

## A CEFR-based Comparison of ELT Curriculum and Course Books used in Turkish and Portuguese Primary Schools

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**Abstract:** This cross-cultural study aims to explore to what extent a macro-level language policy, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (CoE, 2001), is implemented at micro-level contexts, more specifically, primary English classrooms in Turkey and Portugal. This study investigated the 3rd and 4th grade course books and the Turkish and Portuguese English language curricula through content analysis and cross-cultural comparison. The course book analysis was carried out with reference to language skills as suggested in the CEFR, intercultural characteristics of the course books, and A1 level descriptors. Results highlight similarities and differences in both countries in terms of the implementation of the CEFR and representation of A1 level descriptors in course book activities in primary English classrooms. Implications refer to the importance of teacher education, preparation of age and inter-culturally appropriate materials for primary levels and necessities for sustainable and consistent language policy and planning.

### Anahtar

#### sözcükler:

ADOÇP, İngiliz  
dili öğretimi  
programı, A1  
seviyesi ders  
kitapları,  
çocuklara yabancı  
dil öğretimi, dil  
politikası

### Türkiye ve Portekiz İlkokullarında Kullanılan İngilizce Dersi Öğretim Programı ve Ders Kitaplarının ADOÇP Temelli Karşılaştırılması

**Öz:** Bu kültürlerarası çalışma, makro düzey dil politikasının, Avrupa Dilleri Ortak Çerçeve Programının (ADOÇP) (CoE, 2001), mikro düzey bağlamlarda, daha belirgin olarak Türkiye ve Portekiz'deki ilkökul İngilizce sınıflarında ne ölçüde uygulandığını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, 3 ve 4. Sınıf ders kitapları ile Türkiye ve Portekiz'de kullanılan İngiliz dili öğretim programını içerik analizi ve kültürlerarası karşılaştırma yoluyla incelemiştir. Ders kitabı analizi, ADOÇP'da önerilen dil becerilerine, ders kitaplarının kültürlerarası özelliklerine ve A1 düzeyi tanımlayıcılara göre gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, ilkökul İngilizce sınıflarında ADOÇP'nin uygulanması ve ders kitabı etkinliklerinde A1 düzeyi tanımlayıcılarının temsil edilmesi açısından iki ülkedeki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları öne çıkarmaktadır. Öğretmen eğitiminin önemine, ilkökul düzeyi için yaşa ve kültürlerarası özelliklere uygun materyallerin geliştirilmesine, ve sürdürülebilir ve tutarlı dil politikalarının ve planlamanın gerekliliğine yönelik çıkarımlar yapılmıştır.

## 1. Introduction

The macro structure that embodies the English Language Teaching (ELT) national curricula in Europe has been the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) since 2001 (Jones & Saville, 2009). Morrow (2004) defines the CEFR as “a means of developing language teaching in Europe by finding a way to compare the objectives and achievement standards of learners in different national contexts” (p. 7). More specifically, it serves as a detailed map for teachers, curriculum developers, and course designers to improve current practices by adapting the ideas and resources set out in the framework. It is a product of the Council of Europe (CoE) that began in the late 1950s. Now, it groups together 47 countries including Turkey and Portugal (Morrow, 2004). It is referred to and implemented in the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations and materials development across Europe. However, as many studies reveal (Jones & Saville, 2009; Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007; Nakatani, 2012), the full potential of the framework at the classroom level has not been realized yet because understanding to what extent it has been implemented in the course books and how teachers are equipped with its guidelines have remained difficult. Accordingly, the purpose of this cross-cultural study is to gain insights into the extent to which the CEFR is implemented in the English Language Teaching syllabuses and course books for the 3rd and 4th primary grades in Portugal and Turkey.

### 1.1. The English Language Teaching Reforms and Policies in Turkey at Macro- and Micro- Levels

In 2012, the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) launched the latest regulation of 4+4+4 education system. According to this education system, primary, secondary and high school education each lasts for 4 years adding up to 12 years (Bayyurt, 2014; Kırkgöz, 2014). The starting age for learning English as a foreign language in Turkey was reduced to 7 in the second grade from 9 in the fourth grade in Turkey (Demirezen, 2014). The amount of English lessons was defined as 2 hours during the first three years, then to 4 hours during the rest of the four years. In other words, primary graders started learning a new foreign language at an earlier age as in other European countries like Hungary and Spain as well as in China and Japan (Nunan, 2003). Such a reform brought about a new and updated teaching program with new syllabuses for the 2nd and 3rd grades and revised syllabuses from the 4th to 8th grades (Güngör, 2016). In line with this revision (MoNE, 2013), mainly speaking and listening skills are emphasized in the 2nd and 3rd grades while reading, writing and grammar are integrated in the following grades. In the 5th and 6th grades, young learners are exposed to short texts and controlled writing activities while 7th and 8th graders read simple texts and write short paragraphs.

The Ministry of National Education also decided to modify the 2013 curriculum with regards to the latest reform movement for grades 2, 3, 4 and onwards in 2017 (MoNE, 2017). This modification proposed an action-oriented approach and other instructional techniques like Total Physical Response, art and crafts, drama, role-plays, songs, games, and cognates (MoNE, 2017). The updated curriculum was revised in two ways: the first one was through the integration of values into education, basic skills as themes and means of assessment and evaluation, and the second one was by way of the linguistic realization of target language skills, evaluation of the tasks and activities and analysis of the program with respect to forms and functions. Moreover, the CEFR served as a basis for the selection of cultural and familiar themes such as family, holidays, leisure time activities to increase young learners' tolerance towards cultural differences. In addition, the amount of English lessons was reduced to 3 hours in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, while it remained unchanged in the other grades. As for assessment and evaluation, the new syllabus suggested performance evaluation through a list of self-assessment questions like “how much did you learn?”, “what did you learn?” and

“what do you think you can do in real life based on what you learnt in class?” Also, young learners were required to keep a dossier of their language learning achievement as mentioned in the European Language Portfolio (MoNE, 2013). Apart from self-assessment and the dossier, formal exams were suggested through oral and written examinations, quizzes, homework assignments, portfolios, projects, teacher observation and peer-evaluation (Güngör, 2016). Finally, each English language program was constructed upon the previous one to sustain learner outcomes through enjoyable learning atmosphere and topics (Kırkgöz, 2014).

