EVALUATION OF READING MATERIALS IN THE SPEAKOUT COURSEBOOK: FROM THE DATA ON PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EFL INSTRUCTORS

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EVALUATION OF READING MATERIALS IN THE SPEAKOUT COURSEBOOK: FROM THE DATA ON PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EFL INSTRUCTORS

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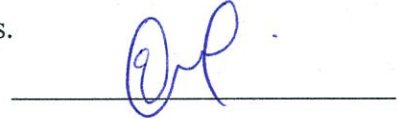
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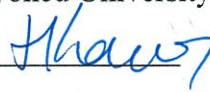
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ABSTRACT

EVALUATION OF READING MATERIALS IN THE SPEAKOUT
COURSEBOOK: FROM THE DATA ON PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES
OF EFL INSTRUCTORS

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook used as an instructional material for learners at the intermediate level of proficiency in a language preparatory program in Turkey. Specifically, the reading materials were examined in terms of text appropriateness, purpose of the materials, learner needs and vocabulary development based on the perceptions and experiences of the Turkish EFL instructors. The participants of this study were 60 EFL instructors working at a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey and the data were collected through a questionnaire (N=60), reflective essays (N=15) and stimulated recall protocols (N=5). The findings revealed that the reading materials were satisfying in relation to length, level of the texts along with authenticity and introduction of target culture; however, certain modifications with regard to topics, genre, visuals, strategies, activities and word recycle were required to be addressed more closely.

Keywords: Coursebook evaluation, reading materials, perceptions and experiences of EFL instructors, English as a foreign language (EFL)

ÖZ

SPEAKOUT DERS KİTABINDAKİ OKUMA MATERYALLERİNİN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETEN EĞİTMENLERİN ALGI VE DENEYİMLERİNE GÖRE

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'nin yabancı dil hazırlık programlarında, orta seviyede İngilizce yeterliliğine sahip öğrenciler için eğitim materyali olarak kullanılan *Speakout* ders kitabındaki okuma materyallerini değerlendirmektir. Özellikle, okuma materyalleri, amaçları, metinlerin uygunluğu, öğrenci gereksinimleri ve kelime dağarcığı gelişimi bakımından öğretim görevlilerinin algı ve deneyimlerine dayanarak ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmaya, İstanbul'da bir vakıf üniversitesinde (kar amacı gütmeyen, özel) çalışan, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten 60 öğretim üyesi katılmıştır. Veriler; 60 kişiye uygulanan anketler, 15 kişi tarafından yazılan yansıtıcı metinler ve 5 kişinin sesli düşünme tekniği ile toplanmıştır. Bulgular, okuma materyallerinin uzunluğu, seviyesi ve gerçekliğe uygunluğunun yanı sıra erek kültürün tanıtımı açısından yeterli olduğunu ancak hala konu, çeşit, görseller, teknikler, aktiviteler ve ifade yeteneği ile ilgili bazı değişikliklere değinilmesi gerektiğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ders kitabı değerlendirmesi, okuma materyalleri, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten eğitmenlerin algı ve deneyimleri, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce eğitimi

To my parents and husband

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout the world, the English language is spoken in many countries by millions of people not only as a first language but also as an alternative means for cross-cultural communication. English has become a part of our daily life, considered as a window to the world, a bridge between countries and it is used as a tool for communication, language of business, science, technology, cinema, TV and most importantly, a medium of instruction in education.

As a matter of fact, English as a school subject has become compulsory in educational curricula starting from the second grade in primary schools to high school and university preparatory programs. Due to this quick spread and popularity of English, a growing need of English language teaching (ELT) and learning has appeared. With the rapid progress in this profession, language learners have become more aware and demanded wider range of materials which offer new and innovative approaches. In a typical ELT setting, classroom materials are unique elements of language instruction that provide for the needs of teachers and learners. Thus, coursebooks in other words; textbooks have increasingly become a key pedagogic device in second language learning.

Many researchers have suggested different definitions (O'Neill, 1982; Sheldon, 1987; Ur, 1996; Průcha, 1997; Tomlinson, 1998) for the term 'coursebook' (as cited in Lawrence, 2011): In the first place, O'Neill (1982) stated that coursebooks shape the unpredictable interaction necessary for classroom language teaching. Similarly, Sheldon (1987) defined a coursebook as a published book that is specially designed to help language learners improve their linguistic and communicative abilities. Ur (1996) also argued that coursebooks are effective tools which allow for carefully planned, balanced and systematic presentation of the syllabus of an EFL program. Průcha (1997), on the other hand, considered a coursebook as a curricular object and the source of knowledge for students and teaching material for teachers. According to Tomlinson (1998), a coursebook is a textbook which provides the students with the basic materials necessary for a course and it covers the specific items of a language such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation; and functions integrating the four skills (pp 5-8).

Regarding the innovations and approaches in language education, coursebooks have played a vital role in language classrooms. The importance of coursebooks is so extensive that it is almost a universal element in learning and teaching and it is crucial to any language program (Litz, 2005; Sheldon, 1988). Research has suggested that it is extremely common to see language professionals incorporating the use of coursebooks for daily teaching purposes and very few of them would not use published materials at some stage of their career (McDonough & Shaw, 2003). This process is beneficial both for learners and teachers. As for the learners, coursebooks increase the chance of autonomy, practice, review and monitoring progress without too much dependency on the teacher. They are also a source for developing a learner's personality, learning styles and strategies. They are designed to give cohesion to the language teaching and learning process by providing direction, support and specific language-based activities aimed at offering classroom practice for students (Mares, 2003) and foster effective and quick learning of the language (Cunningsworth, 1995).

From the teacher's perspective, coursebooks play a crucial role in the process of teaching since they provide fundamental components of a curriculum and determine the content by defining coverage for syllabus items. They are of great value in terms of offering clear objectives and ready-made syllabi which contain a carefully planned and balanced selection of language content and provide consistency in the topics and genres while teaching the four skills (Kayapinar, 2009). In addition, coursebooks include ready-made texts and engaging tasks applicable to each level. They also provide supporting teaching materials such as workbook, teacher's book and achievement tests for each unit. All of these reasons make using coursebooks a very popular choice in the English learning curriculum.

Apart from the supportive research on using coursebooks, some claim that coursebooks are inevitably superficial and reductionist in their coverage of language items and they impose uniformity of syllabus and remove initiative from teachers (Little et al. 1995; Tomlinson, 1998; Tornberg, 2000). To exemplify, Little et al. (1995) point out that some textbooks have characters and situations that are of no interest to students. In addition, if the content is organized in the same pattern, students might be bored and find the coursebooks predictable. It may also be the case that the level of the coursebooks does not match that of the students.

As for the coursebook writers, Tomlinson (2008) argues that they count more on their instincts while writing materials; they include what is best in language learning from their own perspective. As a result, the majority of them fail to apply language acquisition principles. Similarly, some authors of coursebooks construct unfamiliar cultures and they contain typical 'coursebook families' that actually have little equivalence to the majority of people living in the target-language culture (Tornberg, 2000).

In the light of the information above, while some researchers propose a number of advantages of using coursebooks, others criticize them, focusing on different aspects of coursebooks. From their perspective, it is clear that coursebooks have gained more importance in the process of teaching English as a second or foreign language; however, the perceptions vary to a great extent.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

In the framework of material evaluation, the aim is to make a decision on the appropriateness of particular materials, provide developers with a pragmatic stimulus and help them design effective and contemporary materials in the future. In this sense, it is important to know the context of evaluation. In addition, since, this study will merely focus on the evaluation of reading materials in a coursebook; the concept of reading and the objectives of reading materials in *Speakout* coursebook should be mentioned here. Thus, this part presents the two basic components of this current study.

1.1.1 The Context of Evaluation. Many researchers have offered definitions in order to explain the concept of evaluation from their own perspectives. In the first place, Worthen and Sanders (1973) defined evaluation as the determination of the worth of a thing. It includes obtaining information for use in judging the worth of a program, product, procedure, or object, or the potential utility of alternative approaches designed to attain specified objectives. Similarly, Brown (1989) offered another definition for evaluation: it is the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of the curriculum to see its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants' attitudes within a context

of particular institutions involved. According to Rubdy (2003) evaluation is broadly defined as a matter of judging the fitness of something for a specific purpose which can be undertaken for a variety of purposes and conducted in a variety of ways. (p.41). Tomlinson (2003) considers it as a procedure that involves measuring the value of a set of learning materials including making judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them. (p.15).

