Influences on the changes in Tomris' approach to songs

Tomris' changing approach towards songs seems to have been influenced by the NLP course she took (see Section 5.4.2). That is, she may have picked up her ideas of starting the lesson with a warm-up from this course. When I asked her if she was able to use what she learned in her NLP courses she gave the following response. She first talked about what their NLP tutor got them to do during their training and then about how she applied this to her own class.

The last time we did the warming up, ... she [NLP tutor] said let's get up and be a bit more active and she got us to be elephants. And then we - a little bit to the left, a little bit to the right, certain movements – we woke up. I do this especially in the morning classes I have because they usually haven't woken up yet. I tried both of those and they loved them. (PO6:055)

In addition to the NLP seminars, Tomris also seemed to have made use of the various seminars she attended during the school year on teaching English to young learners. She said that in the seminars she went to she got to see how songs were used to teach English, as can be seen below.

I saw them in the seminars I attended, the seminars I went to, aah learning through songs. (HFI 2:030)

These seminars were mainly given as part of the PYP training (see Section 5.4.2). She may also have attended seminars given by publishers, where they demonstrated the use of a song from a particular textbook. She talked about one such seminar, where the publisher was

promoting a textbook for the fifth grades, and demonstrated a few ways of using a song from one of the units in the book. She said she “got pleasure” from seeing how she could use songs. She even commented that during the seminar she thought of a variety of ways she could have used songs with her previous adult students, and that if she were to teach adults again she would certainly use songs.

Another influence on her use of songs, especially on her use of songs to motivate the children, seemed to be Tomris’ recognition of what children enjoyed. She claimed that the songs in the textbook she was using were “really good”, and that in each lesson the children would ask whether they would do a song. She said this made her realise that children enjoyed songs a lot. She often talked about how she “couldn’t let down the children” and if the children really wanted to do something or there was something they really liked, she did it. Based on my observations of Tomris’ lessons the children in her class seemed to enjoy lessons where there was a song.

Another factor that may have had an influence on how Tomris changed her use of songs over the year is the textbook. Tomris will have got many suggestions from the textbook especially about getting children to do actions along with the lyrics of songs. That is, the textbook she used gave very detailed suggestions about this, including step by step descriptions of the actions the children could do while singing the song. Moreover, according to my observation notes, when Tomris got the children to sing and act out, she always followed the teacher’s book suggestions. She comments on the usefulness of the textbook and teacher’s book she was using in the following excerpt.

It [the teacher’s book] is perfect in this sense, I mean I never think of an extra activity, it’s great, grab the teacher’s book and go, that’s it. (HFI 1:062)

Changes in Tomris’ approach to grammar teaching

There were quite a few instances throughout the school year of Tomris talking about teaching grammar. Figure 5.26 presents an overview of the statements Tomris made about teaching grammar.

Not wanting to introduce many grammar 'tenses' to children

Stating having taught language structures in class

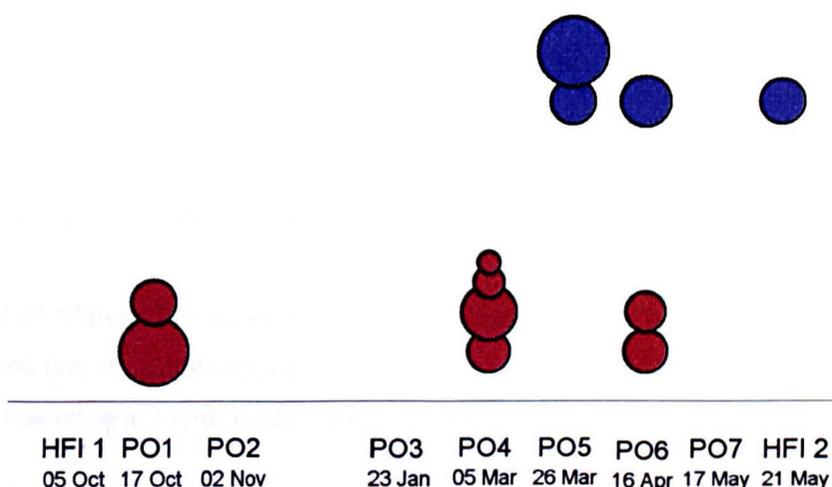


Figure 5.26: Tomris talking about teaching grammar

As can be seen from Figure 5.26, most of the statements Tomris made about teaching grammar were descriptive. She often talked about introducing or practising language structures (see the first, brown 'layer' of bubbles). The following excerpts are examples of this.

Today I want them to do, 'do you like films' and 'I watch films', I think slowly we're getting into the present tense. (PO4:008)

I asked them specifically again today, where do we use 'in', where do we use 'at', at least they've learned that well. (PO1:060)

In an interview in October, she mentioned how, after she taught prepositions and revised them a few times, she would ask the children questions like, "where do we use 'in', where do we use 'at'". Another example of the emphasis Tomris put on the teaching of grammar tenses is a statement she made in the beginning of March, where she said that the children were "slowly getting into the **present tense**". In addition, she complained that the textbook did not include present tense in the first semester. She thought that it would be very late to begin to teach this in the second semester. The quote below expresses her concerns.

G. [Head of Department] asks the same thing, "did you start present tense?" No, it never starts in this book. I think this book has forgotten present tense

because there was none in the first semester, now we will enter it all of a sudden but it is a nice entrance. (PO4:010)

In my observation of her lessons, it appeared that the children were practising the present tense in the activities offered by the textbook in the first semester, but that there was no explicit mention of the 'present tense' in these activities. So, when Tomris talked about the lack of 'present tense' in the textbook, she was, in a way, talking about the lack of the label 'present tense'.

At the end of March, Tomris expressed concern over the lack of coverage of 'past tense' in the textbook (see the purple bubbles in Figure 5.26), stating that children would have difficulty learning this tense in fourth grade if they did not encounter it before reaching fourth grade.

On the one hand I think that I should spend some more time on present simple tense, it didn't give much, and then the other day G. [Head of Department] said to me, "how is past tense going?" "Past tense, there is no such thing", I said, I think it leaves it with present tense. I mean next year, because the fourth grade is quite tough, they do past tense quite seriously, and I am thinking will these children be prepared for next year? (PO5:012)

The first signs of Tomris' change of approach towards teaching of grammar came at the end of March, in the fifth post-observation interview (see the second, blue 'layer' of bubbles in Figure 5.26). She then expressed that she expected too much from her third grade students. She explains her sentiment in the following excerpt.

How can it be normal, is this child ... supposed to learn structure? We do parts of speech, and it's all new yet, they are like this yet (gestures their height from the ground, suggesting they are very 'small') and I treat them like high school students. (PO5:014)

In a similar vein, in April, Tomris said that it would be difficult for the children to learn 'past tense' in the fourth grade. She said, "... poor kids, past tense in fourth grade". In the final hierarchical focusing interview, she acknowledges that the children will have to come face to face with "all these tenses" in fifth grade.

Maybe in fourth still a little bit but in the fifth grade English becomes really

hard. Like they begin to learn what tense is, suddenly they come face to face with all these tenses. (HFI 2:022)

In the above statement, Tomris seems to equate the difficulty of learning a language with the increasing amount of ‘tenses’ that children need to learn. Also, by saying that when they reach the fifth grade children will learn “what ‘tense’ is”, she may be suggesting that her third grade students do not yet need to know the labels of grammar tenses.

Influences on the changes in Tomris’ approach to grammar teaching

It is possible that in teaching her third grade students Tomris was influenced by the teaching methods she used with her adult students. Note that Tomris did not teach at all for the first five years after she got her teaching qualification. She acknowledged that she relied mostly on the textbook when teaching her adult students, as it had been a long time since she had read or studied anything to do with education. The “traditional” techniques she said she used may have been a result of the type of textbook she used in her previous language school. These techniques included her adult students coming to the board and doing dialogues, or Tomris “giving” the students “grammar rules”. She also said that there was a lot of “memorisation”. She added that she “was forced to use” these techniques because her adult students needed to learn English quickly. The excerpt below describes the kind of activities Tomris did in her language school classes.

There was pair work, sometimes they would come to the front of the class and have dialogues. Very traditional, rules, because you had to teach certain things in a limited amount of time you would revert to the old system. Oh, maybe you don't write subject plus verb, but we had to give the grammar rules one way or another, and because they had so little time we would get them to memorise them most of the time - I was getting them to memorise them, I was forced to really, there was nothing to do. (HFI 1:024)

Also, Tomris may have been influenced by the principal and head of department in her new school. She had ‘close’, professional relationships with her colleagues, the head of the department, and the principal, as well as the founder of the school, who was also an English language teacher by profession.

I am happy with G. [Head of Department], I am happy with S. [Founder]. I have a very good dialogue with our founder. (PO6:005)

She told me on many occasions that she got advice, especially from the head of department, about what techniques to use in her classes. The head of department was considerably older and more experienced than Tomris. However, the head only had experience teaching high school students, and she did not have any young learners training. There were many instances in which Tomris told me about what the head of department had asked her to do, and she seemed to do these things without question. An example of what she would say is provided below.

G. [Head of Department] asked me to get them to do that as a class poster, I said okay. (PO5:004)

Although Tomris may have been influenced by the head of department's advice on teaching grammar at the beginning of the year, towards the end of the year Tomris started making more of her own decisions. This is evidenced by how Tomris gradually spoke less, towards the end of the year, about the head of department giving advice.

Later in the year, Tomris commented that her third grade students were too young to be taught language structures directly, and that they forgot these very soon after she taught them. This may suggest that, towards the end of the year, Tomris recognised that her young students learned English in a different way than her previous adult students. Therefore, one of the reasons why Tomris seems to have changed her approach towards teaching of grammar may have been her developing understanding of how her young students learned English.

Changes in Tomris' approach to revision

Throughout the school year Tomris talked about doing revision with the children in her class. Figure 5.27 presents an overview of all the statements Tomris made on this topic, as well as the ways in which Tomris' approach to revision changed over the school year.

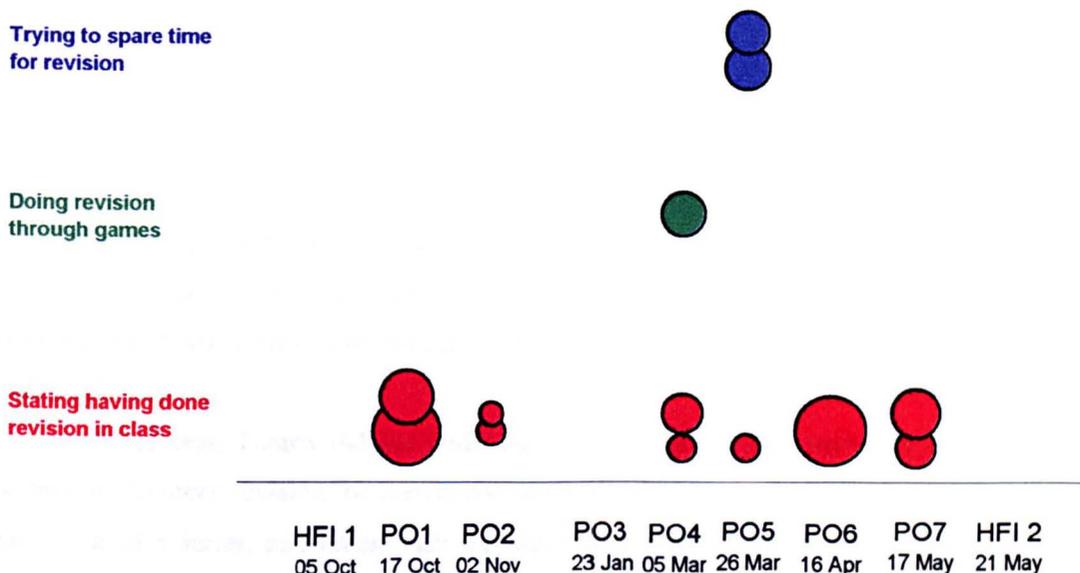


Figure 5.27: Tomris talking about revision

Most of the statements Tomris made about revision were descriptive statements such as her plans to do revision (see the first, red ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.27). For example, she would say, “I will review the whole of the twelve passwords in the coming lesson” and “We will review ‘sit down’ from the song.

In the beginning of March, Tomris started to talk about doing revision through games, and other indirect means (see the green bubble in Figure 5.27).

I will put them up [picture cards] in various parts of the classroom during the semester so that we can review them. We review once in a while, we used to play bingo. (PO4:048)

At the end of March she felt that she really needed to spare some time for revision at the end of her lessons (see the third, blue ‘layer’ of bubbles in Figure 5.27). For example, sparing ten minutes at the end of each lesson for this. Although she had mentioned that she started doing revision through games (i.e., bingo), or by putting up pictures around the classroom so children could look at them and thereby have a chance to revise them indirectly, she seemed to think that this was not sufficient. She seemed to think that revision at the end of each lesson would be more effective if she could spare time for that. This would mean having a specific set time devoted to revision, which is similar to how revision is approached in most high school or language school classes in Turkey.

Influences on the changes in Tomris' approach to revision

The way Tomris started talking about doing revision through indirect means, like games, or posting pictures, may have been influenced by her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned. Although Tomris did not comment specifically on the relationship between children's learning and revision, she did, on a few occasions talk about how important it was for the children to focus on meaning, or how if they did not enjoy what they were doing they would forget what they learned easily. Based on these remarks, it is possible that Tomris may have felt that using games, as a means of revision would help the children's learning.

In general, Tomris did not make many comments in her interviews about why she wanted to do more revision. However, the textbook she used in the second semester was the last book of a series, and rather than introduce new language it mostly reviewed what the children had learned in the first three books. Therefore, it is possible that using this book may have influenced what Tomris said about revision. However, from the evidence available, it is difficult to determine the exact influence of the textbook.

5.4.6 Summary

Taking into consideration that Tomris only had a single year of teaching experience before she started teaching young learners, and that this teaching experience was with adult students who were self-disciplined and had instrumental goals for learning English, she seems to have coped well with the transition to teaching young children.

Tomris changed her approach to extra materials over the year by involving the children in materials preparation. However, she did not want this to take up her class time.

In terms of class management, Tomris tried to develop strategies to keep the children quiet and also to keep the children involved in activities. Towards the end of the year, she commented that she felt she had succeeded in managing her third grade class.

Tomris also changed the way she approached songs over the year. She expressed that the meaning of songs was important for children. She later also expressed that it was important not to pause the songs as this prevented the children from understanding the meaning of the songs and enjoying the song. She talked about using actions with songs, as well as using songs for motivating the children.

Furthermore, Tomris changed her approach to the teaching of grammar. That is, towards the end of the year she did not want to teach too many tenses to the children, as they were too young to understand these tenses.

Tomris also changed her approach to revision by introducing the notion of doing revision through game-like activities and other indirect means. Towards the end of the year,

Tomris felt that she had to spare more time for revision, claiming that the amount of time she was spending on it was insufficient.

Tomris emphasised the importance of seminars on her development more than any other factors. She claimed that the biggest influence on her development as a teacher, as a young learner English teacher and as a person, was the PYP training, as well as the few NLP seminars she attended in her new school. She commented that she relied more on these training opportunities than anything else in her development as a young learner teacher. She expressed her gratitude to her new school for offering her these opportunities for self-development.

The areas in which Tomris showed change over the school year are:

- extra materials;
- class management;
- songs;
- teaching of grammar;
- revision.

The changes in her use of **extra materials** were:

- involving children in materials preparation;
- complaining of children taking too much class time to prepare materials;
- searching for extra materials to use in addition to the textbook.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- PYP training and publishers' young learners seminars;
- Concerns for time (keeping up with the curriculum).

The change in her use of **class management** strategies were:

- developing strategies to keep the noise level down in her class;
- developing strategies to keep children involved in the lesson;
- feeling successful in managing her young students.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- strategies used by the whole school (as part the PYP training);
- her love for the children in her class.

The changes she experienced in the use of **songs** were:

- using songs to teach vocabulary;
- giving importance to getting children to understand the meaning of a song;

- stopping pausing songs while children were listening;
- introducing actions to go along with the lyrics of songs;
- using songs for a variety of purposes.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- PYP training and NLP courses;
- her recognition of what the children in her class enjoyed;
- her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned;
- the textbook.