The revised program employs an action-oriented approach in which English is used as a medium of communication through classroom interactions to communicate competently. This approach has been adopted from the CEFR and aims to achieve autonomy, self-assessment and appreciation for cultural diversity. Learners are expected to become confident and proficient users of English and appreciate their own culture as well as international cultures. The underlying notion is that young learners learn best through songs, games and hands-on activities (Pinter, 2017); therefore, it serves as a guideline to facilitate young learners’ learning process through authentic materials, drama, role-play and similar enjoyable and motivating activities. The program aims to reach out to learners in diverse populations at different developmental levels to meet their needs successfully (MoNE, 2017). Although the emphasis is on speaking and listening activities in the first three grades of the program, teachers are also given space to practice doable reading and writing activities based on the notion of a communicative classroom. While the program contains suggestions and sample units for the book authors, there are also suggestions for teachers. They are expected to introduce the tasks, activities and contexts that are relevant and appropriate for learners’ lives. Teachers are to perform teaching by considering varied learning strategies for both classroom instruction and assignments regardless of the one-sided strategy preference for examinations (MoNE, 2017).

From a broad perspective, the program offers some key competences which include basic skills each and every citizen needs to acquire in formal education (CoE, 2001). These competences are communicating in the native and target language, developing literacy, math and science skills, learning to learn, taking social and civic responsibility, taking initiative, being an entrepreneur, and developing cultural awareness and creativity. The themes and topics were revised so as to cover these competences and values in education so that teachers could make appropriate contextual choices and supplementary materials. Hence, the program offers teachers specific suggestions. In other words, it is left to teachers to decide on the specific selection of teaching methods and techniques to meet learners’ linguistic, social and cognitive needs. Teachers are given the authority to focus on the values and key competences underlying the units through themes and topics. As Bayyurt (2014) suggests, rather than the course hours at primary levels, the important thing is spending the English lesson hours effectively. Hence, teachers should be provided with well-prepared teaching materials and use them effectively enough for the learners’ developmental, social and emotional needs (Tüm & Parmaksız-Emre, 2017).

## **1.2. The English Language Teaching Reforms and Policies in Portugal at Macro-and Micro- Levels**

The decision of the Portuguese government to include the teaching of English in primary schools came as a direct consequence to the political statements and the multiple documents and reports issued by the European institutions since the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which aimed at a set of measures to foster the acquisition of foreign language skills in general, particularly, of the English language. Although the European recommendations regarding the teaching of languages are not prescriptive as to which languages to teach, and it promotes

linguistic and cultural diversity, the choice to provide the acquisition of English in primary education in Portugal seemed natural due to the current role of English as the main language of international communication. Consequently, until the academic year 2012/2013, English was taught as an ‘Extra-Curricular Activity’ in Portuguese primary schools (1st cycle)<sup>1</sup>, offered mandatorily by the schools but as an elective subject<sup>\*\*</sup>. However, in 2014, English became a mandatory subject in years 3 and 4 commencing in the academic year 2015/2016, thus ensuring the offer of seven consecutive years (years 3 to 9) of English language learning in Portugal.

At present, the English language curriculum and syllabus for primary school/1st cycle are developed based on a set of 3 major documents: the ‘Curricular Aims for English Language Teaching’ - CAELT (Bravo, Cravo, & Duarte, 2015), the ‘Supporting Materials for the Curricular Aims for ELT in Primary Education’ - SMCAEPE (Cravo, Bravo, & Duarte, 2015), and the ‘Programming Guidelines for Teaching English in Primary Education: Teaching and Learning Materials’ - PGTEPE (Bento, Coelho, Joseph, & Mourão, 2005), produced by the Ministry of Education aiming at providing relevant and detailed information about teaching English in primary education/1st cycle (years 3 and 4) which should be used as practical guidelines by the two major agents of action, namely English for Young Learners (EYL) teacher education programs at universities and EYL materials producers at Portuguese publishing houses.

To all intents and purposes, the CEFR is perhaps the most important influence on the drawing up of those documents. Firstly, the CAELT (Bravo et al., 2015) identifies the correspondence between the CEFR competence level A1 (Basic User) and Years 3 and 4 of primary school (p. 2). Furthermore, it provides a detailed list of language competences to be developed by learners in both years of the 1st cycle in the following domains: Listening, Reading, Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production, Writing, Intercultural Domain, and Lexis and Grammar (p. 4-18). Similarly, the SMCAEPE reinforces the importance of the CEFR by organizing the content of the proposed activities based on the following domains of reference categorized in the CEFR: Intercultural Domain, Lexis and Grammar, Listening, Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production, Reading and Writing. Moreover, it recommends activities which foster the acquisition of the A1 level, as proposed by the CEFR (p. 3). Finally, the PGTEPE (Bento et al., 2005), in its ‘Framework’ section, recognizes it has been structured based on the CEFR’s essential nature to promote the development of plurilingual and pluricultural awareness (p. 9).

### **1.3. The CEFR and Young Learners’ Curricula and Course Books**

Young learners have captured the attention of literature recently. According to Pinter (2017), primary language teaching materials should provide learners with the opportunity and space to develop their cognitive skills, metalinguistic awareness and communication skills in English, encourage enjoyment and motivation, and learn about other cultures. They should have age-specific characteristics which affect foreign language learning such as learning by doing, interacting with others, and learning through a role model (Cameron, 2012; Crandall & Shin, 2014). At the same time, considering the cognitive, emotional and physical developments of young learners, it is vital to apply these considerations to the English language classroom through appropriate techniques, recommendations and practices with materials (Güngör, 2016). Similarly, the CEFR has brought curriculum, pedagogy and assessment into a closer interdependence (Little, 2011), mostly owing to the action-oriented

<sup>1</sup>The Portuguese educational system is structured in the following way: Basic Education (Years 1 to 9), divided into 1st cycle (years 1 to 4), 2nd cycle (years 5 and 6), and 3rd cycle (years 7 to 9); Secondary Education (years 10 to 12).

<sup>\*\*</sup>English is taught mandatorily from years 5 to 9 (2nd and 3rd cycles).

approach to describe L2 proficiency. Each “can-do” descriptor is used to specify and develop the learning target activities, materials, and assessment types.