From the definitions above, it is clear that evaluation is the systematic analysis of the information in order to promote improvement as well as the assessment of effectiveness on a particular educational program.

1.1.2 Reading Materials in ELT. The concept of reading has recently evolved in ELT materials. Traditionally, materials in the units begin with a reading text, which is to be read by students and this text mainly focuses on grammatical or vocabulary items that are to be developed within the unit. However, these materials are thought to be inadequate to meet the needs of students as they are not being exposed to the variety of styles and the texts are unable to teach reading skills in that way. Reading texts are mostly used as a tool for the introduction of new vocabulary and/or structures. As a result students are not being taught reading and developing reading abilities. It is fairly common for these kinds of texts to begin along the following lines:

Victoria and her family

I'm from New York. My grandparents, Martha and John, and my mother and father, Gloria and Mike, are from New York, too. We're a very American family. My husband, Darren is English. He's from a big family in Manchester. Sam and Dave, his two brothers are in the band, too. His sisters aren't musicians. Ellie's a teacher, and Rachel's a housewife. My son, Rory is 4, and my daughter, Summer is 2.

(*Success* Beginner, 2008, p.23)

These kinds of texts seem artificial as they merely function as a vehicle to draw learners' attention to specific item usage rather than to the authentic features of real text. In this passage, the sentences come together in isolation with little attempt at coherence. The same structures are repeated which makes the text inauthentic. In

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addition, the learners are overfamiliar with the topic, thus, the content is unimportant for them. There is no real interaction between the writer and the reader as the artificiality of the text means that no real message is being conveyed. This 'text as object' viewpoint views the reader as having nothing to contribute to the reading process and is seen as an 'empty vessel' that merely receives information. (McDonough & Shaw, 2011 p.91).

In recent years, an increasing number of ELT materials have moved from 'text as object' to 'text as process' by encouraging close interaction between the reader and the text (McDonough & Shaw, 2011 p.92). In this way, students feel challenged or involved in the text and they have the opportunity to dialogue with the writer by interrogating the text, reflecting on expectations at every stage, assuming what the writer will say next.

<center>It's never too late.</center>

Joan Collins can't believe she's seventy-seven- she certainly doesn't look it. She made her first films in the early 1950s and is still one of Britain's best known actors. Probably most famous for her role in the 1980s classic soap, *Dynasty*, Joan has always been very glamorous.

She recently made a TV program, *Joan Does Glamour,* with the aim of showing younger women how they can dress with a bit more style.

Joan insists that she has never had plastic surgery and that she never will. She claims that her good looks are a result of good skincare and make-up.

<center>(*New Total English* Intermediate, 2011, p.98)</center>

The reading text above is an example of 'text as process' as the reader cannot trace a specific grammatical item while reading it. In addition, it is obvious that the mere function of the text is to draw the attention of the reader to authentic functions and meaning. No structure is repeated or written in isolation. On the contrary, the text as a whole shows coherence and cohesion which helps the reader interact with the writer.

To sum up, any reading selection is vital in terms of teaching purposes. Thus, reading materials should present meaningful new information on topics appropriate for students as well as have coherence/cohesion and cater for the needs of learners.

1.1.3 Reading Objectives in the *Speakout* Coursebook. Since the researcher's main concern is evaluating the reading materials in the Speakout coursebook it is important to have a look at the objectives of teaching reading. As it is stated in the coursebook reading is considered as priority for students. Because learners who read regularly tend to have a richer, more varied vocabulary which in turn supports their oral communication skills. In addition, it is emphasized in the objectives that the language learner who develops skill and confidence in reading in the classroom will be more motivated to read outside the classroom, thus the classroom reading texts aim to introduce stimulating topics and act as springboards for class discussion. Based on the information above, the important features of the reading materials are listed here:

- Focus on authentic texts: Many of the reading texts in the *Speakout* are sourced from the BBC. There is an attempt to maintain authenticity by remaining faithful to the text type in terms of content and style. The authors also state that they have chosen up-to-date relevant texts to stimulate interest and motivate learners to read.

- Focus on sub-skills and strategies: The authors think that they strive to maintain authenticity in the way the readers interact with a text. They give students a reason to read, and provide tasks which stimulate authentic reading, including real life tasks such as summarizing, extracting specific information and reacting to an opinion. The authors also state that they focus on strategies for decoding texts, such as guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary, understanding pronoun referencing and following discourse markers.

- Noticing new vocabulary: Noticing language in use is regarded as a key step towards the development of a rich vocabulary and greater all-round proficiency in a language, and this is most easily achieved through reading. In *Speakout* reading, texts often serve as contexts for introducing grammar and vocabulary as well as discourse features.

(*Speakout* Intermediate, Teacher's Book, 2011, p.20)

It is clear that the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook have distinctive features which are intended to improve reading skills of students in the classroom. In an attempt to find out whether these important features really make reading materials effective enough for students to improve reading proficiency, this current study will be conducted.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The quality of coursebooks has advanced dramatically lately; however, the process of selecting an appropriate one has not become any easier. Some of them cannot adequately cater for the needs of students as they are written for an imaginary group of learners who are assumed to have similar profiles. O'Neill (1993) stated that the coursebooks are not likely to cover all materials that are preferred or enjoyed by such learners. Alptekin (1993) also acknowledged that the writers produce materials related to their own culture rather than that of learners. As a result, the content of the materials may not be attractive and engaging for the target group of learners who are generally coming from different cultural and educational backgrounds. This causes reluctance to complete the reading comprehension tasks.

Parallel to the research on reading, it can be said that some coursebooks foster production over process providing little or no contextual information about the reading selections. In addition, many EFL instructors agree that some coursebooks do not provide learners with effective reading materials and this inevitably results in poor level of reading proficiency. Since some reading materials heavily depend on answering specific comprehension questions and understanding word meaning students are rarely encouraged to process the information through an intellectual engagement, analysis and interpretation of the text. Thus, reading is regarded as a passive and dull activity which fails to meet the needs of the students. As an EFL instructor in a preparatory program, the researcher herself has been facing this problem recently. Based on teaching practices, classroom observations and discussions with colleagues, the researcher has found out that the preparatory students in the program she is teaching do not find the reading materials of the current coursebook *Speakout* appealing enough and show reluctance in reading the

texts and doing follow-up activities of the coursebook. As a result, they lose their enthusiasm and eagerness in reading.

Considering this problem, the researcher has decided that it is essential to carry out a concrete and an in-depth analysis of reading materials in *Speakout* coursebook, which will serve as a guide for EFL instructors and help the language learners improve motivation and meet their learning needs by attaining their potential.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the reading materials used in the *Speakout* coursebook which is designed and developed as an instructional material for EFL learners at the intermediate level of proficiency. The reading criteria to be evaluated in this study were parallel to Uslu's (2003) study which were applicable to the research context.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions and sub-questions were addressed in the study:

1. What are the perceptions of the EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of the reading materials used in the *Speakout* coursebook in terms of the following criteria:
   a. Text appropriateness
   b. Purpose of the materials
   c. Learner needs
   d. Vocabulary development
2. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook?
3. What modifications can be suggested for the reading materials based on the reflections of the EFL instructors on their classroom practices?

1.5 Significance of the study

In the first place, coursebooks have numerous functions in the process of teaching and learning. They can be regarded as one of the most prominent sources of knowledge for the learners. According to Hutchinson and Torres (1994), coursebooks provide the basic input into classrooms through different activities, readings and explanations along with being a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Furthermore, they serve as a syllabus and self-study source for learners as well as a support for novice teachers. Therefore, it is important to select an appropriate coursebook in order to meet the primary language needs of students. There have been many attempts to involve learners in the evaluation of courses and materials (Güntek, 2005; Çakıt, 2006; Özdemir, 2007; Kesen, 2010; Zohrabi, 2011; Ipek, 2014); however, little research focused primarily on the reflections of the EFL instructors' classroom practices during coursebook evaluation process. Therefore, this study will mirror real-classroom practice of the mentioned reading materials.