The change she experienced in her **approach to teaching of grammar** was:

- she expressed concern over teaching too many language structures to children in a short time.

A possible explanation for this change is:

- her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned.

The changes she in her **approach to revision** were:

- doing revision through indirect means (e.g., through games);
- trying to spare more time for revision towards the end of the year.

Possible explanations for these changes are:

- her developing understanding of how the children in her class learned;
- the textbook.

6 Cross-Case Analysis

In this chapter I present a cross-case analysis building on the findings of the individual case studies. This chapter answers the third and fourth research questions,

3. 'What are the similarities between the teachers in the changes they experienced, or did not experience?'
4. 'What are the similarities between the factors that influenced the changes the teachers experienced, or did not experience?'

To be able to comment on similarities in the changes teachers experienced in these areas, I include in this chapter only those topics that two or more teachers showed change in over the period of their first year of teaching English to young learners. These areas are teachers' approach to:

- using extra materials;
- class management;
- using L1;
- using songs;
- revision.

Table 6.1 provides an overview of these common areas of change teachers experienced over the school year. In this section, for each area, I first present the similarities in the changes teachers experienced, and then discuss the common influences that played a role in these changes.

	Use of extra materials	Class management	Use of L1	Use of songs	Approach to revision
Sevda	change	change			change
Gamze		change	change		change
Imge	change	change	change	change	change
Tomris	change	change		change	change

Table 6.1: Common areas in which teachers experienced change over the school year

6.1 Using Extra Materials

In this study, the term ‘materials’ refers to flashcards, realia, puppets, posters, worksheets, handouts, overhead projector, and practical books for teachers. Teachers participating in this study most commonly referred to flashcards, posters, puppets, and realia as ‘materials’, which is a cognate in the Turkish language (“materyal”).

Three teachers, Sevda, Imge and Tomris, talked extensively in their interviews about using extra materials in teaching young learners. They all showed change in how they approached using extra materials over the school year.

6.1.1 Changes

The common changes in the three teachers’ approach to extra materials over the school year were that they 1) prepared their own materials, 2) involved children in preparing materials, and 3) used materials independently of the textbook suggestions.

Involving students in materials preparation

One of the changes common to all three teachers was that, fairly early in the year, they talked about involving their students in preparing materials. My observations of all three teachers’ lessons confirm the involvement of children in materials preparation. Imge, in particular, was

well prepared for activities that involved children preparing materials. She usually brought spare materials like glue, crayons and scissors, just in case children were missing their own. She had spare pieces of paper for children who needed to re-do a flashcard or a finger puppet. The other two teachers did not come to class as prepared as Imge. They mainly just used the resources already available in the class.

Sevda and Imge's statements about involving children in materials preparation were descriptive statements, such as "they prepared finger puppets", and "they prepared some traffic lights in class". Tomris' statements about involving children in materials preparation were different. Tomris seemed to try to involve children in preparing the materials but was soon faced with practicality problems. She complained about how the children took a lot of time to prepare the materials they were to use in an activity and that consequently there was little time left for them to actually do the activity. She tried to get children to prepare the materials during the breaks. However, as the excerpt below suggests, she was not very successful at this.

Anyways, that's [an activity] what I was going to do, I didn't have time for that, the cutting thing drove me mad! I gave it to them to do it during the break but of course, would any of them do anything like that during the break! (Tomris, PO3:019)

Later in the year, her complaints about children preparing materials increased. She expressed that she felt bored while the children were doing cutting and pasting during the lesson. The reason she gave for this was that she did not have anything to do while the children were working. As such, although Imge and Sevda approached involving children in the lesson in a positive way, claiming that children's involvement would help them engage in the lesson and also help them learn by doing, Tomris' experience of involving children was not so positive. She claimed that it took them a long time to prepare the materials and that this took away from her classroom teaching time.

Teachers preparing their own materials

A common change for Imge and Sevda was that, in the early stages of the school year, they started preparing their own materials. This involved preparing materials like finger puppets or flashcards that were not a part of the cut-out section of the textbook, or a suggestion made by the teacher's book. Imge and Sevda gave the impression in their interviews and in my observations of their lessons, that they enjoyed preparing materials. Of the two teachers, Imge was the one most enthusiastic about preparing her own materials and she kept up this

enthusiasm throughout the year. She was the only teacher who systematically came to class every lesson with a box of resources that she made use of in every activity.

Using extra materials in addition to textbook

All the teachers, at different stages of the school year, expressed a need for using materials in addition to their main textbooks. For Sevda and Imge this mainly meant using the materials that came as components of the main textbook they were using, such as flashcards and puppets, independently of the suggestions provided by the teacher's books on how to use these materials. In other words, after they had used these resources for the relevant activities suggested in the teacher's books, they would continue using them in other activities and games, and also for revision purposes. The excerpt below shows Imge's approach to using materials in this way.

There are things within the book, generally the book touches upon all these materials, I only do them a lot in number. For example, it had suggested puppets in the first unit, it didn't suggest in the third unit but I did it in the third unit as well. (Imge, HFI 1:054)

From my observations of their classes, Imge seemed to make use of any resource she could find in different activities she did. The other teachers were not as active as her in this matter. However, all three teachers seemed to give importance to finding resources to support the textbook they used. Both Tomris and Sevda talked about the need they felt to support their teaching with resources they could find in their department library. Sevda mentioned this in the very beginning of the year, saying she spent most of her free time trying to find activities appropriate for her students' age and level of English. Tomris mentioned this at the very end of the year, expressing how she was lucky because their English department library provided them with a lot of resources where they could find new activities for their students. All the teachers seemed to feel that the assigned textbook itself was not fulfilling their needs.

6.1.2 Influences

The following is a discussion of common influences on changes in the teachers' use of extra materials.

Teachers getting to know the needs and interests of the children in their classes

A common influence on all three teachers' attempts to involve children in preparing materials seemed to be teachers' getting to know their students' likes and interests. Sevda talked about

how her young students loved creating materials, and doing cutting, pasting and colouring. She also mentioned that her class was “good at using their hand crafts” and that by being involved in preparing materials they could use their talent. Tomris also emphasised children’s love for hands-on work, as can be seen from the following quote.

They love colouring them [picture cards], they love putting them into the envelopes, they take them out and count them. They colour them in various colours, it’s great. I can’t start the lesson before the colouring is over. In the beginning I used to say, colour them at home, but no, it doesn’t work. (Sevda, PO2:036)

All three teachers seemed to have recognised children’s need to be actively involved in the lesson, through hands-on work, such as cutting, pasting, and colouring. However, none of the teachers commented on focusing children on the language while the children were preparing materials. In other words, they seemed to see the process of preparing materials as an end in itself, and not a way to review the language or to get children to notice the language. They seemed to be focusing on trying to get children to enjoy themselves and enjoy the English lesson by getting them involved in materials preparation. Imge’s quote below represents an example of the importance she gave to making sure children liked the English lesson.

I mean the most important goal in the first grade is to get them to like the lesson and I think that has been achieved. (Imge, PO1:078)

Another change in teacher’s approach towards using extra materials and resources was that they started searching for and using extra materials in addition to what their textbook offered. Teacher’s developing understanding of how the children in their class learn was a particularly important influence on this change, as teachers said they recognised that children needed as many colourful materials as possible in addition to the textbook to be involved in the lesson. Also, teachers said they were able to hold children’s attention in the lesson for longer periods of time with the use of materials like puppets and flashcards. Imge expressed that her young students enjoyed seeing colourful materials and, therefore, by bringing such colourful and attractive materials to class, she was able to motivate them to do the activities. Sevda also commented, on a few occasions, about how children loved the puppets she used and how they asked for the puppets when she did not bring them to class. Below is an excerpt from Sevda’s interview data about her young students’ love for puppets.

They like it [puppet], to touch it, to have a new puppet. They love visual things. As colourful as possible, as lively as possible. (Sevda, PO7:080)

Although the teachers did not focus on any language learning opportunities that can be created by involving children in preparing materials, they did talk about the value of visually attractive materials for helping the children remember what they learned and understand the target language better. Imge pointed out that she tried using as many pictures as possible so that the topic or the vocabulary could “settle better in their brains”. In a similar vein, Tomris commented on occasions where her young students could have understood what she was trying to teach had she only been able to find appropriate flashcards or posters to teach with. That is, the teachers may have recognised that pictures represented a more concrete means of introducing the language for children.

Young learners seminars and PYP training

For Imge and Sevda, the seminars they attended on teaching young learners had an influence on their preparation of materials. In Sevda’s case, the seminars given by publishers were helpful because they showed her concrete examples of how to prepare materials that she could then go away and try out herself in her classes. In the final hierarchical focusing interview, Imge also acknowledged the importance of the young learners seminars she attended for the development of her teaching in general. Most of the seminars Imge and Sevda attended were targeted towards providing teachers with practical suggestions for teaching English to young learners. Representatives from publishers would present activities from textbooks, and talk about the merits of using the particular activities they presented in young learner classrooms. Sometimes, they would have workshops where the teachers were actively involved in more practical work, like trying out a certain activity. In the quote below, Sevda describes how the practical seminars she attended were useful for her teaching.

I have learnt so much from the seminars I have attended this year, all of them show new techniques, and now I know how I can do it, how I can use them, for example, I mean I saw how to produce materials from things I would never have thought of. (Sevda, HFI 2:102)

Although she did not say anything related to preparing materials, Tomris also emphasised the importance of being able to attend practical seminars where she could see ‘how to do’ activities and go back to her classroom and use them.

We learn by living it, otherwise nothing stays in our heads, they show us and we use what we see in these seminars in our classes, that's really nice.

(Tomris, HFI 1:086)

This suggests that the impact of seminars on the teachers' practice was more at the level of helping the teachers out in their survival stage, where they could just find out about new techniques and use them as they are. None of the teachers' comments suggest that they used these seminars as springboards to develop their own style of teaching or adapt activities to suit their own learners' level or interests.

Compared to Imge and Sevda, Tomris was involved in a more systematic training for teaching young learners. Tomris's school was, at the time, implementing a young learners programme called the PYP (see Section 5.4.2). Tomris attended seminars provided by a PYP trainer regularly throughout the school year. Tomris often articulated how much she benefited from PYP training both personally and professionally. Based on my observations she seemed to use many ideas she got through these seminars in her classes. However, similar to the other two teachers, Tomris also seemed to simply make use of activities and materials exactly as they were presented in these PYP seminars, rather than adapting the ideas.

Interaction with and support from colleagues

A further common influence on two of the teachers', Sevda and Imge, preparation and use of resources was their colleagues. Sevda mentioned that one of the first things she noticed in her new job as a primary school teacher was that her colleagues were constantly engaged in preparing materials in the staffroom between lessons. She took this as a sign that she would have to do the same for her first grade classes. She said that seeing her colleagues prepare resources provided some guidance for her about what to do in her classes in the very beginning of the year. Imge, in a similar way, also talked about the general atmosphere of the staffroom where all the primary school teachers could be seen preparing colourful materials for their classes. It seems that for both teachers, their colleagues' active engagement in preparing materials encouraged them to take this issue seriously.

Towards the middle of the year, Imge even started to swap materials with her colleagues. She seemed to discover a new dimension of being a young learner teacher, where collaboration with colleagues served important practical benefits. One of these benefits was that she had more resources to choose from. Also, she had more ideas to choose from, as the bringing together of resources led them to discuss the contexts in which each resource would be appropriate to use. This led to discussions of their practice and comparing of their lessons. Imge emphasised the support she got through such "constant interaction, the transfer and

sharing of experiences” with her colleagues and the head of the department.

6.1.3 Summary

The following bullet points summarise common changes in the teachers’ approach to extra materials, and common influences on these changes.

Common changes experienced by all the teachers were:

- involving their young students in preparing materials;
- preparing their own materials;
- using extra materials in addition to what was suggested in their textbooks.

Common influences on these changes were:

- teachers getting to ‘know’ their students;
- publishers’ seminars and PYP training;
- interaction with and support from colleagues.

6.2 Class Management

All four teachers participating in this study consistently talked about class management in their interviews throughout the year, and they all changed their approach to class management over the school year.

6.2.1 Changes

The common changes in the teachers’ approach to class management were that they 1) talked about strategies for keeping children involved in the lesson, 2) developed class rules and some criteria for ‘good behaviour, 3) reinforced positive behaviour, 4) gave responsibilities to children, and finally, 5) expressed feeling of success in managing their young learners.

In the beginning of the school year, Sevda, Imge and Tomris all talked about how they struggled with the needs and the behaviour of the children in their classes. Imge and Sevda found it difficult to cope with children’s needs like going to the toilet, or wanting to drink water in the middle of class time. Imge complained that each time a child went to the toilet or wanted to drink water her lesson would be interrupted and she did not know how to manage this situation. She said, “I have a timing problem, now someone’s gone to the toilet, wait for him, send the other one, five minutes, ten minutes...”. She felt that she lost control of her lesson. In a similar vein, Sevda, in the very beginning of the year, stated that her “biggest problem” was children’s need for going to the toilet so often. She felt that the children might be pretending that they needed to go in order to get away from the classroom. Towards the

end of the year, Sevda stated that she could now understand whether children really needed to go or if they were just pretending, and she allowed them to go based on her judgment of the situation. Tomris mostly struggled with the children's habit of telling on each other to the teacher. She did not understand why they complained so much about their friends and she did not know how to react to this situation. However, Imge was concerned about the children's energy level and how noisy and active they could get during games. Imge played a lot of active games in the lesson compared to the other teachers and this may be why she complained of this particular problem the most.

Keeping children involved in the lesson

All four teachers talked about ways they could keep their students involved in the class activities. Sevda and Imge arranged the seating in their first grade classroom such that they seated the noisier and physically more active children in the front of the classroom. Both teachers felt that in this way they could keep their eyes on these children and intervene more easily if they misbehaved. In addition, Imge tried to seat children who regularly misbehaved on their own so that they would have less chance to distract their friends. Gamze felt that having children sit in groups made her class management and control of her class easier because she could see all of the children. This sentiment is supported by Brewster et al. (1992), who suggest seating the children such that the teacher has a clear view of all the children. Imge, at the end of the year, arranged children's desks in a semi circle around the classroom. Consistent with what Brewster et al. suggest, Imge said she felt that she could get children's attention more easily this way because she could see all the children at the same time.

Another way in which Imge and Tomris tried to keep children interested and attentive was by avoiding teaching a difficult topic right after a Physical Education class or in the last lesson of the day. When coming from a Physical Education class, the children were tired, and it was therefore difficult to gain their attention in the English lesson. Similarly, in the last lesson of the day, the teachers did not expect their students to concentrate, and therefore preferred not to use this lesson for introducing difficult language content.

Developing class rules and criteria

Three teachers, Sevda, Imge and Gamze, started talking about developing class rules and criteria for 'good' behaviour in their classes in the first half of the school year. Sevda emphasised rules like, all children should stand up to greet her when she entered the classroom, all children should sit down at the same time and they should all stand up when they were asking and answering questions. She referred to these as "basic important" rules in

a class. At the end of the year, Sevda emphasised the usefulness of having established such class rules in the first two weeks of the school year for the effective management of her class. She said, “a young learner teacher should first...establish the classroom organisation, ... right after meeting the students, she has to establish her rules.” Imge also talked about introducing class rules. She always reminded students of the rules of a game or general class rules but there were many occasions where children did not follow these rules. Imge was the only teacher who complained about not being able to control her students when they played games. However, she was also the only teacher who engaged children so consistently in games, which involved a lot of physical activity.

Like Sevda, Gamze was also keen on class rules, such as children having to raise their hands and becoming quiet when they saw Gamze’s hand raised. However, in the latter stages of the school year, Gamze pointed out that she did not think rules, like getting children to stand up to greet the teacher, were very important. She explains this in the following excerpt.