However, as Little (2011) warns, the extent to which the curricula and course books are prepared to reflect those principles should be clearly examined. In short, it is important to evaluate curriculum and course books developed for young learners in terms of reflecting the principles of the underlying theory, meeting the developmental needs of young learners, and leading teachers to apply developmentally appropriate teaching methods and/or techniques (Ghosn, 2013; Tomlinson, 2013). Furthermore, the adaptation of the CEFR entails a process of contextualization and appropriation (Little, 2011). There are several studies which focus on the implementation of the CEFR in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade course books (Tüm & Parmaksız-Emre, 2017), in 8<sup>th</sup> grade course books through a critical discourse analysis perspective (Balci, 2017), and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ELT curriculum through illuminative evaluation model (Özüdoğru, 2016) in Turkey which focus on the comparison of ELT curriculum in Portugal and Kosovo (Bekteshi, 2017); however, there is little emphasis on the comparative studies conducted in both countries that use the CEFR as their map in the ELT curriculum at macro-and micro-levels. Hence, this study aims to compare ELT curricula and course books employed in young learners’ classrooms in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades in Turkey and Portugal in view of the key aspects of the CEFR. To this end, it attempts to explain to what extent ELT curricula and course books in each country follow the principles of the CEFR. Following that, the two countries will be compared in accordance with their coverage of the CEFR in primary schools.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Questions**

Based on the aims of the study, the research questions below guided the analysis of data:

- (1) To what extent does the ELT curriculum used in young learners’ classrooms in Turkey and Portugal reflect the main considerations of the CEFR?
- (2) To what degree do ELT course books employed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade follow the descriptors of the major skills for A1 level emphasized in the CEFR?

### **2.2. Research Design**

In this study, a mixed research methodology has been employed to examine the curricula and course books thoroughly. Dörnyei (2007) defines the mixed method as a “collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the research process” (p. 163). Creswell (2014) specifies basic and advanced mixed method research types with respect to data collection, analysis and interpretation. Accordingly, this study draws upon a “convergent mixed methods design” in which the researchers “compare or relate” the results of qualitative and quantitative data analyzed separately (Creswell, 2014, p. 220). In this research, qualitative and quantitative data were gathered and analyzed separately. The findings obtained from both kinds of data were interpreted and related in order to track the implementation of the CEFR respectively in ELT curriculum and course books. For qualitative data collection, a “Curriculum Evaluation Form” was used to investigate the representations of the CEFR in ELT curriculum in Turkish and Portuguese primary schools. On the other hand, quantitative data were gathered through “The CEFR Checklist for A1 Level Course Books” providing full-fledged analysis of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade course books in view of main language skills (i.e., spoken production, reading comprehension, written production, listening comprehension, and spoken interaction).



### 2.3. Data Collection Procedure

Firstly, the “Curriculum Evaluation Form” was employed to examine the curricular dimensions of English language teaching in primary schools. This form was developed by the researchers to measure to what extent ELT curriculum in Turkey (MoNE, 2017) and ELT curriculum in Portugal (Bravo et al., 2015; Cravo et al., 2015) meet the requirements of the CEFR in foreign language education in primary schools. In order to devise this instrument, theoretical aspects of the CEFR given below were taken into consideration as the constructs of the data collection form:

Language teaching approach(es), language teaching and learning materials, language skills, language functions, contextual domains, task conditions and constraints, and language assessment and evaluation (CoE, 2001).

In consonance with these constructs, open-ended and close-ended questions were written, and then expert opinions were asked about the content validity of these questions. Upon the feedback obtained from the field experts, the “Curriculum Evaluation Form” was revised and finalized for the actual administration (see Appendix A). Each pair of researchers examined their own national curriculum in practice since they are more acquainted with the contextual information about teaching English to young learners in their native country.

Secondly, the CEFR checklist for A1 level course books was used to develop an understanding of how comprehensively ELT course books for the 3rd and 4th grades reflect A1 level descriptors (can-do statements) given in the CEFR for the five main skills (CoE, 2001). By and large, this checklist measures to what degree the course books present young language learners with activities which are constructed in line with A1 level descriptors. These descriptors provided a basis for the development of each item in the checklist. Checklist items were examined by five experts to ensure the content validity. In light of the expert feedback, the CEFR checklist was reviewed and prepared for the course book analysis. Through this finalized checklist (see Appendix B), the following course books (see Table 1) were analyzed by the researchers:

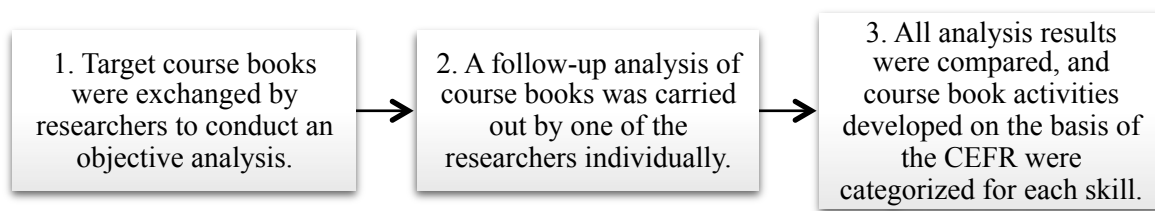
Table 1

*Descriptive information about the target course books used in the analysis*

Country	Grade	Course Books	Writers & Publishing Year
<b>Turkey</b>	3rd Grade	İlkokul İngilizce 3: Ders Kitabı	(Dağlıoğlu, 2017)
	4th Grade	İlkokul İngilizce 4: Ders Kitabı	(Barut, 2017a; 2017b; 2017c)
<b>Portugal</b>	3rd Grade	Let's Rock! 3	(Abreu & Esteves, 2017a)
	4th Grade	Let's Rock! 4	(Abreu & Esteves, 2017b)

The Turkish course books, which were officially approved by the board of education and employed by English language teachers in the 3rd and 4th grades across the country, were developed by the course book writers in keeping with the curricular underpinnings of ELT curriculum (MoNE, 2017) used in primary schools in Turkey. Similarly, the Portuguese course books were developed by material writers in line with the guidelines proposed by the Ministry of Education (Bento et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2015; Cravo et al., 2015) in relation to English language teaching in primary schools. Those course books were analyzed in three stages as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Three stages of the course book analysis through the CEFR checklist



In the first stage, the abovementioned course books were exchanged among the Portuguese and Turkish researchers and analyzed activity by activity. As a second step, a follow-up analysis of the course books was conducted by one of the researchers independently. At these stages, it is attempted to secure both inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. For inter-rater reliability, the researchers worked in collaboration to develop an agreement on the placement of each language activity into the appropriate checklist item. In regard to intra-rater reliability, which refers to a researcher's elaboration on data in "the same way at different times" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 129), one of the researchers analyzed the course book activities thoroughly (Stage 2) at different intervals from various perspectives. Finally, all analysis results were compared, and course book activities which were appropriately constructed in light of the CEFR were highlighted in each language skill.

During the course book analysis, some important points were taken into consideration as explained below.