Secondly, a number of researchers have underlined the importance of post-use evaluation of a textbook as it provides data regarding the actual effect of the materials on the users (Mukundan & Ahour, 2010; Skierso, 1991; Tomlinson, 2003). However, to the knowledge of these researchers, the number of post-use evaluation studies is limited in Turkish EFL context. In order to fill this gap, this study provides a natural platform for a post-use evaluation due to the importance given to textbooks in Turkish EFL classrooms. The results are likely to enhance the literature giving suggestions based on the perspectives of the EFL instructors as well as their classroom practices of the *Speakout* coursebook. The findings will most probably help material writers enrich the effectiveness of the reading component by analyzing what modifications and adaptations should be addressed in the existing coursebook.

Last but not least, this study is based on a micro evaluation characterized by a narrow focus on reading materials. Therefore, the findings are expected to contribute to the existing evaluation procedures by providing in-depth information about the effectiveness of the reading materials used in the coursebook.

1.6 Basic Assumptions

It is assumed that the participants gave honest responses to the questionnaire, in reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols. The researcher also assumes that the participants represent the general characteristics of the target population. Finally, in this study, the data collection instruments are thought to be reliable, convenient and show consistency.

1.7 Operational Definitions

CEFR: Refers to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages which is a guideline to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe.

Coursebook: A textbook providing the core materials for a language learning course. (Tomlinson, 1998).

EAP: English for Academic Purposes: the teaching of English to speakers of other languages who need English to study at a college or university (Online Cambridge Dictionary, 2015).

EFL: English as a Foreign Language: the teaching of English to students whose first language is not English (Online Cambridge Dictionary, 2015).

ESL: English as a Second Language: the teaching of English to students whose first language is not English, but who live in a country where it is the main language (Online Cambridge Dictionary, 2015).

ELT: English Language Teaching: The teaching of English to students whose first language is not English (Online Cambridge Dictionary, 2015).

Materials Evaluation: The systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and the learners using them (Tomlinson, 1998).

Macro Evaluation: This type of evaluation is carried out for accountability and/or developmental purposes by collecting information relating to various administrative and curricular aspects of the program, including teaching materials (Tomlinson, 1998).

Micro Evaluation: This type of evaluation is characterized by a narrow focus on some specific aspect of the curriculum or the administration of the program (Tomlinson, 1998).

Reading: It is a process in which information from the text and the knowledge possessed by the reader act together to produce meaning (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, Wilkinson; 1985).

Reading Skill: A reading skill is a helpful tool that a student practices in order to improve reading (Hollas, 2002).

Reading strategies: A reading strategy is a plan or way of doing something; a specific procedure one uses to perform a skill (Hollas, 2002).

Learning styles: Learning characteristics of the learners such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, experiential, analytic, global, dependent and independent.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a review of the theoretical background regarding material evaluation. It starts with the role of the coursebook in EFL classrooms and continues with the advantages and disadvantages of coursebooks, reading as a skill, the evaluation criteria as well as evaluating ELT materials and lastly, ends with the previous studies related to material evaluation.

2.2 The Role of Coursebook in EFL classrooms

The importance of coursebook in EFL classrooms is so extensive that it has become a universal element in teaching and learning in language education. Many researchers (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Cunningsworth, 1995; Nunan, 1999; McGrath, 2006; Richards, 2007; Wang & Lee, 2011) agree that coursebooks play a vital role as they are seen the main source of exposure to the English language and help to determine learner success in language classrooms. Coursebooks also specify classroom activities, teaching methods and students' roles by giving cohesion to the language teaching and learning process providing guidance and support.

Another function of coursebooks is to make the substantial knowledge available and apparent to the learners in an organized way. According to Hutchinson & Torres (1994) coursebooks are the most convenient means of providing structure that the teaching-learning system requires (p.317).

With respect to the multiple roles of coursebooks, Cunningsworth (1995) states that coursebooks do not only help present the written and spoken material; but they also provide activities, promote interaction, serve as a reference on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, act as a source for classroom activities by offering self-access work or self-directed learning (p.7). In addition, the primary role of coursebooks is also recognized as a grammatical and functional framework that serves for both students and teachers' common needs and wants.

From Nunan's (1999) perspective, coursebooks are regarded as the basic elements of any curriculum and without them it is quite difficult to imagine a class.

Moreover, coursebooks foster the learning process by mediating between the teachers and students by offering a coherent syllabus and appropriate language control (p.98).

McGrath (2006) also suggests that coursebooks are a central element in teaching-learning encounters and they tend to dictate what is taught, in what order and how as well as what learners learn (p.171). Richards (2007) also defines coursebooks as classroom materials that provide students with the main source of contact with the language acting as a key component in most language programs. He states that materials in a coursebook provide the main input necessary for the students through different activities; readings, explanations and the type of the language practice that occurs in the classroom. They also serve as the basis for the language content and skills to be taught and other kinds of language practice that the learners take part in (pp.251-252). Similarly, from the point of Wang & Lee (2011) coursebooks can provide activity design and assure a measure of structure, consistency, and logical progression in a class (p.91).

Based on these common descriptions, it can be said that though the importance of coursebooks in EFL classes has been justified by many different researchers above, opinions on whether coursebooks can actually help or hinder the teaching and learning process still seem to polarize. In this sense, it is important to review the pros and cons of using coursebooks in EFL teaching. These will be addressed below.

2.3 The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Coursebooks

Many scholars have acknowledged that coursebooks provide both learners and teachers with numerous advantages (O'Neil 1982; Sheldon 1988; Harmer 2001; Hutchinson & Torres 1994; Ur 1996; Lawrence, 2011).

In the first place, coursebooks are one of the more economic and convenient forms of access to carefully structured packaged learning materials and they can also save learners from teachers' incompetency and deficiencies (O'Neil, 1982). Similarly, as Sheldon (1988) states coursebooks need little preparation time for lesson planning, whereas teacher-created materials can be inefficient in terms of time, cost and quality; they reduce the danger of teacher occupational overload.

According to Harmer (2001) coursebooks often contain lively and interesting material; they provide a sensible progression of language items, clearly showing what has to be learnt and in some cases summarizing what has been studied so that students can revise grammatical and functional points that they have been concentrating on. Textbooks can be systematic about the amount of vocabulary presented to the student and allow students to study on their own outside the class (p.257).

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) also argue that during periods of change, a coursebook can serve as a tool for supporting teachers and as an instrument of modifications and alterations. Furthermore, the way chapters are designed and structured can provide a blueprint of how lessons should be conducted.

According to Ur (1996) one of the major motivational issues in using coursebooks in the EFL environment is that they can serve as a good monitor for measuring the teaching and learning process. They are effective tools in terms of allowing for carefully planned and systematic presentation of the syllabus of an EFL program and can facilitate curriculum change.

In agreement with the researchers mentioned above, Lawrence (2011) also states that students benefit from coursebooks in many different ways: they provide security by being a kind of road map of the course; they can act as a reference point for the learning process and keep track of student development. Besides, students can use the coursebook as a tool for revision of previously taught items and familiarize themselves with the new items that will be taught soon.

Despite the undeniable benefits, a number of researchers have highlighted that heavy dependence on a single coursebook is detrimental to students' needs, and too much dependency on coursebooks can be seen as educational failure (Allwright, 1981; Nunan, 1991; Cunningsworth, 1995; Tomlinson, 2001; Richards, 2001).

To begin with, Allwright (1981) emphasizes that content is not predictable due to the interactive nature of classroom events. Although a coursebook may assist in some way, it cannot determine the over-all content of a language program. Thus, coursebooks may hold a limited role (p.8).

Cunningsworth (1995) affirmed that no matter how pedagogically sound the textbook is, learners will quickly lose interest if they find the materials dull and not attractive (p.10). He also provides four interrelated disadvantages to an approach which is heavily dependent on a single coursebook. Firstly, there can be a lack of variety in teaching procedures. Secondly, innovations toward individual student needs are reduced. Thirdly, spontaneity and flexibility are diminished. Fourthly, there can be a lack of creativity in teaching techniques and language use.