I mean it's of course important to stand up and sit down when the teacher comes but I hadn't specified that as a primary rule. It's a bit too harsh that for them, they have to do it but it's not like an important rule. (Gamze, PO4:028)

In addition to class rules, all three teachers also talked about setting criteria for ‘good behaviour’. Sevda began to set criteria for ‘good’ behaviour fairly early in the school year. She kept renewing and revising her criteria based on children’s behaviour throughout the year. She chose some students as the ‘best’ students of the week based on these criteria. Her general criteria for ‘good’ behaviour in the beginning of the year consisted of children following the lesson attentively. Later in the year, she added new criteria, which are described in the following excerpt.

The ones who listen to the lesson nicely all week, the ones who don't upset their teacher, the ones who get along nicely with their friends, the ones who keep their books and notebooks neat and tidy, ... They know now, they know what to do in which situation. I refer to these things [criteria] during the lessons. (Sevda, PO5:072)

Imge’s criteria were doing homework promptly, behaving well in the lesson, and raising hands before talking. Based on how well the children followed these criteria, she chose the ‘star student of the week’. Gamze’s approach to setting criteria was different from the other two teachers in that she involved the students in this. Involving children in setting criteria was

a common procedure used by the whole school, and it was in accordance with the PYP principles.

Reinforcing positive behaviour

Three of the teachers, Gamze, Imge and Sevda, emphasised the importance of positive reinforcement for effective class management. All three teachers used different means of reinforcing positive behaviour. Gamze initially used smiling faces to encourage children who behaved well to continue to behave well. Later in the year she talked about using stickers to reinforce positive behaviour. Towards the end of the year, she explained, in detail, why she preferred using positive reinforcement strategies compared to punishing children's 'bad' behaviour. She said, "it is important to praise positive behaviour rather than to always punish bad behavior, so that others model the good behavior". Imge also used a lot of strategies to reinforce positive behaviour, like choosing the star of the week and giving stickers. She praised children often and in the interviews emphasised the importance of praise for building children's motivation and self-confidence. Towards the end of the year she used name tags to put around children's necks if they behaved well during the lesson. She thought all these strategies created a positive atmosphere in the class and that this allowed her to manage her classroom effectively. Sevda, like Imge, began the year by choosing 'students of the week'. She began to choose more than one student every week so that she could get all students to enjoy the feeling of being announced as the 'student of the week'. She also sometimes chose students who did not fulfil every criterion as a 'student of the week', hoping to motivate them to behave well and work hard. This also shows how Sevda tried to make every single student in her class feel special.

Giving children responsibilities

Towards the middle of the school year, three teachers, Sevda, Imge and Gamze, began talking about giving responsibilities to children. Sevda said that if she gave a child who often disrupted the class some responsibility, then that child started behaving better in class. Similarly, Imge appointed children who regularly misbehaved in the lessons as her assistant and gave them responsibilities like handing out materials to their friends or helping the teacher clean the board. Imge suggested that giving these children responsibilities made them feel important and they therefore did not misbehave as much. Gamze also sometimes gave misbehaving students secret responsibilities based on their interests and what they enjoyed doing. Based on my observations of all three teachers' classes, children who were consistently misbehaving reacted well to being given responsibilities by the teacher. That is, children who were asked to hand out the books to their friends or to go and fetch something from the

teacher's room showed immediate change of behaviour towards the positive. Teachers continued to give these children responsibilities consistently showing that once they saw a strategy work they pursued it.

Feeling successful at managing children

Two teachers, Imge and Tomris, talked about how much progress they felt they made with managing their young learner classes. Imge talked about this at the very end of the year, stating that, once children got used to some basic rules she felt more in control of her classroom. Imge suggested that her success at class management was a direct result of her efforts to get children to like her and the English lesson.

Tomris mentioned her progress with managing her young learners twice during the year. She pointed out that she did not get as tired as she used to in the beginning of the year trying to involve the children in the lesson. She also commented that the children listened to her more and that she did not feel the need to shout any more. She said that the children were much 'better' in their behaviour, adding that at the end of the year there was not much noise or chaos in the classroom.

6.2.2 Influences

The following is a discussion of common influences on changes in the teachers' approach to class management.

Teachers getting to know the children and their needs

One of the main influences on the teachers' use of different strategies for class management throughout the year seemed to be their getting to know their students over time and their recognition of their students' needs. Although the teachers struggled with how to cope with the children's needs and how they behaved, they frequently mentioned that it was normal for the children to behave the way they did because that was children's nature. Sevda's comment, "they're children at the end of the day", shows that she accepts children as who they are and does not expect from them what she would expect from her high school students. By contrast, Tomris, earlier in the year, complained about not being able to accept children as who they are. She confesses that she got angry at herself for thinking in this way.

There's a problem like that with me in general, I can't accept that my students are young, I mean I feel like they have to understand everything. If I can accept that they are children the problem will be solved. I act as if they are adults sometimes. I get angry with myself. (Tomris, PO3:085)

It seems that although Tomris had difficulties in accepting children as who they were in the beginning of the year, she was aware that she was having this difficulty. Teachers' awareness of their practice, of what they are doing and why they are doing it, their awareness and acceptance of their students' knowledge and capabilities are considered important influences on teacher change (Lamie, 2004; Pennington, 1995). Tomris was aware that children were different, and she was aware that she might have been expecting too much of them, and this helped her change her approach.

The importance of getting to 'know' the children was further emphasised by Sevda, who suggested that in order to be able to get children's attention in the lesson teachers needed to try and find out what children liked. This, for her, could be accomplished by the teacher trying to look at the world from the child's perspective and to "feel like a child". Imge also shared this sentiment, saying she tried to "put herself in children's shoes".

Gamze seemed to be perceptive of first grade children's concerns and worries when they entered the school environment for the first time. This is reflected in the following excerpt.

It's important to take care of the young children, especially for kindergarten and first grade children. Having just left their mother's lap they ask themselves the question, where are we, who are these people, why are they here, they teach us, does the teacher only teach, what other things can we share, how should we behave towards them. (Gamze, HFI 1:104)

In addition to being open to trying to understand children's needs, what they like and what they do not like, the teachers in the present study also showed a lot of love and care for the children in their classes. They all mentioned this in their interviews. The following excerpts, taken from the four teachers' interviews, exemplify this.

For one, with this age group children, six or seven year olds, their innocence has not gone away yet. They understand that they are loved and they go about so many different ways of returning the same amount of love to you. In that sense I have taken a lot of pleasure. (Imge, HFI 2:002)

You go into class with more love. (Sevda, HFI 2:104)

We seriously love each other, I love them and they love me. I mean, our

electricity has sparked so well, I get a lot of pleasure from the lessons.
(Tomris, PO5:048)

At the end of the day things are resolved through love. (Gamze, HFI 1:046)

I can understand that the children love me, how do I understand, like they wave when they are passing by, they want to come and kiss me. (Gamze, HFI 1:110)

Gamze claims that the 'love bond' between the teacher and the student is what will keep the students involved in the lesson. The teachers in this study seem to have recognised that children are generous with their expressions of love towards the teacher, and this, in turn, seemed to fuel teachers' love for them. The teachers commented on how different this situation was to teaching high school students, where students would more likely want to show off to their peers rather than to try to please the teacher. All the teachers recognised this difference between the two age groups, and children's show of love seemed to give them an extra reason for wanting to teach at primary level.

Teachers learning through experimenting with new ideas

Learning through experimenting with new ideas may have been another influence on the change of the teachers' approach towards class management. Imge and Gamze talked of instances where they tried some strategies, but then abandoned them once they felt that they did not work. Imge said "I try different ways, this way and that way" and depending on the effect of these different ways she started using a strategy consistently. Gamze mentioned the influence of learning through experimenting with new ideas when she talked about getting to know the children, as shown in the following quote.

You shouldn't say things that will hurt their pride. Through experience, you learn that you should go into class knowing which age group will be embarrassed by what, or what they will find discomforting.

(Gamze, HFI 2:033)

The teachers seemed to rely more on their classroom experiences in figuring out what to do, as compared to learning about class management in books or listening to seminars. In the final hierarchical focusing interview Imge said, "it was the time that passed and it gained me experience". Imge states that through experimenting with ideas in her lessons and with the general experience she gained over time she saw an increase in her 'practical intelligence'. A

specific example of Imge learning through experience is when she realised that the more noise she made, like raising her voice in the class, the more noise the students made. Being able to learn through experimenting with ideas included the teachers in reflecting on their practice and becoming aware of what they did and said in their classes. For example, Imge showed that she thought about her experiences in the classroom. Unlike the other teachers, Imge always began the post-observation interviews by making a brief self-evaluation and she also often talked about ways in which she could have handled the classroom situation better, or avoided chaos by being critical about her teaching.

Interaction with and support from colleagues

For Gamze and Imge, cooperation among their colleagues, and particularly their interaction with the classroom teacher, seems to have been a factor that influenced the changes in their management strategies over the year. Imge talked about how the classroom teacher helped her by calming the class down before she entered the classroom. She said that this was very useful for her as she could get straight to the lesson and not lose time by trying to calm the children herself. Another example of the cooperation between Imge and the classroom teacher is described in the following excerpt. This extract refers to Imge and the classroom teacher working together to deal with a particularly ‘difficult’ student, who seemed to misbehave and disrupt both Imge’s and the classroom teacher’s class.

We also made an agreement with their classroom teacher, she called me once, S. [name of student] was by my side, she called him to her side and said, ‘Look Miss Imge, he didn’t upset me and if he doesn’t upset you either I will have a surprise for him. (Imge, PO3:065)

Gamze was also in constant interaction with the classroom teacher about how to manage the students. She said, “I can subtly include things that the classroom teacher tells me without hurting them [the children]”. There is also a reciprocal influence from Gamze on the classroom teachers’ practice. Gamze mentioned that some of the strategies she used were taken up and implemented by the classroom teacher. For example,

When we couldn’t find a place to put them up [projects students have prepared], we put them up on the walls with clips [by putting a string from wall to wall] The classroom teacher has started doing the same thing as well. (Gamze, PO7:23)

This is an example of how, whereas the teachers changed their own practice through interaction with their context, they could also make an impact on the context.

PYP training

A further influence on teachers' change in the management strategies they employed over the course of the school year was the PYP implemented in both Gamze and Tomris' schools. In Gamze's school, the PYP had been running for a number of years. In Tomris' school, they had just started training their teachers using this programme with the help of a consultant who came in once every week. Since Gamze actually had to implement the PYP principles in her own classes while she got this training she was under some pressure. She did not find this easy initially, but she had a positive attitude towards the programme.

Although Tomris' school had not yet started actually implementing the PYP principles in the classrooms, she still got a lot of suggestions about class management from this training because she attended it very systematically. I got the impression, from the way Tomris talked about the programme, that the school was trying to train Tomris first so that there would be someone in their institution who could gradually help the other teachers implement the PYP principles. Tomris seemed to work more hours than the other teachers and most of this time was spent in training with the PYP consultant. Tomris tells how her class management was influenced by the PYP training in the excerpt below. In this example, she talks about how the teachers that participated in the PYP training implemented the strategy of raising a hand when a class got too noisy.

They do, in other lessons because in our schools almost every teacher does this, it's [raising a hand] something we got from the PYP programme. U. [PYP trainer] would raise her hand in our meetings when there was a little noise. Everyone has taken it on board. (Tomris, PO3:053)

Both Tomris and Gamze participated in a module in the PYP training called 'classroom climate'. According to Tomris, this module helped recognise individual differences in children and helped them develop strategies for managing the class by taking account of each student's needs and characteristics. In the following excerpt, Tomris talks about how much she learned from the 'classroom climate' module. She also mentions the influence of an NLP course she attended at around the same time.

When I first came here, when I first went into classes, I had no idea about classroom climate [class management], NLP, nothing, I thought I would use my

techniques from back there [how she taught in language school]. ... the things I saw, in those PYP seminars, and other seminars, I said to myself, I have to take a new direction now if I am going to teach young learners. ... I developed myself little by little there [the language school she used to work in] but that's on the outside. There's also the development inside, there's a development process. (Tomris, HFI 2:048)

Tomris' use of the concepts of developing on the 'outside' and 'inside' may suggest that the combination of PYP and NLP training she received in her new school helped her feel that she was developing as a teacher and as a person, and this development was possibly more deep-rooted, influencing her beliefs and attitudes towards teaching. It appears that she regarded her development in the language school as development happening on the 'outside', suggesting that what she learned there stayed at a more surface level, and that it did not influence her belief system.

The class management strategies used by Gamze also tended to come from the 'class climate sessions' that she attended as part of the PYP training. All the teachers in Gamze's school used these strategies, which indicates that the school policy of implementing the PYP principles, and what her colleagues did were important influences for the changes in Gamze's approach to class management.

6.2.3 Summary

The following bullet points summarise common changes in the teachers' approach to class management, and common influences on these changes.

Common changes experienced by some or all the teachers were:

- finding ways of keeping children involved in the lesson;
- developing class rules and criteria for 'good' behaviour;
- reinforcing positive behaviour;
- giving responsibilities to children;
- feeling successful at managing their young learners.

Common influences on these changes were:

- teachers getting to 'know' their students and their needs;
- teachers experimenting with new ideas;
- interaction with and support from colleagues;
- PYP training.

6.3 Using L1

Only two teachers, Gamze and Imge, talked about using L1 in their classes. The other two teachers, Sevda and Tomris, did not bring this up in their interviews.

6.3.1 Changes

The common change in Gamze and Imge's approach to using L1 was that they expressed the need to use less L1 in their primary classes towards the end of the school year.

In the beginning of the year, Gamze and Imge said they used mostly Turkish in the classroom. This is supported by my observation data, which suggests that except for a few simple instructions like, "Come here", "Give me" and some greeting words and phrases like, "Good morning", "Hello", both teachers predominantly spoke in Turkish to their students.

Gamze suggested that first grade children were already struggling with getting used to 'schooling' and that it would not be supportive of her if she spoke to them in a language they could not understand.

Using less L1

Both Imge and Gamze started using more English as the year progressed. Imge started to use English when giving classroom instructions, gradually introducing more English into her classroom talk. At the end of the year, she said she told some stories using both English and Turkish, suggesting she had extended the context in which she used English. Gamze also showed change in her use of L1. At the beginning of the year, she had clearly stated that it was necessary to use the children's first language in class to facilitate communication with them. Then, towards the end of the year, that she expressed her need to use less Turkish towards the end of the year, she expressed a need to use less Turkish.

Both Gamze and Imge used a combination of English and Turkish in their classroom talk. However, they did this in more than one way. For example, in one lesson Gamze wanted the children to listen to a cartoon story from a cassette. Gamze first explained the story in Turkish and then played the cassette for the children to listen to it in English. Gamze claimed that it would be difficult for the children to understand the story by just listening to it from the cassette. Because of this, she told the children the story of the listening text in Turkish before they listened to it in English. This can be contrasted with a lesson where Imge was reading a story to her students. She would begin by reading it in English, using accompanying actions and gestures. Then, afterwards, she would explain it in Turkish, in case the students did not understand some parts.

By telling the children the story in Turkish before listening to the English cassette recording, the children may not have felt a need to try to understand the listening text in

English. This may suggest that the teacher, in this case Gamze, may have been concerned with the children's enjoyment of the text (a funny cartoon story) rather than challenging them to understand the text by themselves. In contrast, by Imge reading a story in English before it was explained in Turkish, at least the children were given the opportunity to understand the story in English first. However, also in this case, the children might have felt that there was no need to try to understand the text in English, as it would be explained to them in Turkish afterwards. Imge expressed this sentiment herself in the excerpt below.

In class we try to use L2 and L1 together as much as possible, I mean it's not possible to have a fulfilling interaction because the Turkish explanation usually follows straight away. (Imge, HFI 2:006)

6.3.2 Influences

The following is a discussion of common influences on changes in the teachers' approach to using L1.

Teachers recognising the needs of the children in their classes

The reasons for teachers using Turkish in the beginning of the year with their young learners seem to originate from their growing understanding of their young students' emotional needs. Gamze talked about the necessity of using Turkish at a stage when children were trying to get used to the school environment. She seemed to be concerned about providing the children with a sense of security and confidence by talking to them in Turkish. Another reason for Gamze to use Turkish was her attempt to prevent the children from getting bored. Imge also expressed concern about her students getting bored. Both teachers seemed to have 'discovered' that if children got bored in the lesson they got distracted and it became difficult to regain their attention.