- Figures, flags, traditions from various countries and different characters, which do not exist in the native cultures, are regarded as cultural elements of the course books.
- Course book activities based on "making a dialogue" or "making a sentence" were examined to analyze both speaking and writing skills.
- Song and chant activities, even if some of their transcriptions were not available, were seen as authentic and practical listening and speaking activities because the pupils can make use of songs or chants easily to develop their receptive and productive skills.
- Authenticity was also traced in listening and reading activities including cartoons and speech bubbles.
- Each activity developed for spoken interaction was considered as a spoken production as well.
- A set of sentences, which consists of at least ten words, was accepted as a short text for reading comprehension.
- When some mechanical activities were dependent on a core activity in practice, only the core activity was taken into account in the course book analysis.
- Course book activities presented in a postcard-shaped or post-it-shaped figures were analyzed as if they were given in a separate material like real postcard or post-it.
- Grammar-based activities which required the pupils to fill in the blanks with appropriate structure were accepted as writing practices.
- Spelling activities were not analyzed within the framework of the writing skill since it is regarded as an orthographic skill in the CEFR (CoE, 2001).
- Because of practical issues in getting audio and video files in the target countries, some listening and video activities were not included in the course book analysis.

In addition, some items (the third item in listening comprehension, and the second and tenth items in spoken interaction) in the checklist were excluded from the course book analysis due to the limitations of the study (see Appendix B). More specifically, the researchers could not reach the audio files of target course books because of the practical reasons. Whereas a large majority of listening comprehension activities can be analyzed with their transcription and visuals provided, the third item in the listening comprehension part of the CEFR Checklist (i.e., the course book presents students with activities which include very slow recordings with long pauses) requires the researchers to access the audio files. Similarly, the researchers can interpret the second and tenth items in the spoken interaction part only by taking part in classroom practices and observing spoken interaction among the students, while other items in this part can be checked with reference to the examples, visuals, and instructions given in the relevant activities. Because of those limitations of the study, the abovementioned items were not included in the analysis of course book activities, and they were not reported in the “Results” section.

In keeping with the high-stake points identified above, Table 2 summarizes the number of activities which were analyzed in each course book. As it is obvious, Portuguese course books include more activities when compared with Turkish course books.

Table 2

*Number of course book activities analyzed through the CEFR Checklist*

	Turkey		Portugal	
	3rd Grade	4th Grade	3th Grade	4th Grade
1. Spoken Production	64	73	84	66
2. Reading Comprehension	11	31	130	103
3. Written Production	15	23	85	59
4. Listening Comprehension	31	11	49	38
5. Spoken Interaction	33	35	26	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>289</b>

## 2.4. Data Analysis

Since qualitative and quantitative data were collected independently and respectively from the “Curriculum Evaluation Form” and “The CEFR Checklist for A1 Level Course books,” both types of data were analyzed separately. In order to code and categorize the qualitative data gathered through open-ended questions, content analysis was employed. This analysis technique is based on “the process of summarizing and reporting written data – the main contents of data and their messages” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 475). Along with the content analysis, descriptive statistics were computed for quantitative data collected with the checklist items. “Descriptive statistics can help to provide simple summary or overview of the data, thus allowing researchers to gain a better understanding of data set” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, pp. 250-251). Accordingly, frequencies and percentages were calculated to present to what degree the activities in the 3rd grade and 4th grade course books in Turkey and Portugal reflect the can-do statements for each language skill at A1 level in the CEFR.

## 3. Results

The results reveal the basis of two main constructs: the implementation of the CEFR in ELT curriculum and representation of the CEFR descriptors in ELT course books at A1 level.



Firstly, both curricula were evaluated in terms of their coverage of the CEFR underpinnings. Following that, the 3rd and 4th grade course books were described with respect to their percentage of representing A1 level descriptors in the CEFR.

### ***Implementation of the CEFR in ELT Curricula***

ELT curricula used in foreign language education in Turkish and Portuguese primary schools were thoroughly evaluated in consideration of the key components emphasized in the CEFR. Table 3 draws a holistic framework of how the CEFR components are elaborated in ELT curricula in both countries:

Table 3

*Evaluation of ELT curriculum in Turkey and Portugal in view of the CEFR*

	<b>Turkey*</b>	<b>Portugal**</b>
<b>Suggested Approach</b>	An eclectic mixture of instructional techniques on the basis of action-oriented approach	Total Physical Response and Task-based Learning (PGTEPE)
<b>Components</b>	General Objectives, Key Competencies, Values Education, Testing and Evaluation, and Structure of the Curriculum	Programming Guidelines for Teaching English in Primary Education (PGTEPE), Supporting Materials for the Curricular Aims for ELT in Primary Education (SMCAEPE), Curricular Aims for English Language Teaching (CAELT)
<b>Language Skills</b>	Listening, Speaking (Spoken Production and Spoken Interaction), Very limited writing and very limited reading	Listening, Reading, Writing, Spoken Production, Spoken Interaction, Lexis, Grammar (PGTEPE & CAELT)
<b>Competences</b>	Key competences (traditional skills, digital skills, and horizontal skills) are underlined.	In addition to skill-based competences, intercultural domain is highlighted (CAELT).
<b>Language Functions</b>	Language functions (e.g., greeting and saluting, making simple requests, expressing likes and dislikes) are clearly and explicitly established in each unit.	Curriculum does not directly propose language functions. Alternatively, it places the language functions to be achieved into curricular aims for each skill (CAELT).
<b>Contextualization</b>	Language activities are mostly contextualized in personal, public and educational domains.	Language activities are contextualized in four domains: “Me,” “My Family,” “Cross-curricular Themes,” and “Festivals” (PGTEPE).
<b>Task Conditions and Constraints</b>	Arts and crafts, chants and songs, games, drama, drawing and coloring, question and answer, reordering, making puppets, storytelling, matching, labelling, lexical activities are suggested.	Language tasks such as role plays, creative and intercultural activities are suggested (PGTEPE).
<b>Teaching or Learning Materials</b>	Authentic, audio-visual materials, printed handouts, textbooks, flash cards	Story books, games, textbooks, multimedia resources (PGTEPE, CAELT)
<b>Assessment and Evaluation</b>	Language testing and evaluation should be conducted with formative and summative purposes. Also, it should offer positive washback effect and provide information on what has been achieved and needs to be achieved. Self-assessment, alternative and process oriented testing techniques and methods are proposed (MoNE, 2017).	Learners are assessed in “a positive and supportive environment.” Formative assessment is mainly suggested by means of observation, portfolio, and self-assessment (PGTEPE, p. 29).