Tomlinson (2001) explained that a coursebook is inevitably superficial and reductionist, in its coverage of language points and in its provision of language experience. It cannot cater for the diverse needs of its users, it imposes uniformity of syllabus and approach, and it removes initiative and power from teachers (p.67).

Finally, Richards (2001) mentions possible negative aspects of coursebooks. To illustrate, some pre-packaged coursebooks contain inauthentic language failing to portray real life; they may distort content; the real needs of students may not be reflected and as they take teaching out of teacher's control; they cause over-dependency issues and this may result in deskilled teachers. Finally, some coursebooks are generated for a mass market and they may present a financial burden to the learners. pp. (255-256).

In brief, it should be noted that both merits and limitations of coursebooks need to be considered in the critical process of coursebook selection for the teaching of English as a foreign language. If the coursebooks that are being used in a program are thought to have some negative consequences, remedial action should be taken by adapting, supplementing or providing appropriate guidance and support for teachers on how to use them effectively.

2.4 Reading as a skill

Reading is basically defined as an interaction between the reader and the text requiring a rich background and adequate knowledge of language (Grabe, 2002). It requires complex processes which differ in specific contexts depending on level, age, motivation, and reading purposes. The traditional definition of reading comprehension results in the teaching of reading through "separately defined"

comprehension skills, and could be called as "skills model." (Sheridan, 1981). Skills, separately taught in a logical and sequential order, is thought to result in the improved comprehension of textual material. The traditional skills model view of reading is a bottom up or data driven processing model. In this view of reading, letters are perceived in a left to right sequence until a word is perceived as a whole, meaning is obtained and related to other words in the sentence, thus activating the dominant schema and its particular concepts. Similarly Carrell (1998) defines this process as extracting information from the text and deal with letters and words in a relatively complete and systematic way in order to aid comprehension.

According to psycholinguistic model, reading is considered as process of predicting meaning based on the reader's knowledge of oral language syntax, semantics, and phonological cues. In other words, based on the reader's store of information about how language works from his knowledge of oral language, a reader already knows something about how words are ordered and what kinds of meaning words possess in certain contexts. The early psycholinguistic model is primarily a top down or conceptually driven model where the emphasis is on prediction of meaning. More specifically, there is an interaction between the reader and the text and it involves the reader in activating their world knowledge by referring to past experiences, expectations and intuitions to reach an overall idea about the text.

A more recent theory of reading comprehension is called schema theory defined by Adams and Collins (1979) as the interaction between what is in the text and how that information is shaped and stored by the reader. The underlying assumption is that meaning does not lie solely in the print itself, but interacts with the cognitive structure or schemata already present in the reader's mind. This schemata represents the framework for understanding new information. According to Rummelhart & Ortony (1977) schemata represents universal concepts which are stored in memory: the particular concept is not stored by remembering the isolated event in its totality down to its most basic components, but by identifying those aspects of the event related to other concepts already stored. We make connections between the information in the text and what we already know. So, a schema represents generalized knowledge about a sequence of events and, having its parts and sequenced events. We comprehend the message in a text when we are able to

call up the appropriate schema, fitting it into an interpretation on which allows us to see the text in a certain way. What we store is the interpretation of the text, which we then call up to make inferences about author's purpose, specific characters, and so on in other similar texts. (p. 68)

Schema theory has new emphasis on various parts of the teaching process, particularly the importance of utilizing pre-existing knowledge and experience of the reader, setting purposes for reading, and asking appropriate questions before and after reading. In the light of the schema theory, it is important to motivate reader by building interest as well as assessing the knowledge and experience before having the student read. After that, students need to activate their background knowledge or experience to understand what they are reading as well as how to use it. Students also need to become aware of their personal attitudes and beliefs which can shape their interpretation of a text, giving it a meaning unlike that which the author intended.

In addition to reading theories, there are some important strategies to help students enhance their reading comprehension and increase their reading ability as well. Cunningham and Allington (1994) offered the following five key strategies that readers need to use; using background knowledge, predicting, self-monitoring and self-correcting, identifying main ideas and summarizing, making inferences and questioning. Keeping these strategies in mind, students are able to become better at monitoring their comprehension, review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know.

Vocabulary is considered as an integral part of the reader's overall competence (Biemiller, 2005). Vocabulary plays an important role both in learning to read and in comprehending text: readers cannot understand text without knowing what most of the words mean. However, vocabulary development becomes more than simply introducing words, looking up definitions in the dictionary, and using the words in sentences. Developing vocabulary means developing concepts for words, and seeing how they are alike or different from other words. As we begin to focus on reading comprehension in a more holistic way, the overlapping nature of comprehension skills as well as the importance of knowing which to use and how to integrate this into one's cognitive structure becomes more the issue.

In summary, teaching reading should integrate approaches and techniques which would make the process more meaningful by actively integrating vocabulary to help learners to improve their language proficiency.

2.5 Material Evaluation Criteria

Material evaluation is a complex and tough process carried out in various frameworks and guidelines. They are built around important categories and they have to be adopted with care and consideration. Many researchers have come up with their own criteria and made valuable contributions to this process (Cunningsworth, 1984; Ur, 1996; Littlejohn, 1998; Ellis, 1998; Richards; 2001; McGrath, 2002; Mukundan, 2006; McDonough & Shaw, 2003).

In the first place, Cunningsworth (1984) considered the relative merits of pedagogical factors such as suitability for the age group, cultural appropriateness, methodology, type and number of exercises, availability of a teacher's book, variety, pace, and personal involvement. He offered a very detailed checklist that consists of items about grading, recycling, presentation and practice of new language items, developing language skills and communicative abilities, supporting materials, motivation and overall evaluation. In order to decide whether the coursebooks are suitable or not he asked questions about the strengths and weaknesses or omissions.

Ur (1996) offered two types of criteria. The first one is general criteria that refer to clear layout, print or periodic review. The second one is course or learner-specific criteria which aim to obtain information about how attractive and colorful the illustrations are or whether vocabulary and texts are relevant to the topic or not. For this purpose, she proposes a checklist that consists of titles such as objectives, approaches, layout and print, visual materials, topics, clarity of instructions, authentic language, the explanation and practice of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar, guidance for the teacher etc.

According to Littlejohn (1998), what we need is 'a means of looking inside the Trojan horse to see what lies within (as the use of materials, like the Trojan horse, may imply more than is immediately apparent.' He offered a checklist based on three levels of analysis of the coursebook: what is there, what is required of users and what is implied. The items at the first level seek information about the physical features

such as publication, design including layout, durability, print, availability and illustrations. At the second level, a detailed task aims to gather information about the tasks which refers to all language related activities in the textbook. It also aims to analyze the language learning activities in the textbook. At the third level, there are items that seek to gather information about the approach, philosophy and aims of the textbook. His levels of analysis move from a more objective evaluation, as in the first level, to a more subjective one, as in the third level. (p.191)

Furthermore, two of the most commonly used evaluation types are macro and micro evaluation suggested by Ellis (1998). The former is defined as the evaluation carried out for accountability and/or developmental purposes by collecting information relating to various administrative and curricular aspects of the program including teaching materials. Micro evaluation is characterized by a narrow focus on some specific aspect of the curriculum or the administration of the program. The following table illustrates the important features of macro and micro evaluation:
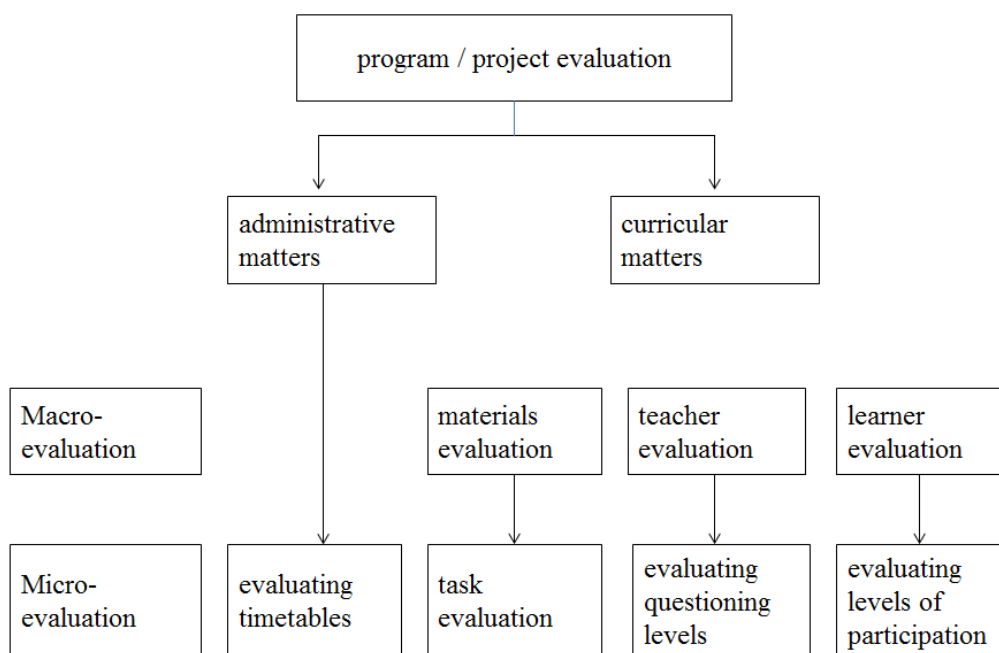