The children's increasing ability to understand English

Children's increasing ability to understand and use English phrases may have served as a prompt for Imge and Gamze to adjust the amount of English they used in their classes. It seems that as the children understood more English, the teachers began to use less Turkish. That is, the teachers seem to have adjusted the balance between Turkish and English as their students' level of English improved.

School policy

Another influence on the gradual decrease in Gamze's use of L1 may have been pressure

from parents and the school administration. In my experience, the use of Turkish in English lessons often pits a school administration against parents in the Turkish educational context. This is because most parents in Turkey believe that effective language learning results from having plenty of exposure to English. For this reason, parents tend to put a lot of pressure on school administrations to get teachers to speak English in classes. For the same reason, parents also prefer to send their children to schools that have native speaker teachers. For high school or language school teachers, using English in their lessons is something that is favoured, especially in private schools. However, for teachers teaching English to children in first grade, using English in the class all the time may not be feasible. Gamze explains the reason for this in the following quote.

Of course in the first grades you may be forced to speak Turkish. You can give the commands in English but in most cases you are in a difficult situation, when you can't explain to them because they are getting used to the school ...also they get to know their teacher slowly, and there are a lot of sentimental issues. (Gamze, PO2:052)

6.3.3 Summary

The following bullet points summarise common changes in the teachers' approach to the use of L1 in their young learner classrooms, and common influences on these changes.

Common changes experienced by both teachers were:

- making less use of the children's L1.

Common influences on this change were:

- teachers getting to know the needs of the children in their classes;
- the children's increasing ability to understand English;

An influence that was particular to Gamze was:

- school policy on using English in the classroom.

6.4 Using Songs

Two teachers, Imge and Tomris, talked consistently about how they used songs in their classrooms. Both teachers showed change in their approach to songs over the school year.

6.4.1 Changes

The common changes in the two teachers' approach to using songs were 1) including actions in songs, 2) not pausing songs while children were listening, and 3) using songs for a variety of purposes.

Using songs with accompanying actions

One common change Imge and Tomris showed in using songs was introducing actions to accompany the songs they did in class. Imge introduced this notion earlier in the year, at the end of January, and Tomris talked about it at the end of March. Both teachers just mentioned this once in their interviews, but my observation data shows that after the middle stages of the year the two teachers always got children to perform actions while they listened to songs. Both teachers first modeled the actions, and allowed the children time to practise the actions. Then they got the children to listen to the song and do the actions.

Not pausing songs while children listen

Another common change was how both teachers stopped the practice of interrupting the songs while children were listening to them from cassettes. Both teachers said they did this early in the year to focus on vocabulary. However, Imge said she realised that children got bored and Tomris said she noticed that children could not understand the meaning of the song when she paused it so many times.

Using songs for a variety of purposes

A further change was that both teachers used songs for a variety of purposes other than what was suggested by the textbook. Imge compiled a separate cassette from all the songs in the children's main textbook and played it to the children while they were doing individual work such as colouring or preparing materials. She suggested that these songs were a source of motivation for the children. This practice also allowed the children to hear the vocabulary and phrases they had learned through these songs over and over again, which according to Imge helped the language "settle" in the children's minds.

Tomris used the songs that children learned from their textbook to create class shows, and she picked the songs that children enjoyed most and got the children to turn the songs into presentations for their parents. Tomris suggested that songs were a great opportunity for children to revise the vocabulary they had learned, through doing something fun and purposeful. Tomris also used songs as a means to get children's attention and to motivate children for the lesson in the mornings. She played a song in the beginning of each early morning class she had with her third grade students.

6.4.2 Influences

The following is a discussion of common influences on changes in the teachers' approach to using songs.

Textbook and accompanying teacher's book

It seems that one of the main reasons for why the teachers used songs so much was because songs made up a significant part of the textbooks they used; there was a song in almost every unit. Imge followed the teacher's book suggestions more closely than Tomris. She tried to do all the pre- and post-activities related to the songs. Tomris did not do the songs as they were presented in the textbook. She mostly just played a song from the textbook unit and the students listened to it. This may have been due to Tomris' inexperience with such teaching activities, never having used songs in her previous language school teaching.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) draw attention to textbooks, claiming that they have an important role in the day-to-day job of a teacher, and that their role becomes even more important in periods of change. Imge seemed to make use of the support that her textbook offered. I observed that she went through the teacher's book very carefully, and each page in her teacher's book was covered with comments written on small post-it notes. She often expressed that the textbook they used was very good for the children, noting especially the songs and the activities related to the songs. Tomris, however, did not mention anything about the textbook suggestions influencing her use of songs. However, in one particular song that she spent a lot of time on, the actions that children did while they were listening to the song were actually provided in a very detailed way in the teacher's book. On this occasion, therefore, Tomris seemed to have read the teacher's book suggestions and carried them out in class.

Teachers getting to understand how their young students learned

Imge thought that when children were actively involved in a singing activity they "understood the song better". This suggests that she had thought about, and maybe experienced, the success of engaging children in physical action in their learning, and that she therefore started to include actions in songs she did with her first grades. Both Tomris and Imge initially modelled the actions, and as children showed that they understood the songs they gradually let the children do the actions on their own. They both also seemed to adjust the amount of modelling they did according to how much children understood of the songs and actions.

Teachers getting to know the children in their class and what they enjoyed

Tomris and Imge's desire to find out what children liked, and to try to please them, may have

contributed to their use of songs to the changes they made in the ways they used songs over the school year. Imge, in particular, pointed out that her students liked doing songs and activities, saying, “there’s a Hello song there [in the textbook], songs and activities like that, they like them a lot.” Tomris also mentioned her young students’ excitement about doing songs in lessons. She said, “the songs in I-Spy are really good, every time they wait, are we going to do a song today? I wouldn’t want to change that.” Both these comments were made towards the beginning of the year. As such, it appears that, early in the year, both teachers had developed a sense for what children enjoyed.

It seems that getting to ‘know’ their young students (i.e., what they liked and what they enjoyed) were important influences both Imge and Tomris’ use of songs in various contexts. Tomris started using songs regularly to ‘wake her students up’ and get their attention. She may have realised that songs are a means of activating children’s minds and preparing them for the lesson ahead, especially early in the morning. Similarly, in order to motivate children for the lesson, Imge recorded all of the songs that the children liked from their textbook units onto one cassette and played this cassette tape when children were doing individual work like colouring in their funbooks, drawing or preparing materials. Imge said, “they [the children] learned them [the songs] by listening to them, they do their work and they do shoulders knees and toes. Whoever finishes their work does the actions, they get very motivated.” Just like Tomris, Imge also seemed to realise that she could make use of certain activities that children liked in more than one way in order to increase the pleasure children got from the English lessons.

Another change both teachers made to their approach to teaching songs was that they did not pause the song before it was finished. This also shows that Imge and Tomris were acting upon what they discovered interested the children in their classes. Tomris indicated in the interviews that the reason for doing this was to give the children a sense of having achieved listening to and understanding the whole song.

Young learner seminars

Tomris emphasised the influence of young learner seminars on the way she did songs in her classes. She gave a specific example from a seminar in which they were shown how to approach songs, saying that she had used what she had learned in this seminar in her class and found it to work really well. It is, therefore, possible that she got ideas about including actions in songs through such seminars.

6.4.3 Summary

The following bullet points summarise common changes in the teachers’ approach to using

songs, and common influences on these changes.

Common changes experienced by both teachers were:

- involving children in doing actions while listening to songs;
- not pausing the cassette when children were listening to songs;
- using songs for a variety of purposes.

Common influences on these changes were:

- the textbook and teacher's book;
- teachers' developing understanding of how their young students learned;
- teachers' getting to know the interests of the children in their class and what they enjoyed.

The influence that was particular to Tomris was:

- young learners seminars.

6.5 Revision

All four teachers showed some change in how they approached revision over the school year.

6.5.1 Change

The common changes in the teachers' approach to revision were 1) using games or other activities as means for revision, 2) involving parents in revision, and 3) adjusting the amount of time spent on revision.

Using games or other activities as means for revision

From fairly early on in the school year, the teachers talked about using their routine class games, video watching or fun book work as means for getting children to revise what they had learned. With this approach the teachers got the children indirectly involved in revision while they were working on colouring, watching a cartoon excerpt on the video, or playing a game. All the teachers seemed to have developed the understanding that if they engaged the children in indirect revision through doing some kind of task, children's learning would benefit from it. An example of such an argument is presented below, from Sevda's interview data.

But I think colouring, the colouring book is better for revision, because when

you are telling them what to do, you use the words, they do the same by looking at the words, that's why the more they work with the fun book the more it gets reviewed, I believe that. (Sevda, PO7:052)

Involving parents in children's revision

Two of the teachers, Gamze and Imge, showed change in their approach to revision by involving parents in this process. Gamze mentioned this for the first time in the beginning of March and Imge mentioned it first at the very end of the year in the final hierarchical focusing interview. The way they talked about involving parents suggested that they thought it was important for children to have the opportunity to go over what they had learned at school when they were at home.

Adjusting the amount of time spent on revision

Tomris and Imge presented opposing views about revision towards the end of the school year. Whereas Tomris thought that she did not have enough time left in her lessons to do revision, Imge felt that she was doing too much revision and, therefore, did not have enough time left to cover what she planned for the lesson. However, Imge did do a lot of activities that took much time in class and often seemed a bit rushed for time. This may be the reason she thought she should not spend too much time on revision.

6.5.2 Influences

The following is a discussion of common influences on changes in the teachers' approach to revision.

Textbooks

The international textbooks that all four teachers used may have had an influence on how much all the teachers focused on revision. The textbooks used were designed to recycle the language systematically across units. Since all the teachers followed these textbooks quite strictly, it is natural for them to talk about revision as it came up so regularly. It is unclear, though, to what extent the teachers 'picked up' on the more implicit ways in which the textbooks revised, or recycled, language. Finally, the teachers talking about doing revision through games and other activities and not only relying on the textbook for this, may indicate that the teachers developed an understanding of revision that was independent of the textbooks.

Teachers' developing understanding of how the children in their classes learned

One of the main reasons teachers changed in their approach to revision seems to relate to the development in their understanding of the children's learning. In high school classes in Turkey, revision is usually one stage of an English lesson. It is common for this to take place in the beginning of the lesson, for the purpose of reviewing what was covered in the previous lesson. However, the participating teachers did not approach revision as a stage in the lesson in their young learner classes. Rather, it was like a process where, through games and working on the fun book, they aimed to recycle the language children had been learning. The teachers seemed to recognise that games and activities provided a more natural context for revision that allowed for indirect learning. Gamze provides an example of this kind of approach, saying, "...I played bingo instead with them and got them to review the food better in this way". This quote suggests that Gamze felt that games such as bingo provide a 'better' context for doing revision because children get pleasure out of games. She also described a guessing game she did with the children, saying that the children got a lot of pleasure from the game and that reviewing vocabulary through such games helped them learn "better". Tomris also used the medium of games, such as bingo, to do revision with her students.

Sevda, Imge and Gamze all point out that one of children's characteristics is that they forget easily. The following excerpts present the three teachers' views about this.

If I don't ask them or if there's a lesson in between, then they start to forget them. (Sevda, PO7:052)

But sometimes they forget, because they are young, so we need to repeat again and again. (Gamze, PO7:021)

They forget very easily, it's been a week. (Imge, PO5:003)

Children learn very quickly and forget very quickly. (Imge, HFI 2:066)

It seems therefore that because the teachers have observed that children forget easily, they want to do as much revision as possible.

Increase in the amount of language content introduced

Towards the latter part of the school year, Tomris stated that she would try to set aside more time for revision. She mentioned how she wanted to make revision a more regular part of her lessons by devoting ten minutes at the end of each lesson to this. This seemed to be an attempt

at being more systematic about revision in her third grade class. It may have been due to the increase in the amount of language content introduced as the year progressed thereby creating a need for more regular revisions to keep track of their learning. Doing revision in a specific part of the lesson is more similar to the way revision was approached with the teachers' previous older age groups. Tomris may have approached revision differently from the other teachers because she taught a higher grade than the other teachers. That is, in Tomris' third grade class, there would have been 'more' language to cover, and therefore a greater need for revision.

School policy

Another common change for two of the teachers was to involve children's parents in doing revision at home. Gamze's motivation for involving parents in the process of revision may have been linked to the general policy of the school she worked in. Gamze's school promoted the involvement of parents in their children's school experience. This was part of the PYP they were implementing in her school, and it involved organizing monthly events, such as shows where the children presented the work they did to their parents. Teacher-parent meetings were also organised frequently in Gamze's school, and based on my observations around the school grounds, teachers and the principal were receptive to parents visiting at other times as well. Such an approach to parents' involvement recognises the importance of the support of both the family and teachers in a child's education. Working in an environment where parents' support was recognised as a positive influence on children's learning may have led Gamze to talk of involving parents in helping their children to revise what they learned at school. It is likely for Gamze to be influenced by such school policies as she had, on numerous occasions, talked about such policies particular to her school. One example is the 'No Turkish' school policy which she was keen to implement as soon as her young students were sufficiently developed in their English language skills (see Section 6.3).

Teachers recognising the needs of the children in their classes

Although there was no explicit policy in Imge's school about involving parents in children's learning, Imge herself emphasised the unity between the child, the school and the family, and the importance for the child's emotional and academic development that such unity had. She was articulate about her approach, saying:

I think it is the development of children both cognitively and emotionally, maybe this is one of the characteristics of this age group. Maybe parents, school, teacher, we created this triangle pretty well, it's stronger. We got to

know each other with the parents, both with the students and the administration, we tried to coordinate a strong communication, the counseling department is involved in this as well. (Imge, HFI 2:054)

From this excerpt, it appears that Imge has created successful interaction both with parents and the school administration. She has shown awareness of the influence that the unity between the school, the teacher and the home environment have on children's emotional and academic development.

Imge was comfortable with asking parents to help their children in English because she said that most of the parents in her school knew some English. This was not the case in Tomris' school, where the parents, in general, did not know as much English.

6.5.3 Summary

The following bullet points summarise common changes in the teachers' approach to revision, and common influences on these changes.

Common changes experienced by some or all the teachers were:

- using various activities to do revision;
- involving parents in doing revision with their children at home;
- adjusting the amount of time devoted to revision in class.

Common influences on these changes were:

- textbook;
- teachers getting to understand how the children in their classes learned;
- school policy;
- teachers recognising the needs of the children in their classes;
- increase in the amount of language content introduced.

In the next chapter, I draw on common changes in the teachers' approach to teaching English to young learners and common influences affecting these changes that I reported in this chapter and discuss these issues in light of the existing literature on TEYL and the literature on teacher change.

7 Discussion

This study has explored the changes experienced by former teachers of high school and adult students during their first year of teaching English to young learners. The study has also explored the factors that have influenced these changes. In this chapter, I discuss these changes and the influences on these changes in light of existing literature on TEYL and the literature on teacher change.

All the teachers participating in the study displayed a positive attitude towards teaching children in the beginning of the school year. All of them seemed to enjoy being around children and they frequently articulated how much they “loved” children. However, at the beginning of the school year, none of the teachers expressed a desire to continue teaching at primary level after the school year was over. They all claimed that they were teaching at primary level because the Head in their English department placed them in younger classes and that they did not object to this because they were new to the school. Their plan was to go back to teaching high school students once the school year was over, or once they had become more established teachers in their new schools. The reason none of the four teachers were forthcoming about continuing to teach at primary level, despite their positive feelings towards children, may have to do with the general perception of primary school teachers in the Turkish society. That is, primary school teachers are not regarded with the same prestige as high school teachers.

All of the teachers finished the school year with the same positive attitude towards children as they had expressed at the beginning of the year. In addition, contrary to what they had said at the beginning of the year, they all stated that they would like to continue teaching at primary level, and not go back to teaching high school students. The main reason why the teachers decided to continue teaching in primary school may have to do with a general feeling of satisfaction with and achievement in, their new role as a primary school teacher. For example, two of the teachers expressed that they had successfully ‘managed’ the young students in their classes. The other two teachers, although not quite as directly, also commented on their accomplishments in teaching children. For example, they mentioned motivating children through preparing and using attractive materials, and getting children to participate in activities by adding elements of ‘fun’ in the activities. This shows that the teachers felt successful in their new roles, and that over the course of one school year they managed to adjust to their new teaching context and their new teaching responsibilities.