*\*This column explicates the implementation of the CEFR in ELT curriculum (MoNE, 2017) in Turkey. Accordingly, it includes direct quotations from MoNE (2017) to specify the research constructs.*

*\*\* This column explicates the implementation of the CEFR in ELT curriculum (Bento et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2015; Cravo et al., 2015) in Portugal. Accordingly, it includes direct quotations from CAELT, PGTEPE, and SMCAEPE to specify the research constructs.*

### **Representation of the CEFR descriptors in ELT course books at A1 level**

In order to understand how the CEFR is put into practice at this level, a meticulous analysis of ELT course books has been conducted in view of five main language skills. Table 4 displays the frequencies and percentages of spoken production activities which represent A1 level descriptors of the CEFR.

Table 4

*Descriptive statistics for spoken production activities in A1 level course books*

A. Spoken Production	Turkey				Portugal			
	3rd Grade		4th Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade	
The course book presents activities	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
1 which include characters from different . cultural backgrounds.	7	10.94	26	35.62	16	19.05	14	21.21
2 which encourage students to describe . themselves.	-	-	1	1.41	15	17.86	-	-
3 in which students give personal . information.	8	12.5	20	27.38	21	25	8	12.12
4 which encourage students talk about their . daily routines.	-	-	3	4.11	5	5.95	1	1.52
5 which help students take control of simple . grammatical structures.	60	93.75	69	94.52	69	82.14	61	92.42

Accordingly, the 3rd and 4th grade course books in Turkey and Portugal mostly help language learners produce simple spoken utterances by appropriately using grammatical forms. Also, cultural elements are highlighted in speaking activities with different percentages. For example, the frequency of language activities, which include cultural figures, in the 4th grade is higher than the ones in the 3th grade activities in both countries. In addition, language learners give personal information in some activities; however, there are fewer activities which put major emphasis on encouraging learners to describe themselves or expressing daily routines.

As a receptive skill, reading comprehension is examined through language activities presented in the 3rd and 4th grade course books on the basis of the CEFR. Table 5 shows that target course books include reading activities in which cultural characters or figures from different contexts are available. Whereas the percentages of including cultural elements are almost equal in the 3rd and 4th grade course books in Portugal, in Turkey the 4th grade course book covers more activities with cultural perspectives in comparison to the 3rd grade course book. In Portuguese course books, informative and descriptive texts along with very short texts are commonly used to develop reading comprehension. While authentic materials are employed less in reading activities, visual support is given in both course books. In addition, reading activities largely allow learners to practice familiar statements in both countries. On the other hand, reading texts consisting of instructions and directions or messages on postcards or similar materials are not given enough place. Generally speaking, the Portuguese course books include more reading comprehension activities which reflect A1 level descriptors. The main reason for this difference is that the Portuguese curriculum puts emphasis on the thorough comprehension of reading skill whereas the Turkish curriculum accentuates that very limited reading should be included in language teaching materials.

Table 5

*Descriptive statistics for reading comprehension activities in A1 level course books*

		Turkey				Portugal			
<b>B. Reading Comprehension</b>		3rd Grade		4th Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade	
<i>The course book presents students with activities which include</i>		<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
1.	characters from different cultural backgrounds	2	18.18	16	51.61	45	34.62	33	32.04
2.	very short texts to develop their reading comprehension	3	27.27	13	41.94	69	53.08	76	73.79
3.	visual support for reading texts	3	27.27	11	35.48	70	53.85	62	60.19
4.	reading texts which offer simple descriptions and information	3	27.27	12	38.71	96	73.85	92	89.32
5.	simple texts using authentic materials	1	9.09	1	3.23	19	14.62	24	23.3
6.	texts with short and simple directions	-	.	-	-	-	-	1	0.97
7.	texts with short and simple messages on postcards or similar materials	-	-	5	16.13	5	3.85	6	5.83
8.	short and simple instructions	-	-	3	9.68	23	17.69	14	13.59
9.	very short statements which they have practiced in advance	9	81.82	22	70.97	103	79.23	95	92.23

With respect to written production in ELT course books, it can be concluded from Table 6 that these course books present writing activities which include cultural characters or figures from different backgrounds. Also, language learners have more opportunities to use written language by controlling grammatical structures in both countries, especially in the 4th grade in Turkey. Similar to spoken production, there are writing activities which enable language learners to produce written expressions about themselves and other people. These activities are generally given in the 4th grade course book in Turkey. Whereas Turkish course books, especially the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, include written production activities presented in post-it or postcard-shaped figures, these activities are rarely found in Portuguese course books. In view of the less employed A1 level descriptors, it can be stated from Table 6 that using greeting and farewell expressions is only encouraged in an activity in the Portuguese course book in the 3rd grade. In addition, writing down numbers and dates about learners themselves are not commonly involved in ELT course books in the 3rd and 4th grades.

Table 6

*Descriptive statistics for written production activities in A1 level course books*

		Turkey				Portugal			
<b>C. Written Production</b>		3rd Grade		4th Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade	
<i>The course book presents activities</i>		<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
1.	which include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	2	13.33	7	30.43	24	28.24	13	22.03
2.	in which students can write simple sentences about themselves or other people;	2	13.33	11	47.82	16	18.82	12	20.34
3.	which encourage students to write simple and short sentences on postcards or similar materials;	2	13.33	9	39.13	5	5.88	4	6.77

4.	which provide students with activities in which they can write greetings and farewells;	-	-	-	-	1	1.18	-	-
5.	which encourage students to write numbers and dates about themselves;	-	-	-	-	5	5.88	1	1.69
6.	which include activities which help students take control of simple grammatical structures.	5	33.33	18	78.26	34	40	16	27.12

Since listening is one of the major skills in ELT curricula in Turkey and Portugal, listening comprehension activities reflect relatively more A1 level descriptors given in the CEFR as pointed out in Table 7. Cultural elements are integrated into listening comprehension with different percentages in Turkey and Portugal. Nearly half of the listening activities in the Portuguese course books include cultural characters or figures from different backgrounds. Almost all listening activities are authentic. Language learners generally use listening activities, particularly songs and chants. These practical activities are more frequently used in the 3rd grades. Moreover, ELT course books also put emphasis on gaining familiar vocabulary especially in the 4th grade. Language learners in both countries practice listening activities in which they comprehend simple questions and instructions. Likewise, language learners can comprehend everyday expressions related to simple needs in oral text, especially in the 3rd grade in Portugal. Additionally, listening comprehension practices including dialogues are more available in ELT course books in Portugal.