Figure 1. Macro and micro evaluations in language teaching by *Ellis, R., 1998, the evaluation of communicative tasks. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), Materials Development in Language Teaching (pp. 219-20.).*

As it is seen in the table; macro evaluation examines various administrative and curricular aspects including materials, teacher and learner evaluation; while

micro evaluation focuses on the specific aspect of the curriculum or the administration of the program such as evaluation of learning tasks, questioning practices, learners' participation etc.

Richards (2001) also mentioned three different purposes for evaluation; formative, illuminative and summative. Formative evaluation focuses on what is working well as well as what is not. Illuminative evaluation sorts out how different aspects of the program work or are implemented. It has more to do with the teaching and learning stage in a program and there is no need to modify the course at the end of this type of evaluation. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is performed at the end of the course and investigates whether the coursebook is effective or has any deficiencies. (pp. 288-292).

In a similar fashion, McGrath (2002) introduced three basic methods for evaluation. The first one is the impressionistic method which involves analyzing a textbook on a general impression by reading the blurb and the contents page, and then, skimming through the book to get a sense of organization, topics, layout and visuals. (pp.25-29). However, this method was not adequate. It could be combined with the second, checklist method, which is also inadequate if it is used solely, although it has some advantages. It is systematic in the way that the criteria on the list are checked off in a certain order. It is also very easy to compare different materials and it is not very time-consuming compared to other methods. The third method, the in-depth method, suggests a careful examination of representative features such as the design of one particular unit or exercise, or the treatment of particular language elements. However, the selected section might not be representative of the whole book. As all three methods have their pros and cons, it is a good idea to integrate them all and modify them for each individual case of material selection.

Mukundan (2006) referred to some of the shortcomings of checklists. For example, complexities of teaching-learning process cannot be evaluated by a checklist. (pp.171-172). Further, some checklists include difficult and misleading terms and some others contain complex and long-winded criteria. Therefore, Harmer (2001) suggested that teachers should better prepare a checklist based on their own particular objectives, needs, and cultural and social norms.

Finally, McDonough and Shaw (2011) examined criteria in two stages: external evaluation which offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside cover, introduction, table of contents, followed by an in-depth investigation into the materials- internal evaluation. They stated that the evaluation process is never purely statistical; when materials are deemed appropriate for a particular course after a preliminary evaluation, their ultimate success or failure may only be determined after a certain amount of classroom use, which is known as summative evaluation. (p.61).

To sum up, many criteria and checklists have been proposed in order to pave the way for effective evaluation of materials. In the light of this information, the present research is designed as a micro evaluation study in order to investigate a specific aspect: reading skills. Through micro evaluation, the researcher will determine the perceptions of the EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook, reveal major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials as well as provide suggestions for the redesign of the reading component in the coursebook based on the reflections of the participating instructors on their classroom practices.

2.6 Evaluating ELT Materials

Today there is a wealth of EFL materials available; however, many of them seem to lack language acquisition principles. Instead of contributing positively to students' development in the acquisition of the English language, they are in fact leading to learner's failure in acquiring the language and in the worst case, contain serious pedagogical flaws and practical shortcomings (Litz, 2005; Tomlinson, 2008). For these reasons, materials evaluation requires serious consideration.

Evaluation of teaching materials effectively is a crucial responsibility for all EFL teachers. Many teachers use published course materials and they provide a vast number of choice with teachers. Since materials are seen the core of a particular program and the most visible representation of what happens in the classroom, an inappropriate choice may lead to waste funds and time not to mention the demotivating effect on both students and colleagues.

In order to prevent the risk mentioned above some teachers adapt the materials as best they can to cater for the needs of their specific context. However, before adaptation they need some model which is brief, practical to use and comprehensive

in its coverage of criteria. McDonough and Shaw (2011) offered a model which examines criteria in two stages: an external evaluation which offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside cover, introduction, table of contents, and an internal evaluation defined as an in-depth investigation into the materials.

More specifically, external evaluation stage examines the claims by the author or publisher with respect to the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context and presentation of language items, whether the materials are to be core or supplementary, the role and availability of a teacher's book, the inclusion of a vocabulary list, the table of contents, the use of visuals and presentations, the cultural specificity of the materials, the provision of audio/video material and inclusion of tests. Upon completing external evaluation, it is possible to make a decision on the appropriateness for adoption or selection purposes. If external evaluation confirms that the materials are appropriate it is possible to continue with an internal evaluation in order to examine the materials in a more detailed way; if not then teachers should exit at this stage and start to evaluate other materials to adopt.

After agreeing on the appropriateness of materials at external stage, it is necessary to perform an in-depth investigation to see whether the factors mentioned in the external evaluation stage overlap with the internal consistency and organization of the materials as stated by the author or publisher. To do so, the treatment and presentations of the skills, the sequencing and grading of the materials, the type of reading, listening, speaking, and writing materials contained in the materials, appropriacy of tests and exercises, self-study provision and teacher-learner balance in use of materials should be examined carefully.

Finally, when all the criteria that are carefully analysed, teachers can reach their own conclusions regarding the suitability of the materials for particular group of learners. The final stage aims to enable the teachers to decide on what extent the materials achieve their objectives, which is known as overall evaluation. After all these stages, once the materials are found to be appropriate for use, the ultimate success or failure can only be determined after trying them in the classroom with real learners. As Ellis (1997) states most evaluation models are based on predictive evaluation; however, a retrospective evaluation by conducting a micro-evaluation of teaching tasks can help teachers reflect on their practice.

In the light of the points mentioned above, this study aims to conduct a retrospective evaluation in order to evaluate the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook by focusing on the perceptions of the Turkish EFL instructors, major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials as well as their reflections on the implementation of reading practices in their classrooms.

2.7 Previous Studies on Material Evaluation

2.7.1 Studies on Macro Evaluation. As previously stated, macro evaluation refers to the overall evaluation of the materials for accountability or developmental purposes by gathering information for administrative or curricular concerns (Ellis, 1998). Numerous studies have been carried out to evaluate teaching materials at macro level both in ESL and EFL contexts which are briefly discussed in this part of the thesis (Çakıt, 2006; Özdemir, 2007; Kesen, 2010; Azarnoosh, 2014; Bermudez, 2014; Sabzalipour & Koosha, 2014).

To begin with, Çakıt (2006) carried out a study to assess the effectiveness of an intermediate textbook "New Bridge to Success 3", for 9th grade high school students emphasizing the perspectives of the teachers and students on the basis of eleven criteria. The data were collected through a five point Likert-scale questionnaire provided to 336 students and interviews carried out with eight teachers. According to the results, both students and teachers showed dissatisfaction with most of the components in the coursebook. It was found that the reading passages needed to be simplified in terms of both vocabulary load and grammatical structures; and the difficulty level of the coursebook was not appropriate for the particular age group. It also revealed that the materials failed to address different learner styles such as the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learner. Nevertheless, the book was useful for the artwork's being up-to date and helping the students to understand the lesson.