The love that the children expressed towards their teachers also seemed to be an important factor in the teachers’ adjustment to teaching young learners. Woods (1994) proposes that friendship creates a strong basis for learning, and the more the children can see

teachers as their friends the more they will become open to learning. Teachers in this study seem to have recognised the children's generosity with their expressions of love towards the teacher, and this, in turn, seems to have fueled the teachers' love for them. At the end of the school year, the teachers commented on how different this situation was to teaching high school students. That is, high school students would more likely want to show off to their peers than trying to please the teacher. In sum, children's 'show of love' seemed to give these teachers an extra reason for wanting to teach at primary level.

Although the teachers, in general, felt successful in teaching children for the first time in their professional careers, at a more 'micro' level, there were a number of issues that they struggled with during the school year, and there were a number of changes that they went through that need elaboration. In the following two sections, I discuss these changes using the framework given in Section 2.2. In the third section, I discuss the influences on the teachers' change in light of the literature on teacher change presented in Chapter 3.

7.1 Classroom Environment

The general framework presented in section 2.2.1 suggests that a young learner classroom environment that is conducive to learning should be:

- secure;
- predictable;
- constructive;
- confidence-building;
- target language-based.

Studies conducted with teachers of young learners in other contexts show that one of the areas in which teachers seem to have difficulty, when starting to teach children for the first time, is creating a classroom environment conducive to learning (Farrell, 2003; O'Connell Rust, 1994; Olson & Osbourne, 1992). This finding is mirrored in this study, with three out of four teachers complaining, at various stages of the year, about their struggle to understand children's needs and their behaviour, as well as how to best fulfill these needs and react to their behaviour, such that they can create a positive learning environment. In this section I look at the extent to which the teachers participating in this study created a classroom environment that is secure, predictable, constructive, confidence-building, and target language-based, the characteristics that, according to the literature on teaching young learners (see Section 2.2.1), provide a classroom environment conducive to learning.

One of the characteristics of a classroom environment conducive to learning is that it

needs to provide children with a sense of **security**. The literature suggests that one of the ways in which the classroom environment can provide security for children is when teachers make an effort to discover what individual children's characteristics and interests are, and what they enjoy, and then act according to this in their interaction with the children (Dean, 1992). Examples of how the teachers in this study managed to create a sense of security for the children in their classes was by going next to children while they were working individually and helping them out, or spending time listening to individual children's problems and talking with them both in and out of the class. The teachers did this consistently throughout the school year. However, the teachers did not talk much in their interviews about children's individual characteristics except for those children who were especially disruptive to the class environment. This may suggest that as inexperienced teachers of young learners, their minds may have been more occupied with those children who created class management problems. This meant that they were trying to come up with strategies to cope with these children, rather than trying to get to know all the children in their classes.

Another way in which the teachers seemed to establish a secure environment in their classes was by trying to involve parents in children's school work. The importance of bridging the gap between the home and the school environment for children's development is discussed in the literature (see Section 2.2.1; Dean, 1992). The teachers in this study, towards the end of the year, tried to get children's parents to do revision with their children at home regardless of whether they knew English or not. It is possible that the teachers in the present study recognised the importance of such continuity for developing a sense of security for the children. The teachers' talking about this towards the end of the year suggests that it took some time for them to understand the importance of bridging the gap between the children's home and school environment. The reason for this may be that teachers of high school students, in Turkey, do not usually interact with their students' parents, except for the few parent-teacher meetings held during the school year. As such, the interaction a primary school teacher has with the parents of the children in his/her class may have been something unfamiliar for the teachers in this study when they started teaching young learners.

The interaction between the primary school teacher and parents seems important in the Turkish context because Turkish parents seem to be particularly protective of their children (see Section 2.1.5). For example, parents are often reluctant to send their children to pre-school, trying to keep them 'under their wings' for as long as possible. Hence, when the teachers, in this study, talked about involving parents in the children's school work, it may have meant that they were developing insight into this aspect of the Turkish primary school culture.

In addition to creating a sense of security for the children, the literature on teaching

children also suggests that a classroom environment conducive to learning be **predictable** (Brewster et al., 1992). Brewster et al. (1992) argue that the use of class rules and routines help children to understand how they are supposed to behave. Without these rules one cannot expect children to know what to do. In the present study, the teachers managed to make the class environment reasonably predictable by gradually establishing class rules and criteria for 'good' behaviour.

The children were mostly already used to class rules since classroom teachers take routines very seriously in Turkish primary schools. That is, classroom teachers consider rules and routines as the main means by which to establish discipline in classrooms (see Section 2.1.5). As such, the teachers participating in this study were already teaching in classrooms that had their own rules. This was especially so because the language teachers went to the children's main classroom (the classroom teachers' classroom) to teach their lessons (rather than, for example, students going to a classroom designated for English lessons) (see Section 2.1.5). Even so, teachers in this study seemed to be committed to establishing further rules and routines. It is possible that they saw that children were accustomed to such rules and routines and therefore tried to establish some continuity. They may have also felt that such rules brought some sort of predictability in the classroom, which in turn made the children behave in predictable ways.

Some of the teachers were particularly adamant about having strict rules for the more physically engaging activities like games and sometimes songs. It seems that while the teachers wanted to get children to participate in activities physically, not wanting a class full of children who were passively sitting in their seats, they wanted them to be physically active in an organised way.

A further characteristic of young learner classrooms that is reported to help children's learning is that they need to be **constructive** environments (see Section 2.2.1). Dean (1992) describes a constructive classroom to be one where children are rewarded for their achievements rather than reprimanded for their failures. Moon (2000) also draws attention to the positive influence of praise and rewards on children's learning. Teachers in the present study made extensive use, from the beginning of the school year, of positive reinforcement, such as using stickers and stars, choosing students of the week, as well as praising the children whenever they felt it was appropriate. They used very few reprimanding strategies, although reprimanding children, such as sending them out of the classroom, giving them extra homework, taking something they like from them, not involving them in an activity, are considered normal techniques to discipline children in the Turkish education system (see Section 2.1.5).

The teachers claimed that they did not use praise in high schools or in teaching adults

because this would have left students feeling that the teacher was treating them like children. Using so much praise and so many rewards was, therefore, a new experience for these teachers. They seemed to have recognised the need for using praise and rewards from the beginning of the year, and as the year progressed teachers developed their positive reinforcement strategies further as they got to know more about their students. As such, teachers participating in this study showed that they had gradually got to know the interests and need of the children in their classes, and they seemed to put a lot of effort into making the children feel successful and important.

The teachers changed their positive reinforcement strategies regularly, for example, by using different techniques for rewarding students who behaved according to class criteria, bringing different types of rewards like stickers, stars. Moyles (1995) suggests changing class routines every so often so that children do not get bored. The teachers in the present study switched to a new strategy immediately when they realised that children were getting bored of the existing one. This also shows that the teachers were perceptive of their children's needs and that they considered these needs in their practice.

In the literature on teaching young learners, explaining the purpose of activities to children can be a valuable tool for creating a constructive classroom environment (Galton, 1994; Moyles, 1995). It is argued that this will help children develop confidence in their learning and help them take responsibility for their own learning (Moon, 2000). In the present study, only one teacher made such explanations to children. This teacher often explained to the children why she behaved in a certain way and why it was wrong to do something. However, this teacher seemed to be doing this because it was school policy, and she did not seem to have engaged with why she did this personally. It may be that teachers who have not taught young learners before do not recognise that children can be treated as 'thinking' individuals. This may be especially the case if, like in the present study, teachers are part of a society, such as Turkey, where children are seen as having more passive roles (see Section 2.1.5).

A further characteristic of a young learner classroom that makes it conducive to learning is **confidence-building** (see Section 2.2.1). Giving children responsibilities is considered one way to help children develop self-confidence (Brewster et al., 1992; Galton, 1994). Towards the end of the year, the teachers in the present study talked about giving responsibilities to children. However, they seemed to regard this as a strategy to get the 'misbehaving' children to be more 'obedient'. They gave a number of responsibilities to students who misbehaved so they would have 'something to do' and not disrupt the class. They stated that giving these children responsibilities helped children feel they got more individual attention from the teacher. As such, the teachers did not seem to see giving

responsibilities to children as a way for them to become more confident language learners, although it is likely that giving these responsibilities did make children feel more special and important and therefore more self-confident. The teachers did not seem to be aware of the benefit of these responsibilities to develop children's self-confidence as language learners. Again, this may be a result of the teachers being concerned with the more immediate problems of class management, and not having engaged, in a deeper sense, with the idea that children are 'thinking' individuals, who can, with teachers' encouragement, become more independent learners.

A final characteristic of a young learner language classroom, as discussed in Section 2.2.1, is that it needs to be **target language-based**. The teachers in this study, especially at the beginning of the year, did not use the target language much in their classes. They almost always used L1, giving even simple class rules and instructions in Turkish. The reason the teachers gave for using mainly L1 was to support children emotionally in their first year of school, suggesting that they were trying to create a sense of security for the children. Especially in the beginning of the year, all the teachers were concerned with managing their young learner classrooms, and they felt that if they used L1 children would at least understand what was going on in the lesson, and not get distracted. The potential support provided by the use of L1 in young learner language classes is discussed in the literature (Moon, 2000). However, the teachers in this study may have overly depended on the use of L1 to help the children understand what was going on in the lesson, thereby overlooking the possibility of creating a target language-based classroom environment, and failing to maximise limited opportunities for exposure to English.

Over the period of the school year, the teachers tried to use more English, especially when giving instructions, since children's English gradually improved. By the middle stages of the year the children could understand simple instructions in English and the teachers attempted to use more English. However, even so, at the end of the year, the teachers still seemed to think that using L1 helped the children feel more secure, and my observations suggest that they still used L1 most of the class time.

7.1.1 Summary

The framework presented in Section 2.2.1, presenting what the literature suggests makes a young learner classroom environment conducive to learning, was revisited in this section. The purpose was to see whether the changes the teachers participating in this study made to managing their classrooms reflected any attempts on their part to make their classroom environment secure, predictable, constructive, confidence-building, and target language-based.

All the teachers seemed to be successful in providing a **secure** and a **predictable** classroom environment for the children. The most common ways they went about this was by giving individual attention to children, by involving parents in their children's school work, developing class rules, routines and criteria for 'good' behaviour. These are all acknowledged in the literature as important ways of providing children with a sense of security (see Section 2.2.1).

It is suggested in the framework outlined in Section 2.2.1 that a young learner classroom environment should be **constructive**. One way in which the teachers in this study made their classrooms constructive was by rewarding the children's positive behaviour rather than reprimanding them when they misbehaved. Not many teachers, however, tried other ways to make the classroom constructive. Only one teacher explained the purposes of activities, or why the way children behaved was not acceptable. However, she only seemed to be doing this, as it was an important component of the PYP programme that was implemented in her school. The other teachers did not seem to be aware of this aspect of providing a constructive classroom environment, possibly because they may have felt that the children were too young to understand such explanations. The main reason for this may be because in Turkish society children are perceived as passive, and as people who are not yet knowledgeable about many things, and for this reason not taken seriously in what they say or do (see Section 2.1.5).

The framework also presents the promoting of **self-confidence** in children as an important aspect of young learner classrooms, and the literature suggests giving children responsibilities is a way of developing self-confidence (see Section 2.2.1). The teachers in the present study gave children responsibilities but did not seem to do this for the purpose of developing the children's self-confidence. They only talked about giving responsibilities for the purpose of getting the children who always misbehaved to behave well. This may also have to do with how children are regarded in Turkish society, where, for example, children are considered too young to take responsibility for their own behaviour, or to distinguish between right and wrong.

Finally, the teachers in the present study did not appear to try very hard to make their classrooms **target language-based**. This was especially so in the beginning of the year. This seemed to be related to the children's lack of knowledge of English at that stage. As the year progressed the teachers began to use more English, especially when giving simple instructions. However, in general they did not seem to make an effort, in their class management, to communicate to the children that they were in that class to learn English. The main reason for this had to do with the teachers' perception that if they spoke in Turkish the children would understand what was going on in the classroom and thereby the teacher would

have established some security for the children.

7.2 Classroom Language Activities

In this section, I discuss the changes in the teachers' approach to teaching English to children on the level of activities following the framework presented in Section 2.2.2. This framework suggests that young learner language teaching activities should be:

- concrete;
- meaningful;
- challenging but accessible;
- target language-based.

All the teachers participating in this study seemed aware of the necessity for different types of activities when teaching children as compared to the activities they used in their high school or adult language school classes. In the previous schools that the teachers taught in, the main focus of the English lessons was grammar. Although there may have been slight differences in the way grammar was approached in these schools, from what the teachers said, English was not necessarily embedded in any meaningful context. It was assumed that the students understood that they were in that class to learn English and that the teacher did not always need to create a meaningful context in which to introduce the language. Coming from such a teaching environment to one where the students (children in first or third grades) do not really understand why they are in the English classroom in the first place (Moon, 2000) did present a challenge for these first time young learner teachers.

The framework presented in section 2.2.2 suggests that one of the main characteristics of young learner language activities is that they need to be **concrete** (Cameron, 2001; Moon, 2000). Moreover, the literature on teaching young learners emphasises the need for young learner teachers to start from the concrete and only gradually move to the abstract (see Section 2.2.2). The methods all the teachers in the present study talked about having used with their previous older learners were mainly based on students learning the language by abstract means. That is, the teachers did a lot of explaining by using meta-language and not a lot of exemplifying through more concrete, here-and-now elements like pictures, flashcards, and posters. The teachers seemed to recognise, from early in the year, that the children could understand the language better when it was introduced through concrete means rather than through abstract means. All the teachers tried to make the language concrete. For example, they all made use of visual materials (e.g., flashcards, posters, puppets and realia). As the year progressed, the teachers made varied use of extra materials. For example, they started finding

appropriate materials such as flashcards, posters and puppets, from resources other than their assigned textbooks. They also started preparing their own materials in order to increase the variety of materials they used in their classes.

In one aspect of the concrete versus abstract dimension, there was a difference between the first grade teachers and the third grade teacher. That is, the first grade teachers did not try to explain grammar to children at any time, which suggests that they may have recognised the difficulty for such young children to understand grammar rules and how the language worked through abstract explanations. However, the third grade teacher made many references to teaching grammar. I did not observe her explicitly trying to explain grammar rules but in her interviews she talked about how she had tried explaining to children in which contexts particular grammar tenses were used. This may be because of the age of students, where compared to first grade students, third grade students may have a more developed ability to think in abstract terms.

In Section 2.2.2, it was suggested that in order to make the language learning experience **meaningful** for children, this experience needs to be 'fun' (Rixon, 1991). Teachers in the present study seemed to employ a number of ways to make the English lessons more meaningful for children. Although they did not use the term 'meaningful', the changes they made to how they conducted activities over the year was always towards making the experience more relevant to the interests of the children in their classes. For example, some of the teachers got the children involved in preparing materials, claiming that this gave children a sense of enjoyment because they were creating things. Similarly, some teachers added actions to songs thinking that if children were physically active while listening to songs, they were more likely to enjoy themselves. Also, they started using songs in the first lesson of the day in order to 'wake up' children and prepare them for the lesson. They stated that hands-on activities, role-plays, games, and songs were similar to the activities that children would normally do out of the school context. As such, in their view, including activities which the children enjoyed doing out of the school context in the classroom provided children with extra motivation for the English lessons. In the young learner classroom this is a way of creating a meaningful context for language learning (Halliwell, 1992).

For the teachers in the present study, 'meaningful' described how much the children enjoyed themselves, liked the English lesson and liked their English teacher. In Nikolov's (1999) study of children's attitude towards learning English, children who were aged between six and eight said they liked English because they had fun in their English class and because they liked their teacher. All the teachers in the present study seemed to believe that if the children liked their teachers they would also like their English lessons. One of the teachers

explicitly acknowledged that her most important mission in the first grade classroom was to get children to like English and to like their English language teacher so that they would be motivated to learn English in the future.