On the other hand, listening activities including directions are not commonly presented in the course books except for the 3rd grade Portuguese course book. Also, listening texts addressing everyday themes at an A1 level, such as numbers, times, and directions, are less common in the 3rd grade course book in Turkey. Besides these findings, it is also seen that the frequencies of listening activities in some A1 level descriptors are comparatively lower in some course books. This may stem from the fact that the limitation of practicality related to accessing listening materials inhibits a precise analysis of course book activities.

Table 7

*Descriptive statistics for listening comprehension activities in A1 level course books*

D. Listening Comprehension	Turkey				Portugal			
	3rd Grade		4th Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade	
<i>The course book presents students with activities which</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
1. include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	1	3.23	3	27.27	24	48.98	21	55.26
2. include listening materials students can use practically;	19	61.29	5	45.45	20	40.82	10	26.32
4. include short and simple authentic listening materials;	30	96.77	11	100	49	100	38	100
5. include directions and instructions;	2	6.45	-	-	14	28.57	1	2.63
6. include short and simple texts which help students pick up familiar words;	10	32.26	10	90.91	38	77.55	35	92.11
7. include dialogues with very common and basic expressions;	1	3.22	1	9.09	16	32.65	14	36.84
8. include texts with most common	3	9.68	4	36.36	16	32.65	11	28.95

everyday themes;									
9.	help them understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs;	8	25.81	3	27.27	24	48.98	5	13.16
10.	help them understand simple questions and instructions in oral texts.	10	32.26	5	45.45	29	59.18	22	57.89

Similar to language activities in other skills, spoken interaction activities, including cultural themes or characters, are presented with different percentages in both countries as highlighted in Table 8. Whereas the 4th grade course book in the Turkish setting offers culturally diverse interactive activities for speaking, there are few activities with cultural differences in the 3rd grade course book in Turkey. Generally speaking, young language learners ask and answer more questions about themselves or others in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. A large body of spoken interaction activities in both countries encourages language learners to make simple dialogues and talk about familiar topics. Additionally, language learners in Portugal may introduce themselves while interacting with others more frequently in the 3rd grade. In an activity in the 3rd grade in Portugal, learners use basic greetings. It is also seen from Table 8 that language activities which require expressing numbers, quantities, cost and times are included more often in the Portuguese course books.

Table 8

*Descriptive statistics for spoken interaction activities in A1 level course books*

E. Spoken Interaction	Turkey				Portugal			
	3rd Grade		4th Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade	
<i>The course book presents students with activities</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
1. which include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	2	6.06	17	48.71	7	26.92	8	34.78
3. in which they ask and answer questions about themselves and other people;	15	45.45	25	71.43	10	38.46	17	73.91
4. which help them talk about very familiar topics;	33	100	34	97.14	16	61.54	23	100
5. which encourage them to engage in simple dialogues;	33	100	35	100	22	84.62	21	91.30
6. in which they can introduce themselves;	1	3.03	1	2.88	8	30.77	-	-
7. which encourage them to use basic greetings and leave taking expressions in dialogues;	-	-	-	-	1	3.85	-	-
8. in which they deal with numbers, quantities, cost and time;	4	12.12	2	5.71	4	15.38	7	30.43
9. which encourage them to use time expressions.	-	-	2	5.71	3	11.54	3	13.04

## 4. Conclusion and Discussion

### 4.1. Implementation of the CEFR in the Portuguese and Turkish ELT Curricula

The main focus of the CEFR is on an action-oriented approach which regards language learners as “social agents” (CoE, 2001, p. 9). In view of the methodological aspects in ELT curricula, it can be stated that the Turkish curriculum proposes “an eclectic mixture of instructional techniques” on the basis of an action-oriented approach (MoNE, 2017, p. 3) whereas the Portuguese curriculum suggests mainly task-based learning and total physical



response to construct language learning (Bento et al., 2005). It seems that the ELT curriculum in Turkey is methodologically based upon adopted approaches in the CEFR. In regard to the Portuguese context, the ELT curriculum puts forward how language learning should be taught, and similarly draws on methodological dynamics of the CEFR in some respects. Considering the structural constituents of the curricula, it can be seen that general objectives or aims are highlighted in both countries. In other words, all language learning practices attempt to attain pre-determined curricular goals.

In addition to language aims and objectives, the main language skills are highlighted in the CEFR. More specifically, understanding skills (listening and reading), speaking skills (spoken production and spoken interaction) and writing skills are emphasized in accordance with the “Common Reference Levels” (CoE, 2001, p. 26). With respect to the major language skills in the ELT curricula, it can be concluded that listening, spoken production, spoken interaction, and very limited reading and writing are the focal skills on which foreign language use is established in primary education in Turkey (MoNE, 2017). In view of the Portuguese curriculum, listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction, writing, lexis and grammar along with the intercultural domain are used as primary skills for language use as given in the PGTEPE (Bento et al., 2005) and the CAELT (Bravo et al., 2015). This finding shows that ELT curricula have similarities with the CEFR in particularizing language skills.

Also, language functions and notions as well as grammar and vocabulary are depicted in each common reference level of the CEFR. Curricula evaluation indicates that the Turkish curriculum explicitly defines the language functions to be acquired in each unit. On the other hand, the Portuguese curriculum does not directly specify language functions as a separate part of the program. Instead, these functions are embedded in the curricular aims and are achieved through the attainment of these aims. Besides that, the CEFR points out that “language activities are contextualized within domains,” and these domains can be categorized as public, personal, educational and occupational domains (CoE, 2001, p. 14).

Language activities in Turkish and Portuguese course books are generally contextualized in personal, public and educational domains. For these domains, the CEFR underlines the importance of communicative tasks. In both ELT curricula, communication-oriented language tasks are largely suggested, such as arts and crafts, role plays, songs and chants. As for language teaching and learning materials, authentic, audio-visual materials, textbooks, hand-outs, and flash cards are suggested in the Turkish curriculum (MoNE, 2017). Similarly, the Portuguese curriculum puts forward story books, textbooks and multimedia resources as suggested in the PGTEPE (Bento et al., 2005). Moreover, the CEFR identifies a wide range of language assessment types ranging from self-assessment to performance assessment to be employed in the language learning and teaching setting (CoE, 2001). In the same way, self-assessment is highly recommended in both curricula along with alternative and process-based language assessment methods. Furthermore, language assessment should be conducted in a non-threatening environment according to curricular perspectives. Taken together, the Turkish and Portuguese curricula used in primary schools to teach English as a foreign language mostly meet the requirements of the CEFR.