In a parallel study, Özdemir (2007) evaluated "Time for English 4" in terms of purpose, approach, visual design, vocabulary and language presentation, exercises, supplementary sources and materials. The data were obtained through questionnaires administered to 102 fourth grade students and interviews with 15 teachers from six different districts in the same city. The results revealed that both the teachers and the

students were satisfied with the coursebook. The teachers found the book topic-based, appropriate for the age and level of students, and effective in terms of methods and techniques. However, they thought that its communicative aspects could be improved by some dialogues. Based on these findings, the book reached its aims at the macro level. The visual design of the book, layout, design, color, print and publishing qualities were found to be effective by both the teachers and the students.

In another similar study carried out by Azarnoosh (2014), "Select Reading" for upper-intermediate learners was evaluated. For this purpose, language content, selecting and grading of language items, presentation and practice of new language items, developing language skills and communicative abilities, supporting materials, motivation and the learner were evaluated. The data were collected through Cunningsworth's (1984) evaluation checklist. The results indicated that the book includes authentic reading passages of different genres covering a wide range of topics that are both interesting to students and appropriate for their age and level. Writing sections get the students involved and motivated. In addition, vocabulary items are presented in different ways and grammatical points are deductively introduced; however the book falls short as the activities do not provide students with enough practice and revision. The book will be made practical by including appropriate listening and pronunciation activities, adding variety and making changes to grammar presentation.

In his study, Bermúdez (2014) evaluated "New English File: Elementary" coursebook at largely macro and micro level to determine the suitability in a particular context. The researcher conducted a structured qualitative evaluation by analyzing the different theoretical viewpoints and experiences for developing a series of criteria. The book was found to have a very strong and verifiable curricular foundation, as shown by the book's syllabus and documentation included in the teacher resources, which guarantee a comparability between the content of the book and goals with the CEFR's standards for proficiency levels for basic language users. However, the accessibility and authenticity of its topical content limits its effectiveness. Taking this into consideration, *New English File: Elementary* coursebook might not be wholly suitable for young learner use.

Sabzalipour and Kooshato (2014) assessed the effectiveness of textbooks titled "English Book for high school" prepared by Ministry of Education as an instructional material for high school students from the perspective of the teachers. The data was collected from a total of 271 English teachers through a questionnaire with 40 items and interviews. The results revealed that teachers shared positive feelings toward the content, physical appearance, exercises and activities, clarity of instructions, level of the textbooks, vocabulary, grammar and learning style differences of high school textbooks in Iran.

To summarize, as mentioned above; there are various studies conducted at macro level in the literature suggesting that it is necessary to complement their findings with micro evaluation studies which ensure in-depth analysis and provide researchers with concrete data.

2.7.2 Studies on Micro Evaluation. As previously mentioned, macro evaluation is the evaluation of a curricular component in detail and this is often done through task evaluation. According to Ellis (1998), micro evaluation can be less time-consuming and less daunting for teachers as it can be applied as part of their everyday professional life.

Different studies have been carried out at micro level in the literature. This part of the thesis highlights some micro studies that evaluate coursebooks in terms of age, gender, social classes and cultural aspects (Arıkan, 2005, Çelik & Erbay, 2013).

To begin with, Arıkan (2005) conducted a study to find out how age, gender and social class are represented in ELT coursebooks through the analysis of visual materials. He made use of two intermediate coursebooks *"The New Headway and Think Ahead to First Certificate"* and analyzed the contents of visuals by using a checklist. The results showed that with regard to age, the elderly are depicted only when their age constitutes the largest part of the discourse. Considering gender, women are associated child-rearing more than men; this discrimination is also noticeable in sports. Moreover, in phone conversations woman are portrayed as chatting casually by laughing in contrast to men doing serious business or short conversations with a specific aim. Finally, in terms of social classes, both

coursebooks illustrate middle class images and values. According to the obtained findings, the coursebook was renewed and redesigned.

Çelik and Erbay (2013) carried out a study to explore three government-issued coursebooks *"Spot on 6, 7, 8"* in terms of four cultural aspects: products, practices, perspectives and people. This study employed content analysis as a data-gathering technique. The results showed that there is a well-balanced diversity in terms of home culture, target culture and international cultures. However, target culture is emphasized along with European cultures notably German, French and Italian. Asian countries such as Japan and China are also included to a degree; however, Africa is not highlighted in comparison with the aforementioned countries. Furthermore, the results also showed that practices and perspectives are among the least frequently represented elements.

2.7.2.1 Studies on evaluation of reading materials. Apart from the studies on coursebok evaluation mentioned above, it is important to give a narrow focus on similar studies conducted to investigate the effectiveness of reading materials in many aspects (Rahman, 2007; Arıkan, 2008; Ali, 2010; Zohrabi, 2011; Rahimi & Ebrahimi, 2013; Ipek, 2014).

In the first place, Rahman (2007) conducted an empirical study to examine the present situation of teaching reading skills of English, the problems students encountered during reading an English text and the learners' proficiency level of reading skills along with the reading syllabus and materials used at the intermediate level. The methods for investigation included questionnaire survey, interview, classroom observation, reading tests and evaluation of syllabus, materials and tests currently used in the country. The results showed that students had problems in most of the sub-skills of reading, and it also showed that the approaches to teaching and learning reading skills were still backdated. Lastly, the observation showed that the syllabus, materials and tests were not bad, but these emphasized only on the lower order skills; the higher skills were totally neglected.

Arıkan (2008) aimed to find out the nature of the topics of reading passages in ELT coursebooks. For data collection purposes, a total number of 15 ELT coursebooks were examined by using both quantitative and qualitative measures. The findings showed a discrepency between the topics claimed to be in the reading

passages and the actual existence of the topics when the reading passages were read. More specifically, this study revealed that some topics such as relationships, love, work life, education, and values did not appear in the coursebooks in reading passages. This was thought to be significantly important because violence, crime, and the supernatural appeared as popular topics in these coursebooks. From the perspective of a humanitarian and critical stance, it can be said that students should be exposed to such concepts or realities like love and values rather than violence and crime for the good of society and to abolish crime and violence in the world. Furthermore, although coursebooks writers did not declare that they write on topics commerce and trade, it became obvious that these topics were used in the reading passages studied.

In another study, Ali (2010) attempted to evaluate the reading texts and exercises in *English for Palestine-Grade 9* in order to find out whether reading texts and exercises matched the suggested criteria. In this regard, the researcher used two tools to collect the needed data: a content analysis card and a structured interview. The results showed that the reading texts employed a wide variety of topics as well as values and good manners. However, no authentic reading texts were found and extensive reading was not included. Regarding vocabulary, in all the reading texts, colours were used to highlight new vocabulary and the number of new vocabulary was suitable for 9th graders. Almost all the visuals were relevant, attractive, colourful and clear. With respect to the reading exercises, all the instructions were clear, a great variety in questions was found but, same types of questions were repeated. By contrast, there were no exercises that require students to infer the author's attitude, distinguish between fact and opinion, recognize pronoun references, find meanings of new vocabulary in contexts, relate the text to their personal experience.

Zohrabi (2011) aimed to evaluate the coursebook *"Reading English in Action"* for the English for General Purposes (EGP) course at the University off Tabriz, Iran. In this research the data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and feedback from classroom use. Based on the results, there was more focus on student boredom in reading results and it was suggested that they require more interactive and communicative use of language. In this way, students would be more motivated to pay attention and treat the EGP course more seriously and enthusiastically.

Besides, drawings, figures and images could be included so as to increase student interest and stimulate them for more intimate learning.

A similar study by Rahimi and Ebrahimi (2013) investigated the effects of adopting a critical reading approach via a CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) framework and changing the content of reading materials on the some Iranian EFL students' perceptions of their reading comprehension classroom environment. Through a one-group pretest posttest design, the What Is Happening In This Class? (WIHIC) questionnaire was distributed twice among 41 Iranian EFL students, the first time after a five-session-long regular non-critical reading comprehension class and the other time after a five-session-long reading comprehension class featured by more involving passages and informed by a CDA framework. The results showed a significant difference between the participants' perceptions of each dimension of their reading comprehension classroom before and after introducing the CDA techniques and changing the content of the reading materials. The change in teaching approach via the CDA framework and the change into more involving content led to a reading comprehension classroom environment that was perceived by students as more efficient and facilitative of learning.