A further desirable characteristic of young learner language activities is that they be **challenging and accessible** at the same time. This can also be explained by what Cameron (2001) refers to as the appropriate balance between demands that the tasks or activities present to children and the support given to children while they undertake these tasks (see Section 2.2.2). Teachers participating in this study tried to make the language activities accessible to the children by giving them support. The most common way in which the teachers seemed to support the children's learning was by using L1. However, they did not focus much on making activities challenging for children. The reason why the teachers in this study did not talk much about making language activities challenging for the children may have been their general lack of focus on the children's learning of the target language. The teachers seemed to be more concerned with class management strategies.

It was mentioned in section 7.1 that the teachers in the present study did not try to make their classroom **target language-based** (see Section 2.2.2). A target language focus is central in the framework outlined in Section 2.2 both in terms of the classroom environment and in terms of teaching activities. The teachers made use of 'meaningful' activities, but these activities were meaningful only in so far as they got the children to enjoy the English lessons. It did not appear as though the teachers regarded these activities as 'meaningful' in the sense of creating meaningful language learning opportunities. They did not focus on what Rixon (1991, p.35) calls the "language pay-off" of these activities. It is emphasised in the literature that activities used in a language classroom should have a language focus (Moon, 2000) and not just serve as an end in themselves (Rixon, 1991) or be used as fillers at the end of class time (Halliwell, 1992). In the majority of the situations in the present study, it seemed that the teachers looked at activities, maybe not as fillers, but not as language learning opportunities either. Rather they seemed to treat activities as a means of getting children interested in English.

An example of how the teachers focused on children enjoying themselves, rather than on the language learning aspect of an activity, can be seen in how two teachers changed their method of using songs over the course of the school year, from first to get children to listen to songs in their seats, and later to involve them in doing actions accompanying the lyrics of songs. These teachers talked about how doing physical actions was fun for the children when they were listening to songs. They did not mention the possible language learning opportunities, (i.e., helping them associate words of the song with the movements they did). Only one teacher made a comment that when children enjoyed being physically involved they

“understood the song better”. This suggests that this particular teacher had thought about, and maybe experienced the success of, engaging the children in physical action for their learning. However, there were not enough similar comments from this teacher to suggest she focused on the language learning opportunities of the activities she did more than the other teachers. The only context in which teachers referred to their experience of teaching the target language explicitly was when they talked about revision, as this seemed to relate directly to practising language structures and vocabulary.

The reason why the teachers did not focus on the language learning opportunities of activities may be because they felt their most important responsibility was to get children to enjoy English. Especially in the beginning stages of teaching young learners, this responsibility may be more important than trying to ‘teach children English’. Rixon (1991) suggests that with such a mindset, teachers may carry out activities simply because children enjoy them, thereby ignoring the language learning opportunities of the activity. Moon (1991) suggests that for a young learner teacher to focus on teaching the target language she/he needs to prepare the language learning environment such that it becomes conducive to learning. To reiterate the point made in section 7.1, teachers who have never taught young learners before, such as those in the present study, may feel under pressure to establish effective class management techniques, and may therefore ignore children’s learning of the target language.

Another reason why the teachers may not have focused on language may have to do with their earlier experience as teachers of high school or adult students. If teachers compared the language taught in first grades and the language they taught in high school classes, it is likely that they would feel that language teaching was not a big challenge for them, as the language taught in primary schools is at a simpler level than that taught in high school. In other words, because the teachers in this study taught first grade children, after having had experience of teaching older learners, they may be undermining the language teaching aspect of their new roles. However, if they had started teaching children straight after they graduated from their training programmes, without having taught older learners first, they might have taken the language teaching aspect more seriously. One of the teachers explicitly commented that she was disappointed with the level of English she used and she was worried that she might forget her own English after a while because she did not use it more rigorously.

The teacher who taught third grade students talked slightly more about the target language she was teaching than the other teachers. One reason for this teacher to talk about the target language more than the other teachers may have to do with her students’ level of English. The three teachers teaching first grade children may not have thought there was much language to be concerned with and may have dedicated their attention to establishing class rules and basic interaction with the children rather than trying to focus on teaching the

language. In third grade, children would have already made some progress in English, and the teacher may have felt more pressure to focus on the language itself.

7.2.1 Summary

In this section, I looked at the framework presented in Section 2.2.2, that draws on what the literature on TEYL suggests makes language learning activities conducive to learning English. My purpose was to see the extent to which the changes in the teachers' approach to teaching children English in the present study matched with what is suggested in the literature.

Two desirable characteristics of language activities, as presented in the framework in Section 2.2.2, is that they need to be **concrete and meaningful**. The teachers in this study seemed to successfully use concrete means of teaching the children the language. This included the use of visual aids, like realia, puppets, and flashcards, as well as activities like games, songs, cutting-pasting, and role-plays. From the beginning of the year, the teachers stated that they wanted children to do things in the classroom that they would do outside the class environment, so that the classroom became a more motivating place for them. This shows that the teachers have reached an understanding of what the children enjoy, and they displayed a concern for being able to get children to like English. They seemed to view motivating children as their most important responsibility. This was especially the case for the teachers teaching first grade classes.

Another characteristic of language activities that make them conducive to learning is that they are **challenging** but at the same time **accessible** (see Section 2.2.2). In the present study, the teachers were able to make the activities accessible by providing support for children, mainly through the use of L1. However, they did not seem to be concerned about whether the children were challenged in any way in the language learning activities. The reason why the teachers did not seem concerned about how to make the language activities more challenging may have to do with the general lack of attention they displayed towards the teaching of the target language itself.

Finally, although it is considered an important aspect of the young learner language classroom, the teachers did not seem to pay much attention to whether classroom activities were **target language-based**. In other words, the teachers did not exploit the language learning opportunities of activities in their teaching. They did not make many comments, for example, about what language points they intended to teach the children, what language the children might learn more easily, what techniques they felt were more appropriate to teach certain language points, or what progress the children had made in terms of the language taught. It seemed that the teachers were mainly focused on setting activities which allowed

the children to enjoy themselves.

7.3 The Influences on Teacher Change

The teacher change literature has revealed a number of contextual and personal factors that have an influence on teachers' change process, as presented in the bulleted list below, taken from section 3.5.

Contextual influences:

- interaction with and support from colleagues;
- textbooks and other resources;
- teacher training;
- student learning outcomes;
- feedback from students, parents and other members of the school (e.g., principals and colleagues).

Personal influences:

- having a sense of commitment;
- being experimental with new ideas;
- being reflective.

Similarly, the findings from this study have shown that both contextual and personal factors have been influential in the teachers' change over the school year.

In this section I discuss the extent to which the factors emerging from this study match those reported in studies on teacher change.

7.3.1 Contextual influences

One of the influences on teacher change that is emphasised in the literature is the emotional support that interaction with colleagues offers teachers. Studies conducted with first-year teachers (Farrell, 2003; O'Connell Rust, 1994; Olson & Osborne, 1991) show that emotional support from colleagues and principals is important for teacher change. Similarly, in this study, the teachers often commented on how much they benefited emotionally from the support of their colleagues as well as their head of departments. As such, they seemed to give similar reactions to teachers entering schools following pre-service training.

The teacher change literature suggests that the professional support teachers get from their colleagues also has an influence on teachers' change process. Studies by Briscoe and

Peters (1997), Wideen et al. (1996), Wood and Bennett (2000), and Gebhard (1990) (see Sections 3.3 and 3.4) found that teachers benefited from opportunities to brainstorm their ideas and to have discussions about their practice with their colleagues. This helped them reflect on their work and such reflection helped them to change their practice for the better. The teachers participating in this study also seemed to also make changes to their practice through interaction with and support from colleagues. In particular, they claimed that they learned a lot from their colleagues in the areas of class management and use of materials. The teachers stated that by sharing materials they had prepared with their colleagues they were able to increase the variety of materials they used. It is possible that teachers who are not faced with a prescribed response to a curriculum innovation or educational reform, but who feel the urgency to change their practice to suit their new teaching context, are likely to benefit more from interaction with colleagues.

In the present study, the teachers who were 'close' to their students' classroom teachers benefitted in terms of class management strategies. That is, since classroom teachers were experienced in managing young children, they provided a lot of guidance for the teachers in this study, who were new to teaching young learners. They shared ideas about class management, shared stories about children who misbehaved, and collaborated with the English teachers to solve difficult situations in the English classes. This dynamic was somewhat surprising as I had been told, in the beginning stages of my fieldwork, that classroom teachers and English language teachers did not get along much because they had such different teaching styles (see Section 2.1.4). I was told that classroom teachers were sometimes territorial about their students and did not want anyone else interfering with the methods they used to teach them and the criteria they set for how children should behave in class. The present study did not reveal any such sentiments from either party.

Another common influence on teachers' change was the **textbook**. It makes sense that teachers who have no experience of teaching at all will depend more on textbooks than teachers who already have experience of teaching, even though this experience was with a different age group of learners. That is, experienced teachers may already have set ways of teaching which they can carry forward into the new teaching situation (Sikes, 1992). In the case of this study, the teachers had some previous teaching experience. Even so, they seemed to be quite dependent on the textbooks they were assigned. The reason for this may be that the teachers' 'set' ways of teaching did not quite work in their new teaching setting, mainly because the new age group they were teaching was so different from the previous age group of students. So, although the literature may suggest that teachers who are experienced are more likely to make their own decisions about their practice (McAlpine & Crago, 1995; Tsui, 2003) and less likely to follow textbooks, this study shows that if the difference between

teachers' previous teaching experience and new teaching experience is very large, then it is possible that teachers will revert to the textbook for guidance.

All the teachers in the present study followed the textbook quite strictly in the beginning of the school year, and made use of many of the suggestions that appeared in the teacher's book. This is consistent with Hutchinson and Torres' (1994) conceptualisation of textbooks as important 'agents of change'. For example, the teachers' change from using more grammar-based teaching in high school to using 'game-like' activities in their young learner classes was mostly related to the influence of the textbooks. It also seems that the teachers depended on the textbooks to teach the language, assuming that the activities and the techniques suggested in the textbooks, as they were designed by experts in the field, would provide optimal language learning opportunities. The teachers did not seem to be concerned with contextual issues, such as whether these textbooks were suitable for the Turkish context or for their specific students. The one exception to this was an incident where the teacher was worried that a song about Christmas might be inappropriate among the fairly conservative parents of the children in her class. This finding, in general, draws attention to the responsibility that rests on textbook writers, especially when considering the extent to which novice teachers who will be using these textbooks are likely to rely on them in their teaching.

Over the school year, the teachers did show that they could go beyond the textbook. They used songs in different contexts and ways than what was suggested in the textbook. The teachers also showed the same change in their approach to extra materials, using them in various ways other than that suggested by the textbook. This shows that the teachers departed from the textbook and began experimenting with their own ideas once they felt more confident with their teaching.

The influence of **in-service training** has been reported as an important influence in a number of studies on teacher change (Bailey, 1992; Lamie, 2004; Pennington, 1995; Wood & Bennett, 2000). In the studies of teacher change in the context of a prescribed response to a curriculum innovation (e.g., Lamie, 2004; Pennington, 1995), the role of training seems to have been emphasised. That is, with a prescribed response there are clear methods/techniques that can be taught in in-service training courses. However, in studies that look at teacher change where there is no prescribed response to a curriculum innovation, but where the teachers themselves feel a need for change, teacher training does not appear as an influence (e.g., Rennie, 2001; Ritchie & Rigano, 2002). This may be because without a prescribed response there is also less to base an in-service training course on. One study, by Wood and Bennett (2000), reports on a situation where there was no prescribed response to the curricular innovation, but where there nevertheless was a systematic in-service training initiative. These authors highlight how this training helped improve teachers' reflective thinking qualities,

which in turn helped in their change process.

In the present study, the potential influence of training on the teachers' change was one of the most frequently talked about issues by the teachers. This may have been particularly frequent topic as none of the teachers had received any training on teaching young learners before they entered their new teaching context, and they often complained about this. Once they started teaching English to children, they were able to make use of some training opportunities in their respective schools. These opportunities mostly presented themselves in the form of individual seminars given by publishers. In two of the schools where I conducted my fieldwork, the teachers were able to become part of more systematic training, namely the PYP (see Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4.2).

The teachers who participated in individual seminars provided by textbook publishers did not talk about training as an influence on their change as much as the teachers involved in the PYP. This may be because most of the seminars provided by publishers provided the teachers with ready-made ideas that they could use in their classes. The teachers did not seem to reflect much on these seminars, and instead simply used the suggestions they were presented with in their classrooms. They mostly talked about the influence of these seminars as getting ideas for materials preparation and use and what kind of follow-up activities to do, for example, with songs.

By contrast, the teachers who were involved in the more systematic training provided by the PYP, referred to training as being a major influence on their first year of teaching young learners. However, this training was not for the teaching of English *per se*, but for the whole primary curriculum. This meant that the teachers had to adapt what they learned through these seminars to their own English lessons. In order to this they seemed to engage in more reflection. This may also explain why the teachers saw this training as having an influence on their professional development and change. This is consistent with Wood and Bennett's (2000) findings from their study of teachers' change, that training became useful for teachers only when they actually reflected on the training. The teachers in this study, in a similar vein to teachers in Wood and Bennett's study, may have reflected more because they knew that they would need to have thought about what they learned in a previous session in order to build up on this knowledge in the next session. It seems that the more opportunities the training offers teachers to reflect, the more influential these can be on teachers' development.

The literature on teacher change also reports that **student learning outcomes** were an influence on teachers' change process (Pennington, 1995; Lamie, 2004). However, in the present study, student learning outcomes did not seem to be an important influence on the teachers' changing their practice or their approach, as very few teachers mentioned this

throughout the school year. Only two teachers mentioned how they had started to use more English in the classroom as they saw that their students learnt more and more English, and one teacher commented on how she did songs in a way that seemed to help the children's learning. The reason why the teachers did not seem to talk about student learning outcomes as an influence may be related to the lack of attention they showed, throughout the year, to the target language content and the children's language learning process (see Section 7.2). Also, teachers may not have been able to witness the children's learning as it may be more difficult for children to display what they know as compared to older learners. In both Pennington's and Lamie's studies, where they found student learning outcomes influenced teacher change, the teachers taught in secondary schools. It may have been that these teachers were better able to notice student learning outcomes compared to teachers of primary school children, especially those in first grades. For example, secondary school teachers may have had some help in getting insight into children's learning through formal assessment, which children in the present study did not experience.

The teachers talked about the **positive feedback** they got from students on the types of activities, like games and songs, they used, whereby the children clearly showed how much they enjoyed the English lesson. The children showing signs of enjoying the lesson may have also meant that children were learning the language (see Section 2.2.2), but the teachers commented only on the feedback they received in terms of the children enjoying themselves, and not in terms of the children learning the language, as discussed in the previous paragraph. The teachers seemed to increase their use of praise, giving stickers, and 'choosing a student of the week' as they saw the positive influence this had on the children's behaviour. As such, it may be fair to say that the teachers in this study were quite perceptive about which strategies worked in their classes and which did not. Also, once they got positive feedback on their strategies, they kept using these strategies. Nevertheless, what worked and did not work seemed to be measured in terms of student motivation and class management, and not in terms of language learning or opportunities for language learning.

The teachers also occasionally commented on how important it was for them to get positive feedback from the head of department or the principal about what they were doing. All the teachers commented on their 'close' interaction with parents and how they felt parents' positive feedback about how they were interacting with the children, and the teaching techniques they were using, gave them motivation to continue doing what they felt triggered the positive feedback.

7.3.2 Personal influences

One of the main personal influences that seemed to play a role in the way the teachers in this

study changed their teaching practices and their approaches to teaching was their getting to know their young students' interests, likes and needs. This was evidenced in how they went about developing appropriate strategies to manage their classes. These were explained in detail in section 7.1. The literature on teacher change does not seem to address teachers getting to know their students' interests and needs as an influence on their change. However, four studies (Briscoe & Peters, 1997; Day, 2000; Rennie, 2001; Wideen et al., 1996) report teachers' commitment to the change they are making as a big influence on them changing their practices successfully. It was not possible to talk about teachers' commitment to change in this study, as the teachers did not mention this, in so many words, in their interviews. However, it was possible to observe the teachers' 'commitment' to the children. That is, the teachers in this study showed, in many ways, that they cared for children and they were always ready to find ways of making them happy. Again, the teachers did not show much commitment for children's learning of English. Rather, they were more concerned with the children enjoying themselves, behaving appropriately and following class rules.