#### **4.2. Representation of the CEFR descriptors in the Portuguese and Turkish ELT course books at A1 level**

When language skills are examined individually in terms of the extent to which course book activities in the 3rd and 4th grades in Turkey and Portugal reflect the CEFR descriptors for A1 level, it is seen that spoken production activities generally help language learners take control of simple grammatical structures. Also, both countries include cultural figures, but the frequency of speaking activities which include cultural elements is higher in the 4th grade in

both countries. Whereas learners share personal information to some extent in both countries, they do not commonly describe themselves or talk about their daily routines in speaking activities.

Regarding the skill of reading comprehension, it can be stated that ELT course books present cultural differences. There is also evidence that both grades include reading texts which are generally informative and descriptive, and supported with visuals. All the course books provide activities for language learners to read the statements they have previously practiced. On the other hand, authentic materials are relatively less used in reading activities. Similarly, reading texts which cover simple instructions or directions or simple messages on postcard-shaped materials are less presented in these grades. The Portuguese course books generally have higher percentages in reading comprehension. It may be due to the fact that the ELT curriculum (MoNE, 2017) used in Turkey suggests very limited reading for language learners at this level.

As for the written production, language activities include cultural characters or figures in both countries with different percentages. Also, language learners practice writing activities by taking control of simple grammatical forms, especially in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Turkey. Generally speaking, ELT course books in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade include more activities in which language learners may write simple sentences. On the other hand, the Turkish course books do not seemingly include writing activities including numbers and dates about learners, greetings, and farewells while these activities are even less used in the Portuguese course books.

Regarding listening comprehension, the ELT course books present language activities including cultural elements with different percentages. All the course books allow language learners to practice familiar vocabulary in both grades. Also, learners can take part in authentic and practical listening activities in both countries. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Portuguese course book has higher percentages in providing listening texts which include simple directions, instructions and expressions which consider the student's needs. With respect to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade course book in Turkey, it can be found that common expressions are less common in listening activities.

Finally, language activities based on spoken interaction, largely enabling language learners to ask and answer questions, take place in simple dialogues and talk about familiar topics. Also, spoken interaction activities include cultural figures with different percentages in both grades. From a comparative perspective, language activities which require using numbers, cost and time expressions are presented less in ELT course books in both countries. In addition, the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade course book in Portugal includes more spoken interaction activities in which language learners can introduce themselves; basic greeting and leave taking expressions are only provided in an activity in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in Portugal.

#### **4.3. Comparison of Portugal and Turkey in terms of the reflection of the CEFR in ELT curricula and course books for young learners**

When ELT curricula used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades in the Turkish and Portuguese primary schools are compared in terms of teaching approach, instructional objectives, language skills, functions, contexts, tasks, materials, assessments and evaluations, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, the approach, objectives and focus within the language classrooms in Turkey and Portugal differ. The Turkish ELT curriculum theoretically constructs a language teaching approach as “an eclectic mixture of instructional techniques” (MoNE, 2017, p. 3), in keeping with an action-oriented methodology. On the other side, the Portuguese ELT curriculum underlines the focal approaches of language teaching as total physical response and task-

based learning which specify how to teach English in practice (Bento et al., 2005). Furthermore, while both curricula attempt to achieve language aims and objectives which are instructionally defined in advance, different language skills are emphasized in each curriculum: the Turkish ELT curriculum focuses on speaking, listening, very limited reading, and very limited writing skills in the 3rd and 4th grade classrooms (MoNE, 2017); the Portuguese ELT curriculum focuses on speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills along with lexis, grammar and intercultural domain in those grades (Bento et al., 2005; Bravo et al., 2015).

However, the functional, contextual and evaluative aspects of the curricula are more similar. Though the language functions to be acquired are explicitly given in the practical part of the Turkish curriculum, and the Portuguese ELT curriculum covers these functions in the curricular aims, communicative and authentic tasks, materials, and activities are suggested in both curricula. Furthermore, language activities are contextualized in personal, public, and educational domains which are among the language domains identified in the CEFR (CoE, 2001). Finally, self-assessment is highlighted in the curricula in addition to alternative and process-based assessment methods, all of which should be positive and encouraging in young learner classrooms according to these curricula.

As regards the A1 level descriptors identified in the CEFR (CoE, 2001), the 3rd and 4th grade course books used in Turkish and Portuguese primary schools are similar. Though with different percentages, cultural elements can be found in both the Turkish and Portuguese course books. Moreover, the Turkish and Portuguese ELT course books help young learners take control of simple forms when they produce spoken utterances, and when they use grammatical forms in written production, though the frequency of activities enabling the latter is higher in the 4th grade course book in Turkey. Finally, the types and frequencies of activities to practice a language skill differ when examining a student's age and the country's course book.

As regards speaking and writing activities, young learners can give personal information in speaking activities or write sentences about themselves or others in writing activities in both grades. Though present in both countries, it is most frequent in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade that ELT course books encourage young learners to make simple dialogues, talk about familiar topics, and ask and answer questions about themselves and others; however, they give less information on their daily routine. In Portugal, the course books present more activities for young learners to use numerical and time expressions in spoken interaction, and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade course book, learners do more activities to practice describing themselves, and young learners practice greetings and farewells in speaking and writing activities. On the other hand, the 4th grade Turkish course book includes more post-it shaped figures which lead young learners to write simple sentences.

For the reading skill in both countries, ELT course books provide reading activities which help young learners practice the statements they have learnt in advance. Although present in both Turkish and Portuguese course books, in 3rd and 4th grade Portuguese course books, more descriptive and informative reading texts, visual supports and authentic materials are used, and while only found in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade course book of Portugal, simple instructions are also more frequently included in reading activities in the Portuguese course books. In Turkey, in the 4th grade course book, post-card shaped figures or similar designs are used in higher percentages for reading comprehension.

As regards listening activities, similarities and differences were also present. In view of practicality and authenticity, ELT course books in both countries include listening texts based

on songs and chants including everyday themes with different percentages. Furthermore, all ELT course books help young learners learn familiar vocabulary given in listening texts, but the 4th grade course books in both countries provide these texts in higher percentages. They also present listening comprehension activities in which simple questions and instructions are used, though in Portugal, the frequency of these activities is slightly higher. In Portuguese course books, more dialogues in listening activities are present, and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Portuguese course book, listening texts, including directions, instructions, or basic expressions of simple needs, are more often provided.