Finally, Ipek (2014) attempted to investigate whether the content of reading course contributes to the general or world knowledge of students. The data were collected through open-ended questions about the topics in the reading books used in the reading lesson and 48 EFL students at an English Language Preparatory School took part in this study. According to the results, the participating students already had some general knowledge on certain topics before taking the reading course and most of the topics in the book contributed to students' general knowledge. Although not every topic in the reading book may add to all of the students' world knowledge, it still seems that the topics covered contribute to the world knowledge of the majority of students.

As shown in the studies summarized above, evaluation of the reading skill has gained attention in research. However, in the aforementioned studies, the data were mainly obtained from students. Teachers, who have the leading role in teaching and are regarded as the most reliable source in the classroom, should be included in data collection process, as well.

In this regard, this study aims to evaluate the reading materials of the *Speakout* coursebook by focusing on the perceptions of EFL instructors along with their reflection on their classroom practices.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the fundamental components of methodology such as research design, setting, participants and procedure divided into three sub-categories: types of sampling, data collection instruments and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Philosophical Paradigm

Paradigm is defined as a system of ideas or a set of assumptions used by a community of researchers to generate knowledge (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002, p.718). Johnson and Christensen (2012, p.31) also illustrate paradigm as a perspective about research based on a set of shared assumptions, concepts, values, and practices. In order to establish a strong research design, it is important for researchers to choose a research paradigm that is compatible with their beliefs about the nature of reality.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) labeled three paradigm assumptions as post-positivist, constructivist and critical influence researchers' choice of validity procedures. The post-positivist researcher assumes that qualitative research consists of rigorous methods and systematic forms of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.8). This assumption looks for quantitative equivalence of validity. Constructivists, on the other hand, believe in pluralistic, interpretive, open-ended and contextualized perspectives towards reality. A third paradigm assumption is the critical perspective which holds that researchers should uncover the hidden assumptions about how narrative accounts are constructed, read and interpreted (Cresswell & Miller, 2000).

Based on the assumptions above, a qualitative case study was employed on a constructivist paradigm which highlights the importance of collaboration between the researcher and the participant. Through this study, the participants had the chance to reflect on the materials used in *Speakout* coursebook and their classroom practices and this enabled the researcher to gain insight into the participants' actions.

3.2 Research Design

Mixed-method research is defined as an approach focusing on research questions that requires real-life understandings and multi-level perspectives. It employs both quantitative and qualitative research in order to explore the meaning and understanding of constructs by utilizing multiple methods and integrating these methods to draw on the strengths of each. In addition, it aims to frame the investigation within philosophical and theoretical positions (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

In addition, mixed method research design has six prototypical versions; the convergent parallel design, explanatory-exploratory sequential design, embedded design, transformative design and multiphase design (Clark & Creswell, 2011). The convergent parallel design occurs when the researcher uses concurrent timing to implement the quantitative and qualitative strands during the same phase of the research process, prioritizes the methods equally, analyses and then mixes the results during the overall interpretation. In explanatory design, the researcher interprets how the qualitative results help to explain the initial quantitative results. In contrast to the explanatory design, the exploratory design begins with and prioritizes the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the first phase. Embedded design occurs when the researcher collects and analyses both quantitative and qualitative data within a traditional quantitative or qualitative design. In transformative design, the researcher shapes within a transformative theoretical framework. All other decisions (interaction, priority, timing, and mixing) are made within the context of the transformative framework. Multiphase design is often used in program evaluation where quantitative and qualitative approaches are used over time to support the development, adaptation, and evaluation of specific programs.

This present study employs convergent design in order to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic. The quantitative data were obtained from a questionnaire, while qualitative data were provided through reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols. By directly comparing and contrasting quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings, the methods were triangulated. Finally,

the results were interpreted to ascertain to what extent and in what ways the results converge or/and diverge from each other.

3.3 Universe and Participants

The present study was conducted at an English preparatory school of a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. In this program students are assessed in a proficiency exam at the beginning of each academic year and taking their scores into consideration they are placed in four proficiency levels of English *Breakthrough, Waystage, Threshold and Vantage* defined by the Common European Framework (CEFR). Each level lasts for 8 weeks, known as *module,* all the skills are taught in an integrated way depending heavily on S*peakout* coursebook series. The students are assessed through four quizzes (40%), two portfolio assignments (20%) and a final exam (40%) which will form their total score. When their combined average in the exams is a minimum 60 (out of 100), the students reach the required level. After completing the required levels, the students have right to start the undergraduate program in their prospective departments.

For the purposes of this study, the data were gathered from 60 English language instructors (52 female and 8 male) working at a preparatory program of a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. Their age range was 25-60 with 1-20 years of teaching experience. Almost all of the instructors had teaching experience at a private university and taught reading skills at different levels. As for their qualifications, they were all graduates of related fields in English Language Teaching.

3.4 Procedures

3.4.1 Types of Sampling. A sample is defined as a smaller but representative collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population (Field, 2005). With that in mind, one important feature of sampling is the degree of representativeness.

Although Kothari (2004) mentions eight types of sampling, Doherty (1994) groups them into two categories: probability and non-probability samples.

The idea behind probability sampling is random selection; that is each sample from the population of interest has a known probability of selection under a given sampling scheme. There are four types of probability sampling: simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. However, in non-probability sampling the subjects are chosen to be part of the sample in non-random ways, and are divided into four sub-categories such as availability/convenience sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling.

With regard to the types of sampling above, this study employed purposive sampling to gain a closer insight into the perspectives of the EFL instructors teaching at intermediate level classes.

3.4.2 Sources of Data. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through a questionnaire, reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols for the micro evaluation of the Speakout coursebook.

3.4.2.1 Questionnaire. For the purposes of this study, Uslu's (2003) questionnaire which attempted to evaluate 'Reading Textbook' used at the intermediate level classrooms was adapted. In the process of adaptation, reading-related items were used, while the items related to teacher's book and logistical characteristics of the book (easily available / affordable price) were excluded so as to keep the participants focused on the reading materials only.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Specifically, Part 1 requested demographic information based on the following criteria: age, gender, educational background, and teaching background and the second part consisted of four sub-categories. The first sub-category included four items in order to find out the appropriateness of the reading texts (in terms of length-level, topic, genre, racist-sexist elements); the second one included six items to investigate the purpose of the materials (activities, strategies, culture, authenticity, instructions), while the third sub-category included two items to examine the needs of learners (learning styles and visuals). Finally, three items in the last category attempted to evaluate vocabulary development (word-recognition exercises, recycle and frequency of the

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words). In total fifteen items were presented on a four-point Likert-scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Before the questionnaire was administered to the 60 participants, it was piloted with randomly selected 27 EFL instructors. The *Cronbach Alpha* reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as .85 which indicated a high internal consistency of the items (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

3.4.2.2 Reflective essay. A reflective essay attempts to bring different perspectives into focus by shedding light on the affective impact on the pragmatic intervention (Glaser, 2014). In order to gain valuable insight into the nature of reading materials of the *Speakout* coursebook, 15 EFL instructors were asked to reflect critically on the reading activities in terms of text appropriateness, the purpose, learner needs, vocabulary development along with positive and negative aspects of the content.

3.4.2.3 Stimulated recall protocol. Stimulated recall also known as retrospective think-aloud protocol is a research method that allows the analysis of cognitive processes through encouraging participants to recall their concurrent thinking during an event when prompted by a video sequence or some other form of visual stimulus (Turnbull, 2002). Stimulated recall permits video and audio recordings of the participant in action, which is later showed to use as a prompt, participants are asked to reflect on, and then recordings are made by researchers as part of their observational recording which are used in the interview process.

The main advantage of this tool is that it allows participants to explain their decision making by relatively unstructured responses (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Sime, 2006; Slough, 2001). Through multimedia sources, it is possible to replay and reintroduce cues presented during the task (Sime, 2006; Slough, 2001). It also provides an opportunity for real life context and if the recall session is organized immediately after the event, participants are less likely to depend on memory alone (Lyle, 2002, Mackey & Gass, 2005; Sime, 2006).