The literature on teacher change reports that teachers being able to take risks, as well as their ability to experiment and learn through trying out ideas can be potential personal influences on their change process. In the present study, the teachers did not talk much about taking risks. However, a few teachers stated that they had learned many things by experimenting with ideas in their classes. One of the teachers claimed that she had learned as much from experimenting with ideas as she had from books and training.

The two teachers who were particularly open to trying out new ideas, seeing if they worked and then changing them according to feedback from students were the same two teachers who seemed to be most engaged in reflection. One of the teachers always looked back on her lessons and tried to think of ways she could improve them. She was also always self-critical during the interviews. The other teacher went through a systematic and rigorous training programme (PYP) where she was encouraged to reflect on what she did in class. In other words, the teachers who seemed reflective during their first year of teaching young learners also seemed open to trying new ideas in their lessons.

The number of years of experience the teachers had in teaching older learners may have played a role in the adjustment process. However, none of the teachers made any comments about this. In Pennington's (1995) study, the number of years of experience a teacher was reported to have made a difference in how fast that teacher could adapt to the new teaching situation. Tsui (2003, p. 27) also comments that teachers who have teaching experience are likely to "anticipate possible situations in lessons" and predict outcomes of their activities better than teachers without teaching experience. This suggests that teachers with experience may adjust to a new teaching situation much easier than a teacher without

teaching experience.

My perspective on the effect of previous experience is slightly different in that, at the beginning of the study, I felt that the teachers who had more teaching experience with older students would face more difficulty in adjusting to teaching young children. This is because, as Sikes (1992) suggests, they would be more set in their ways than novice teachers. Gamze was the teacher who had the most experience, with nine years teaching in high school behind her. My expectation, therefore, in the beginning stages of the fieldwork, was that she would be more set in her teaching style due to the years of experience she had with older learners, and that she therefore would find it more difficult than the other teachers to change her practice. However, Gamze's school was the only school that had an established PYP system, and both through systematic training and by seeing all her colleagues implement PYP principles in their classes, Gamze significantly adjusted her teaching style. Add to this that Gamze was open minded and believed in the effectiveness of the PYP for children's learning, this seemed to make it easier for her to change her approach and her teaching, even though she had spent so many years teaching older learners. Also, being a mother of a two-year-old may have equally facilitated Gamze's adjustment to teaching young learners, and helped reduce the effects of having taught a much older group of students for a long period of time before starting to teach at primary level.

I also expected Tomris, who had previously only taught adults in a language school, to find it difficult to adjust to teaching third grade children as there was such a big age gap between her previous students and her new students. Language school students are different from any other students in high school or primary school. That is, they potentially have a clear purpose for learning English. They are, therefore, self-motivated to learn English, and most likely pay their own money to finance their learning of English. This kind of class environment, as Tomris also suggested, does not require the teacher to deal with class management issues. The teacher is expected to focus on teaching the language and the students themselves try their best to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning, thereby making the best of their time spent there. Coming from such a classroom environment to the primary school classroom is likely to have been different from coming to the primary classroom from teaching 16, 17 or 18 year old high school students (the case with the other three teachers). However, Tomris did not seem to face any particular difficulties that were not experienced by the other teachers as well. In other words, Tomris did not stand out as different in her ways of teaching or in her process of change as compared to the other teachers in this study. Rather, Tomris' love for her young students and her desire to develop herself professionally seemed to play the biggest role in her adjustment to teaching young learners. Note however that, like Gamze, Tomris also spent a lot of time on PYP training. This

highlights that it may be difficult to understand any single factor in isolation. For example, it is difficult to say whether Tomris' unique previous teaching experience, from adult EFL, would have had a greater impact on her first year in primary school if there had been no systematic PYP training for her to attend.

7.3.3 Summary

In this section I looked at the extent to which teachers in the present study were influenced by the contextual and personal factors that are reported in the literature to play a role in teacher change.

Interaction with and support from colleagues was one of the main influences on teachers' change in the present study. The teachers seemed to benefit from both emotional and professional support from their colleagues in their first year of teaching English to young learners.

This study revealed that **in-service training** was an important influence on the teachers' change in their first year of teaching English to young learners. The most common way the teachers received some training in teaching young learners was through one-off seminars and workshops organised by publishers. The teachers seemed to take ideas from these seminars and use them in their classes without adapting them much to their own classroom contexts. In two of the schools, the teachers were engaged in a more systematic type of training. Although this training was for teaching children in the general curriculum, and not targeted towards teaching *English* to children, the teachers in the present study seemed to benefit from this training, especially in terms of class management strategies. Also, the two teachers benefited from the systematic nature of the training, whereby they had the chance to follow-up on what they learned in one session in another session.

A further influence that seemed to play a role in the teachers' change was the **textbooks** they used. However, the way textbooks were approached by the teachers in this study was different from what was reported in the literature. Whereas the literature suggests that experienced teachers do not depend on textbooks as much as novice teachers (McAlpine & Crago, 1995; Tsui, 2003), in the present study the teachers seemed to rely heavily on the textbooks. This may suggest that the teachers in this study felt like they were "starting all over again" (Burns, 1996, p. 154) because the age group they started to teach was so different from the age groups they previously taught. Also, they may have depended on textbooks in the absence of systematic training in teaching young learners before they started their new jobs.

The literature reports that **student learning outcomes** can be an important influence on teacher change. The teachers in this study, however, rarely mentioned this as an influence on their teaching, if at all. Throughout the school year, the teachers in this study mainly talked

about managing children and their interaction with children and less about the language learning opportunities created by activities, which may explain why they were not as concerned about student language learning outcomes. Also, it is possible that the teachers in this study were not able to notice student learning outcomes as children may not display what they learned as directly as older learners. Considering that most of the studies that report on student learning outcomes as influencing teacher change have taken place in secondary classroom, it may be more natural for teachers in these studies to talk about student learning outcomes more substantially than, for example, a first grade English teacher would.

However, the teachers did talk about the importance of **student feedback**, in the form of whether students enjoyed themselves or not, or whether they changed their practice or not. This finding also shows similarities with what is reported in the literature about the influence of student feedback on teacher change. The influence was not only limited to student feedback, but extended also to feedback from school administrators and parents, also a finding similar to what is reported in the literature.

The number of years of experience in teaching and the nature of the **previous experience** (high school or language school) were both considered as factors that seemed to have had an influence on the teacher's practice in the present study. These contextual factors seem to be embedded in some studies that look at teacher change (e.g., Pennington, 1995).

One of the common personal influences on the teachers' change in the present study was the **commitment** teachers showed towards trying to get to **'know' the children** in their classes and understand their needs. The literature on teacher change also talks about the importance of commitment to one's job as an important influence on the change process. In the case of this study, the commitment seemed to be to the children.

Finally, this study showed that the teachers, especially those who were reflective about their practice, learned through **experimenting with their ideas** in their classes. This is also a finding that supports the studies reporting that qualities like being risk-takers and being experimental with ideas are likely to influence teacher change.

8 Contributions and Suggestions for Future Research

In the first section of this chapter I look at the general contributions of this study to the literature on teaching English to young learners and the literature on teacher change. In the second section, I outline the key findings of the present study and discuss in what ways these findings contribute to policies involving the integration of English into the primary curriculum, to in-service training programmes, and to textbook writers. In the third section, I make suggestions for future research. The final section presents my concluding remarks for this thesis.

8.1 General contributions

There is continual development in research in the area of teacher development and education, where studying the teacher has been considered as providing valuable insights into the process of teaching and learning (Freeman & Richards, 1996). Studying the teacher is especially important as it sheds light on the thoughts, actions, beliefs, attitudes of those individuals who are directly responsible for and involved in the process of 'teaching'. By studying teachers, we can get valuable insider information about schools and students, as well as gain an understanding about things that go on in classrooms that otherwise might have gone unnoticed or be difficult to get at. In this vein, the present study contributes by investigating a small number of English language teachers over the period of a school year (9 months), and by carrying out an in-depth investigation of these teachers' practices, attitudes and approaches to teaching young learners.

There seems to be a particular lack of studies on the professional development of young learner English teachers (but see Hird et al., 2000). The need for such studies is increasing as the integration of foreign languages into primary curricula throughout the world becomes more and more common (Cameron, 2003; Nikolov, 2000a; Rixon, 2000). By focusing on teachers' experience of teaching English to young learners, this study helps identify challenges for young learner teachers, and thereby sheds light on reasons why certain techniques or approaches appear successful and others result in less favourable outcomes. Such insights would be difficult to get at, for example, by focusing on children's learning.

One of the contributions of this study is that it looks at teachers making a transition from teaching one age group to teaching another age group. In the existing literature on teacher change, studies that look at any transition experienced by teachers and how teachers change their practice in response to transition seem limited to teachers making the transition from pre-service training to their first year of teaching (e.g., Doecke, Brown & Loughran,

2000; Farrell, 2003; Hebert & Worthy, 2001; McAlpine & Crago, 1995; Ngoh & Tan, 2000 cited in Farrell, 2003; O'Connell Rust, 1994; Olson & Osborne, 1991; Richards & Pennington, 1998; So & Watkins, in press). While there are some studies that look at transitions made by in-service teachers, these are usually about teachers making a transition from teaching advanced level English to teaching beginner level English (e.g., Burns, 1996), or making a transition from teaching in one culture to teaching in another culture (e.g., Beynon et al., 2004; Freema, 2004).

This study contributes to the field of teacher development by investigating a group of teachers who have had to 'start over' as teachers of young learners on the back of previous experience as teachers of older learners. This is a transition that many teachers around the world may be experiencing because of the mentioned increasing popularity of integrating foreign languages into primary curricula (Cameron, 2003; Nikolov, 2000a; Rixon, 2000). The present study is even more important when considering that training English language teachers to teach young learners is not always seen as a prerequisite for implementing English in primary schools. The present study, then, helps to highlight issues related to teachers changing their practice to adjust to teaching young learners in a situation where there was no organised teacher training to prepare them for this transition.

In addition to a general lack of studies focusing on young learner English language teachers' practices, there also seems to be a lack of studies that have conducted longitudinal investigations of young learner English language teachers. By conducting a longitudinal study I have been able to reveal development over time. For example, I have been able to find out that the teachers participating in this study went from not wanting to teach at primary level to wanting to continue to teach at primary level over the span of a school year. In addition, this study has not only described the changes the teachers experienced over time, it has also shown how different changes, or the lack of change in areas of the teachers' practice, interrelated. For example, the teachers in this study developed their class management strategies continually over the course of their first year of teaching primary English. One would expect that this would result in the teachers being more able to focus on the language learning potential of classroom activities. However, the longitudinal nature of this study has shown that the teachers did not, in fact, learn to exploit the language learning opportunities of classroom activities over the course of the school year, and has provided reasons, in the form of contextual factors particular to the Turkish setting of the study, for why the teachers did not manage to make this adjustment.

This study also contributes to the literature on teacher change by exploring teachers' change process in contexts where there is no prescribed response to a particular reform or curricular innovation. In other words, the teachers in this study were not told, by the Ministry

of Education, or by their own school administration, how to teach young learners English, i.e., what methods to use. Two teachers participating in this study were part of an in-service PYP (Primary Years Programme) training where they were advised on how to teach children. However, this programme was designed for the whole primary curriculum, and not for the teaching of English. As such, the advice teachers were given on what to do in their classes was mostly related to general principles of teaching children and not about teaching foreign languages to young learners. This study has contributed to understanding how teachers change their practice and their approach to teaching based on the needs they themselves perceive in their practice, and what they feel is right for their students (Bailey, 1992; Gebhard, 1996; Rennie, 2001; Ritchie & Rigano, 2002; Wood & Bennett, 2000).

This study contributes to the general literature on teacher change by emphasising the importance of contextual factors on teacher change. The in-depth and longitudinal study of the four teachers showed that the changes that emerged in teachers' practices and their approach to teaching could only be understood by relating these to the Turkish context in which they were working. Only through taking the teachers' own school context and the Turkish educational context as a frame of reference was I able to provide meaningful interpretations of what the teachers had changed in their approach and their practice and why they had made these changes. For example, only by taking into account how children are viewed in the Turkish society was I able to understand why the participating teachers did not explain or share classroom decision-making with the children.

8.2 Findings and specific contributions

A first finding of this study is that the teachers participating in this study, in the beginning of the year, approached children with a lot of love, but did not plan on teaching children the following year. That is, although they expressed positive feelings towards children and teaching children, they did not see themselves as continuing their professional careers as primary school teachers. The reason for this, especially in the Turkish context, can be related to the society's perception of primary school teachers as having less prestige than high school teachers. However, during the school year, all the teachers' feelings about not wanting to continue teaching at primary level changed to where all of them articulated a desire to continue in their jobs as primary school English teachers. It seems that over the course of the school year the teachers gradually formed a strong bond with the children. Also, the children's overt expression of affection for their teachers seemed to play a big role in the teachers making this decision to stay in primary school.

The lack of prestige of teaching in the primary school, expressed in this study as the teachers not wanting to teach at primary level when first encountering this situation, may

suggest that, after integrating English into the primary curriculum, educational authorities may face difficulties recruiting teachers for teaching primary English. This may be particularly so in contexts like Turkey, where being a primary school teacher is not as prestigious as being a high school teacher. However, the fact that the teachers unanimously decided that they wanted to continue teaching at primary level once they had a year of experience teaching this age group suggests that retaining teachers at primary level may be easier than recruiting new teachers at this level.

The study shows that the main challenge the teachers faced in their first year of teaching young learners was managing their classes. The interview data revealed that all the teachers were preoccupied, throughout the school year, with whether their students behaved according to the criteria they set out, whether they obeyed general class rules and rules of the games they played, whether they were noisy or not, or how much individual attention they needed to give particular children for them to behave well. In the interviews, the teachers spent a lot of time talking about their struggle and their achievements in class management. When the teachers talked about their successes, this was mostly centred on managing the children, and not, for example, about how the children learned the target language. Their answers to a question that I asked them in the final hierarchical focusing interview is revealing. The question was “What advice would you give to someone who will start teaching young learners for the first time in the coming year, just like you were last year?”, and the teachers’ answers were all about how new teachers should create close relationships with the children, how they should try to understand children’s needs as well as try to address these needs in their teaching, and how they should prioritise setting class rules and organising their class environment.

The teachers did not develop a sense of self-confidence in the children, in the sense of treating them as thinking individuals. In other words, they did not recognise the children’s abilities to make their own decisions, as thinking individuals. When they gave them responsibilities they did not do this because they felt having responsibilities would help children develop self-confidence. Instead, they felt that these responsibilities would help their class management as the children would be engaged in something useful rather than disrupting the class.

Another finding was that the teachers focused very little, or not at all, on the challenge of teaching the target language. The teachers did not focus on the target language even when they talked about the use of activities like games and songs. In other words, they did not talk about these in terms of how they helped the children learn the language. Three points should be mentioned here. One the one hand, the teachers did not take advantage of the secure and predictable environments that they created to encourage the children to use

English. With the sense of security and predictability they had created, the children might well have been receptive to the teachers using English as a part of the secure and predictable classroom environment. For example, the teachers could have used English more often in their class management and to give instructions for classroom activities. Although all the teachers used a little English in their class management, none of them used it in any consistent or systematic way. None of the teachers used English to organise classroom activities or games. If the teachers had used English more in instructions, in praise and in creating the rituals and practices of the classroom environment, then the students would see the target language as integral to the purpose of the classroom environment as a whole. The second point is related to this last point. By not focusing on the actual teaching of the target language, the children might not have got the sense that they were engaged in a constructive endeavour of learning a language. The final point, then, is that through their focus on class management, with teachers talking about giving rewards and praise for following class rules and criteria for 'good' behaviour, but not very often talking about rewards for succeeding as language learners, the children are unlikely to have developed any self-confidence as language learners.