### **5. Implications**

This study discussed the implementation of language policy and planning, the CEFR, at a micro-level in two different contexts from a cross-cultural comparative perspective. Kennedy and Tomlinson (2013) emphasize that for the successful implementation of language teaching programs, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and teaching materials is essential. This can be possible by providing continuing resources, as well as on-going teacher training and development. Hence, as a recommendation for further studies, and also as suggested by Enever, Moon and Raman (2009), primary English teachers need to be observed in their classroom on their competence in the English language, their use of teaching and assessment techniques, and their adaptations of the course books to ensure cultural and age-appropriate material. In line with Balcı (2017), Bekteshi (2017), and Özüdoğru (2016), they need to be informed about the underlying notion behind the language curriculum and syllabus, and sample implementation workshops should be delivered through in-service trainings. Pre-service teacher education programs also need to be redesigned by including the courses that enhance pre-service teachers implement the CEFR in teaching and evaluating learners from various age groups. As suggested in the study by Tüm and Parmaksız-Emre (2017), the young learner course books should provide learners and teachers with a satisfactory amount of language components, tasks, activities, and critical discourse analysis features so that they can meet the production needs of learners and help teachers guide. They further propose that material writers for young learner course books need to develop a corpus to meet young learners' lexical needs during speaking and evaluate them through an age and level appropriate system. Özüdoğru (2016) also emphasizes the importance of delivering the listening materials to teachers and learners before the academic year starts.

While implementing the CEFR, strengths and weaknesses of the execution phase can be explored through teacher narratives for future studies. These narratives may serve as the primary source for detecting the successful and unsuccessful parts of the program. In doing so, teachers will have a voice in shaping the curriculum and syllabus. Moreover, informing not only teachers but also the principals, teacher trainers, parents and students about the curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials may help facilitate language acquisition and educational development.

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## Appendix A. The CEFR curriculum evaluation form

The following questions aim to describe to what degree a language teaching curriculum has been developed on the basis of the Common European Framework for References. The first question includes Yes/No items about the CEFR criteria. On the other hand, the questions 2 to 10 are presented as open-ended in order to get in-depth information about curricula.

### 1. What criteria are met by English language teaching curriculum?

	Yes	No
a. Are the needs of learners to learn a foreign language identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Are language learning objectives formulated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Is language teaching content defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Are language learning or teaching materials suggested?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Are the assessment/testing/evaluation components clearly explained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which approach is suggested to develop the English language teaching curriculum?

3. What are the components of the English language teaching curriculum?

4. Which skills are taught in the English language teaching curriculum?

5. What competencies are included in the English language teaching curriculum?

6. Are language functions identified in the English language teaching curriculum? If so, which?

7. Are there any specific domains with which language activities are contextualized? If so, which?

8. Does the English language teaching curriculum identify task conditions and constraints? If so, which?

9. What are the language teaching or learning materials suggested in the English language teaching curriculum?

10. What is the role of language assessment in the English language teaching curriculum?

11. How is English language learning assessment/evaluation proposed in the English language teaching curriculum?

## Appendix B. The CEFR checklist for A1 level course books

This checklist aims to quantify to what degree EFL (English as a Foreign Language) course books at A1 level reflect the content and activities proposed by the CEFR. It includes 40 items in five main categories (i.e., spoken production, reading comprehension, written production, listening comprehension, and spoken interaction). In order to analyze EFL course books through this checklist, it is required to follow three steps explained below.

(1) Each activity in these course books should be examined individually;

(2) the activity category (e.g., spoken production or listening comprehension) should be defined;

(3) if the activity represents the specifications of the item(s), the activity code and page number should be noted down for the relevant item(s).

<b>A. Spoken Production</b>		<b>Activity Code &amp; Page Number</b>
<i>The course book presents activities</i>		
1.	which include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	
2.	which encourage students to describe themselves;	
3.	in which students give personal information;	
4.	which encourage students to talk about their daily routines;	
5.	which help students take control of simple grammatical structures.	

<b>B. Reading Comprehension</b>		
<i>The course book presents students with activities which include</i>		
1.	characters from different cultural backgrounds;	
2.	very short (e.g. 10 words) texts including basic vocabulary to develop their reading comprehension;	
3.	visual support for reading texts;	
4.	reading texts which offer simple descriptions and information;	
5.	simple texts using authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, posters, and public signs;	
6.	texts with short and simple directions (e.g., turn left, go straight ahead);	
7.	texts with short and simple messages on postcards or similar materials;	
8.	short and simple instructions;	
9.	very short statements which they have practiced in advance.	

<b>C. Written Production</b>		
<i>The course book presents activities</i>		
1.	which include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	
2.	in which students can write simple sentences about themselves or other people;	
3.	which encourage students to write simple and short sentences on postcards or similar materials (e.g., note cards, post-its, or invitation cards);	
4.	which provide students with activities in which they can write	

	greetings and farewells;	
5.	which encourage students to write numbers and dates about themselves – e.g., address, age, date of birth;	
6.	which include activities which help students take control of simple grammatical structures (e.g., word classes, sentence construction, and, linking words).	

	<b>D. Listening Comprehension</b>	
	<i>The course book presents students with activities which</i>	
1.	include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	
2.	include listening materials students can use practically;	
3.	include very slow recordings with long pauses;*	
4.	include short and simple authentic listening materials;	
5.	include directions and instructions – e.g., go from X to Y;	
6.	include short and simple texts which help students pick up familiar words;	
7.	include dialogues with very common and basic expressions;	
8.	include texts with most common everyday themes such as numbers, times, and directions;	
9.	help them understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs;	
10	help them understand simple questions and instructions in oral texts.	

*\*This item was not included in the course book analysis because of the limitations of the study.*

	<b>E. Spoken Interaction</b>	
	<i>The course book presents students with activities</i>	
1.	which include characters from different cultural backgrounds;	
2.	which require them to ask how people react to something or somebody;**	
3.	in which they ask and answer questions about themselves and other people;	
4.	which help them talk about very familiar topics;	
5.	which encourage them to engage in simple dialogues;	
6.	in which they can introduce themselves;	
7.	which encourage them to use basic greetings and leave taking expressions in dialogues;	
8.	in which they deal with numbers, quantities, cost and time;	
9.	which encourage them to use time expressions (e.g., last Friday, next week, in November, at 3 o'clock) through texts and	

	visuals;	
<b>10.</b>	which help them interact in a simple way at a slow rate of speech.**	

*\*\* These items were not included in the course book analysis because of the limitations of the study.*