The teachers' preoccupation with class management suggests that they might benefit from training focusing on class management strategies before starting to teach young learners. Entering a class full of children with some knowledge of how to react to the children's behaviour and needs might have helped the teachers participating in this study approach their new teaching context with a set of working strategies for managing their new young students. This, in turn, might have provided the teachers with added self-confidence to begin their new job. However, the findings of the present study also suggest that there may be a need to combine such training with more targeted training on the teaching of *English language* to young learners in addition to general ways of controlling classes. This might help the teachers move beyond only 'managing' the learners, and help them take advantage of the language learning potential of classroom activities and ultimately to create a classroom environment conducive for learning English.

The social context in which the teacher works, in this case Turkish society, should also be taken into account in any teacher training. That is, in Turkish society children are not always valued as 'thinking' individuals. For example, children's opinions are not always valued in the company of adults, and children are not expected to question decisions made by adults (see discussion in Section 2.1.5). While remaining sensitive to the Turkish context, training might encourage teachers to reflect on these cultural values, and how they affect teaching and learning in their young learner classrooms.

In the present study, textbooks emerged as an important influence on teacher change. Especially in the beginning of the school year, the teachers seemed to depend on textbooks

quite a lot in their teaching. The teachers received a lot of help from their assigned textbooks to get insight into the types of activities suitable for young learner classes. The teachers had not received any explicit training in the teaching of English to young learners before starting their work in the primary schools. The teacher's books with detailed suggestions about how teachers could carry out activities seemed to be what the teachers clung to, in the beginning of the school year, in the absence of training on how to teach young learners.

The textbooks used by the teachers in the present study were all international publications. This reliance on international textbooks, among the teachers in this study, highlights the potentially great responsibility of what are often 'foreign' textbook writers. These writers should be aware of how influential their textbooks can be, or are, in primary contexts in Turkey, and possibly also elsewhere. That is, for the teachers in the present study, their international textbook, including the accompanying teacher's book, were a major influence in their teaching. This was especially so because the teachers themselves were often preoccupied with class management, thereby leaving the textbook to do all the 'work' of teaching the *English language*. From a different perspective, because the curriculum reform did not provide any training in teaching English to young learners for the teachers in this study, in the beginning of the year the teacher's books, in many ways, fulfilled the role of training.

Finally, this study revealed that interaction with and support from colleagues was an important influence on teacher change. The teachers stated that they learned about class management strategies from their interaction with classroom teachers, and they recognised the importance of using extra materials by observing fellow young learner teachers preparing flashcards, finger puppets and posters in the staffroom.

Teachers participating in this study received help from colleagues and found this help invaluable in their first year of teaching such a different age group. This may highlight the need for in-service training programmes to promote collegiality, emphasising the interaction with colleagues as an important resource for teachers in addition to seminars and books. In-service training programmes may particularly draw attention to the opportunities interacting with colleagues may create for engaging teachers in reflection. Teachers in the present study did not seem aware of the benefits of such interaction in making them reflect. They may have reflected on their practice through such interaction but they did not talk about this, suggesting that they may not have been aware of the more important benefits of interacting with colleagues. In-service training programmes may be an effective environment where teachers' awareness can be raised on such matters.

8.3 Suggestions for Future Research

The present study took place in private primary schools, which only make up five percent of primary schools in Turkey. The reason for doing the research in private schools was my desire to look at teachers who had experienced as big a transition as possible in terms of learners' age. This meant looking at teachers of high school students or adult students moving to teaching first grade students, where the teaching context was likely to be very different. However, at the time I embarked on this research, only private schools had first grade English; state schools only started teaching English in grade four (see Section 2.1.1).

Had the study been conducted in state schools, the findings might have been different because state schools in Turkey have relatively few resources, such as e.g., flashcards, puppets, posters, and resource books for teachers, as compared to private schools. In addition, state schools do not use internationally published textbook series. Instead, they use the Turkish Ministry of Education textbooks, and these do not have detailed teacher's books. Also, publishers' training seminars for young learner English teachers tend to target private schools as they can make sales there. Hence, state school English language teachers have fewer in-service training opportunities. Finally, the state schools differ considerably in their working conditions, such as e.g., class sizes and teachers' salaries. One suggestion for further research may be to focus on young learner English language teachers in the state system in Turkey, especially now that English is included in the first grade curriculum in state schools as well (Turkish Ministry of Education website, 2005).

In contexts where the integration of English into the primary curriculum happens suddenly, there is usually a question of who will teach the newly opened primary English classes (Nikolov 2000a). In some countries, the classroom teacher is recruited to teach the new English lessons, while in other contexts, such as in Turkey, teachers who have been teaching English at other levels of the educational system may be recruited to teach the new primary English classes. Jung (2005) reports on Korean primary classroom teachers' reactions to having to teach English alongside their usual curriculum, after the integration of English into the primary curriculum. Her findings showed that Korean classroom teachers were not particularly enthusiastic about having to teach English. However, this finding was closely linked to the fact that according to the Korean curriculum they were expected to use English not only in their English lessons, but also more generally in their teaching of other subjects. Her findings, therefore, about the classroom teachers' reactions to teaching English are very context specific, and not necessarily comparable to the findings of the present research. Nevertheless, future research, similar to the present study and that which Jung has undertaken, may help to further describe the respective challenges faced by teachers making the transition to teaching primary English from high school, and classroom teachers taking

responsibility for teaching English lessons. For example, the constant focus of the teachers in the present study on managing their classes may, if similar findings emerge in other studies, be weighed against the possible 'other' challenges that classroom teachers may face when having to teach English in addition to their other teaching responsibilities.

Finally, the teachers in this study claimed to benefit a lot, during their first year of teaching English to young learners, from the in-service training available to them. However, the study also raises a question about what exactly was the effect of this training, as well as what may have been lacking in terms of appropriate in-service training. For example, the PYP training that two of the teachers benefited from, was designed for teachers across the primary curriculum, and the teachers in this study often used class management techniques from this training. There were also some seminars specifically on the teaching of *English* to young learners, mainly organised by international publishers. From these seminars, the teachers mainly seemed to learn about new activities, maybe because the seminars were often based around presentations of textbook series to the teachers. What seems to be lacking, then, is in-service training, targeted specifically to the teaching of English to young learners, which requires the teachers to engage in a critical reflection on their practice. For example, such training could encourage the teachers to move beyond simply creating secure and predictable classroom environments, to encouraging purposeful and constructive language learning experiences for their young students. Future research on *how* systematic in-service training specifically designed for young learner *English* teachers (as compared to training for teaching children across the curriculum as was the case with the PYP training in the present study) could help teachers in their first year of teaching English may, as such, be valuable. Also, action research where teachers are asked to become involved in the in-service training, as part of the research, might be useful. With the help of such research, it might be possible to better understand the specific ways in which training may help teachers who have just started to teach young learners.

8.4 Concluding remarks

This study looked at teachers of English in Turkey who have moved from teaching older learners (high school and adult students) to teaching young learners. The focus was on the changes in the teachers' approach towards teaching English in their first year of teaching children. I came away from the research experience feeling that I had gained a lot of insight into the Turkish education system, and more importantly into individual teachers' day-to-day lives within schools that are a part of this education system. It would not have been possible to get such rich insight into teachers' lives had I not undertaken this longitudinal research.

Personally, the most rewarding aspect of conducting this research was the teachers'

acknowledgement that our continuous interaction had helped them become aware of many aspects of their practice that they would not have thought about otherwise. In other words, hearing from the teachers that they gained from the research process made this study all the more worthwhile for me.

Future research into teachers who have experienced similar transitions in different contexts around the world may be valuable in uncovering the more context-dependent challenges of teaching young learners for the first time. Such research may be particularly useful considering that the integration of foreign languages in primary education is becoming more and more common around the world.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Letter

Dear Colleague,

I am currently working towards my PhD in the general field of Teacher Education in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) at the University of Leeds, England.

Although you may already know about my study due to our ongoing contact, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for accepting to participate in my study and express my appreciation in this letter. Also, I would like to inform you briefly about my study taking into account that you may not be informed already.

As you are closely familiar with the situation, there has been an educational reform in Turkey where primary education has been extended from five years to eight years. The consequences of this change of system have been quite interesting to observe within the teaching of English particularly. In a considerably short time, many private schools integrated English into their curriculum starting from, second grade, first grade, and even Kindergarten. However, due to the lack of English language teachers having primary school training, these schools started working with teachers who had experience teaching older children or adults. I find this situation quite an interesting one, and one that has received little attention by other researchers in different contexts around the world.

Belonging to this category of teachers who are newly getting used to teaching young children, my feeling is that I can learn quite a lot from your former and present experiences, which would also prove as invaluable data for my research.

I would like to reassure you that I will discard any material that you may feel reluctant to have published, after the tape recording or observations, and will keep everything in careful confidentiality.

Thank you again for your valuable help,

Zeynep Onat
Researcher

Would you please fill in the following with the researcher:

I, as the researcher, agree to keeping all information confidential and not to publish any material that is not desired to be by the participant

Name: _____ Sign: _____ Date: _____

I, as the participant, allow the researcher to publish material that I feel is appropriate to publish from the data received through our interviews and the observation of my classes.

Name: _____ Sign: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Teacher Profile Record Sheet

Teacher Profile

Name:

Age:

Teaching experience:

Grades responsible for in new school:

Hours of teaching per week:

Textbooks used:

Appendix C: Hierarchical Focusing Interview 1 (HFI 1)

1. For what reasons did you change your teaching setting?

financial? P
 S

personal? P
 S

professional? P
 S

2. Can you describe your previous teaching setting? P
 S

student profile? P
 S

classroom setting? P
 S

working conditions? P
 S

types of activities? P
 S

textbook? P
 S

3. How did you feel about teaching in your previous work setting? P
 S

in general? P
 S

to adults? P
 S

P = teacher was prompted for an answer to this question
 S = teacher talked about this question spontaneously (did not require any prompting)

Appendix C (continued):

4. Can you describe your new teaching setting?		<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	student profile?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	classroom setting?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	working conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	types of activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	textbook?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S

5. How do you feel about teaching in your new work setting?		<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	in general?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S
—	to children?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
		<input type="checkbox"/> S

Appendix C (continued):

6. In your experience so far, what are the differences between teaching adults and teaching children?

communication with the students?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
approaches and methods?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
type of activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
coursebook and materials?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
classroom management?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
classroom layout?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S
dealing with parents?	<input type="checkbox"/> P
	<input type="checkbox"/> S

7. Are you currently involved in any in-service-training facilities (or will there be any such opportunities later)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	P
<input type="checkbox"/>	S

Appendix D: Hierarchical Focusing Interview 2 (HFI 2)

1. What do you feel about having changed your teaching setting?

(in terms of your) personal life? P
 S

(in terms of your) professional life? P
 S

(influences on) your teaching? P
 S

2. Now that you've been here for a year, how would you describe your teaching setting, perhaps imagining that you are describing it to someone from your old school?

student profile? P
 S

classroom setting? P
 S

working conditions? P
 S

types of activities (within class and school)? P
 S

textbook? P
 S

3. How do you feel about teaching in your new work setting?

P
 S

in general? P
 S

to children? P
 S

P = teacher was prompted for an answer to this question

S = teacher talked about this question spontaneously (did not require any prompting)

Appendix D (continued):

4. What do you think now about the similarities and differences between teaching your previous students and teaching your young students this year?

- communication with the students? P
 S
- approaches and methods? P
 S
 - type of activities? P
 S
 - coursebook and materials? P
 S
- classroom management? P
 S
 - classroom layout? P
 S
- dealing with parents? P
 S

Appendix E: Classroom Observation Schedule

Time mins.	Activity	T non-verbal (gestures & mimics)	T actions and movement around class (what the T does)	S actions	Comments

Appendix F: Transcription Codes and Sample Extract

Transcription codes:

<i>(Italics)</i>	actions, laughs, gestures, etc.
Bold	words used in English by the teacher (the interviews were conducted in teachers mother tongue, Turkish)
[]	researcher's explanatory notes
-	cut off
:	interruption
=	overlap
--	time lapse
...	section that is taken out

Example from an interview excerpt:

Imge Post-observation 1	08 October 2001
I: Imge	
R: Researcher	
...	
022	I: When one or two of them know, there's always two or three of them who grasp what you want to say, once they give a hint the rest comes easily but for example the characters, the colours and also a detailed talk about that picture on the ninth page, I thought that was good. I drew it on the board, like what is the queen doing, she's singing, I drew the music symbols, that part looked like it was good.
023	R: Do you always do it like that?
024	I: Normally I do it like that.
025	R: I mean, you draw the notes when you will play music.
026	I: No, I don't do it every time, there [in the textbook] it said particularly like the queen, she is singing , we have to draw this, that's why I made music symbols. Like, what is the queen doing, lalalala. What could she be doing, she is singing. By saying ' she's singing ' I draw their attention to the tape.
027	R: Those actions:
028	I: As it is said in the book=
029	R: =Is it in the book, I see. Fall down and everything is in there then.
030	I: Hm hm, yes.
031	R: They say the numbers in English.
032	I: Yes. They know them in this class that's why for example until now, always we give some basic instructions in English, like ' open your books '. I always say the page numbers in English and if they don't understand I point to them. They have an idea now, it has settled in their minds. Now when we go on to teaching numbers it will take only about ten or fifteen minutes, very little.
033	R: Yes yes.
034	I: If necessary they can count all the pages one by one until ten.
035	R: Nice.

Appendix F continued:

...

- 077 R: And when you got them to listen to it in the sec-third time they all sat down on the floor, they bent down, did they know that beforehand?
- 078 I: No no. As I said, in this class there's not too much need for me to do a lot, it's not because of my fantastic class management, okay maybe they like me, maybe something to do with that, and I think that I have managed to - I mean the most important goal in the first grade is to get them to like the lesson and I think that has been achieved.
- 079 R: Yes.
- 080 I: For example, during the breaks, they would always come and say, for example I am going to another class, they would say, 'our teacher is going to another class, ugh, why isn't she coming to us, why isn't she'. The children in this class seem like they are older, just take them and talk to them. Sometimes we do games, we would sit in rows, because we can't always have it u-shaped like this, I would divide the class into three, according to the shape of it, first row, second row, if I am reviewing the colours that day, if I am doing something related to colours, I give them group names, **group red, group white, group orange** and so on. **Group Red!** (claps three times like one would in a match to cheer), it's in their nature (giggles)!

Appendix G: Coding System for 'Being a Teacher'

Being a Teacher (BaT)

attitude towards administration
attitude towards being a teacher
reasons for becoming a teacher
understanding of what a teacher should be
understanding of education
interaction with students
interaction with parents
interaction with classroom teacher
financial concerns
coordination and cooperation among colleagues
self-development
being organised
implementing control/authority
flexibility
approach to family education
concerns with time limitations (catching up with the curriculum)

Appendix H: Coding System for 'Language Teaching'

Language Teaching (LT)

use of extra materials

types of language activities used

extra-curricular activities used

teaching vocabulary

giving homework

giving exams

teaching of grammar/language structures

Appendix I: Coding System for 'Teaching Young Learners'

Teaching Young Learners (TYL)

attitude towards children

attitudes towards teaching in primary school

teacher-child interaction

treating them as thinking individuals

attitude towards their work/abilities/learning

giving them equal chances/fairness

empathising with/understanding children

emotional attachment

strategies for managing children

adjustment to teaching young learners

noticing children's nature

noticing what children like

noticing roles of classroom teacher/parents

noticing differences in own behaviour towards children

Appendix J: Coding System for 'Teaching English to Young Learners'

Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)

- approach to stories**
- approach to projects**
- approach to games**
- approach to hands-on activities**
- approach to songs**
- approach to role-play activities**
- approach to portfolios**
- approach to use of L1**
- approach to revision**
- approach to memorisation**
- approach to correcting mistakes**
- approach to homework**
- approach to repetition drills**
- approach to vocabulary**
- approach to writing**
- approach to reading**
- approach to pronunciation**
- approach to listening**
- approach to teaching of grammar/language structure**
- approach to use of extra materials**
- approach to individual work**
- approach to group work**
- approach to cross-curricular activities**