For the purposes of this study, the video-recordings of 5 EFL instructors were used in conjunction with semi-structured interviews to help recall the technological practice undertaken. During the recall sessions, the researcher and each participant watched the video together. The researcher paused the video frequently and asked

open-ended questions with an attempt to make the instructors reflect on their classroom practices (Appendix C). Participant interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data were gathered in a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. In order to conduct the research, the researcher received permission from the Head of the English Preparatory School at the university. The data for this study were gathered through three instruments for triangulation purposes; a questionnaire, reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols. In the first place, a questionnaire was administered to 60 EFL instructors on an online platform so that they can do it anytime they are available. For reflective essays, 15 EFL instructors wrote their reflections on the actual use of reading materials in the coursebook by touching upon the given criteria (Appendix B). Finally, for stimulated recall protocols, reading classes of 5 instructors were video recorded to be recalled later. In a few days, the researcher and participants watched the videos together to reflect on the lesson by following the questions (Appendix C).

The following table provides an overview of the research questions and the corresponding procedures:

Table 1

Overview of Research Questions and Corresponding Procedures

Research Question	Data Collection Instruments	Data analysis
1. What are the perceptions of the EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of the reading materials used in the *Speakout* coursebook in terms of the following criteria: a. Text appropriateness b. Purpose of the materials c. Learner needs d. Vocab. Development	• Questionnaire • Reflective Essays • Stimulated Recall Protocols	• SPSS • Content Analysis • Content Analysis
2. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials in the Speakout coursebook?	• Reflective Essays	• Content Analysis
3. What modifications can be suggested for the reading materials based on the reflections of the EFL instructors on their classroom practices?	• Stimulated Recall Protocol	• Content Analysis

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

In this study, the data were gathered and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. For the quantitative part, data were gathered by means of questionnaire. In the questionnaire, percentages and means were calculated through SPSS (Statistical package for the Social Sciences) to describe the overall picture of how the instructors rated readings in terms of fifteen criteria.

Moreover, the quantitative data were supported by qualitative analysis of reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols through content analysis. In qualitative analysis, documents are coded and divided into categories until the categories develop some meaning. Raw data become useful and interesting through the sequence of gathering, sorting, coding, reclassification and comparison. By creating categories and dividing data into them, the researcher forms a conceptual schema allowing the researcher to ask questions of the data and inquire about the situation under investigation (Basit, 2003, p.144)

The data analysis process began with deductive analysis to come up with the codes of the pre-set categories. These codes were gathered under two concepts of strengths, based on the positive comments about the reading materials and weaknesses, focusing on the negative viewpoints shared by the participating instructors. In order to identify the degree of inter-rater reliability, the categories were checked by two experts in the field of foreign language education. It appeared that the raters achieved 82% agreement on the mentioned categories.

Finally, for stimulated recall protocols, the data were coded by hand due to the small number of participants. In the first place, the recorded stimulated recall protocols were transcribed and then the similarities and differences in words, phrases and concepts were underlined. Then, the underlined sections in each participant's stimulated recall protocol transcriptions were searched for emerging themes and the themes were coded and categorized to be interpreted.

3.7 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is often questioned by positivists (Shenton, 2004) who believe that only accurate knowledge gained through observation including measurement is trustworthy. However, Guba (1981) proposes four criteria for the researchers in quest of a trustworthy study.

One of the key criteria is credibility in preference to internal validity in which researchers evaluate to ensure that their study measures or tests what is intended. In order to achieve internal validity in this study, several steps were followed. First of all, triangulation played a prominent part. The data were gathered through three different methods. In addition, in order to ensure honesty when contributing data,

each person was given the opportunity to refuse to participate and only willing participants were involved in the process. With the researcher aiming to build a rapport in the opening moments, participants were encouraged to be frank and offered the data freely. Finally, as Silverman (2001) considers relating the findings of the study to an existing body of knowledge as a key criterion for evaluating works of qualitative inquiry, previous research findings were examined to assess the degree to which the results of the study were compatible with those of past studies.

Another crucial criterion is transferability of qualitative study which has been debated for many years. Erlandson (1993) believes that in practice even typical generalizability is never possible as all observations are defined by the specific context in which they occur. Nevertheless, several contrasting views (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Firestone, 1993) suggest that it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork sites is provided to enable the reader to make a transfer. This current study took place in a preparatory school context in which the *Speakout* coursebook has been in use for about two years and the students are exposed to same reading class hours in a module.

Dependability and conformability are the other two criteria which address the issue of reliability. The former is ensured when the work is repeated; in the same context; with the same methods, with the same participants, and similar results are obtained. In this study, it was achieved through the use of overlapping methods and the process was reported in detail to enable a future researcher to repeat the study viewing this study as a prototype model. The concept of conformability ensures that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). In this sense, the role of triangulation in this study was highlighted to reduce the effect of researcher bias.

3.8 Limitations

There are certain limitations to this study. First of all, this study took place in one preparatory school of a foundation university in Istanbul. For this reason, conclusions need to be verified in order to generalize the results. A greater range of

preparatory schools would have provided a broader perspective of the opinions of the whole population.

Secondly, the number of EFL instructors who participated in the study is not so high which may have affected the results of the study. If the number had been greater, the results would have been more representative of the target population.

Finally, the evaluative study is limited to the reading materials in *Speakout* coursebook. A further comparative study could be conducted to examine reading materials in other coursebooks that are designed for other levels in the series in order to ensure cohesiveness.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the results related to the evaluation of the *Speakout* coursebook in terms of the perceptions of the EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of reading materials in their classroom practices. The evaluation is carried out at micro level mainly focusing on text appropriateness, reading purposes, learner needs and vocabulary development. Data were collected through a questionnaire, reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols respectively.

4.1 The findings of EFL instructors' perceptions towards the effectiveness of the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook

Considering the first research question the data were obtained through a questionnaire, reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols. The following part provides both quantitative and qualitative results regarding each pre-set categories.

4.1.1 Text Appropriateness. To begin with, the instructors were asked to evaluate the *Text Appropriateness* of the reading materials; the frequency and percentages are depicted below:

Table 2:

Frequency and Valid Percent of Items Related to Text Appropriateness in the Coursebook

Item no	Items	SD	D	A	SA
1.	The length and level of reading texts is appropriate for intermediate students.	1	18	38	3
		1.7	30.5	64.4	5.1
2.	The topics of reading texts are interesting to students.	6	33	21	0
		10.2	55.9	35.6	0

	SD	D	A	SA
3. There is a variety of reading genres (e.g., articles, letters, manuals, advertisements, scientific reports, stories, jokes, poems, songs, riddles, crossword puzzles) included in the coursebook	8	29	20	3
	13.6	49.2	33.9	5.1
4. The reading texts are free of racist and sexist elements.	1	2	37	20
	1.7	3.4	62.7	33.9

Note: SD: Strongly Disagree   D: Disagree A: Agree SA: Strongly Agree.

As indicated in the table above, more than half of the instructors (69.5%) stated that the length and level of reading texts was appropriate for intermediate students and almost all of them (96.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that the texts were free of racist and sexist elements.

As for the analysis of the qualitative data, parallel findings were gathered from the reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols. The excerpts below displayed that the students were contented with the length and level of the reading materials and could understand the gist of the texts quite easily:

> […] The length and difficulty level of the reading texts were appropriate for intermediate learners. With no regard to comprehension questions or some vocabulary exercises, the students could understand the main idea of the text without difficulty. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] The texts are appropriate for our students in terms of length and level of difficulty. The content, grammar forms, target vocabulary etc. meet their needs (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

On the other hand, 66.1% of the instructors disagreed that the topics of reading texts were interesting to students (62.8%) emphasizing that there was not a variety of reading genres (articles, letters, manuals, advertisements, scientific reports, stories, jokes, poems, songs, riddles, crossword puzzles) included in the coursebook. Similar comments were also found in the content analysis of the reflective papers and stimulated recall protocols:

[…] The topics of reading materials are not chosen according to learner's interests. Majority of them are related to business life which is not very interesting for young learners (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

[…] The topic was quite interesting. Indeed, it was not interesting enough to provide students with curiosity to engage them in reading. It could be more related to their age and interest (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

4.1.2 Purpose of the Materials. As for the purpose of the materials, the results of the questionnaire showed that 47% of the instructors believed that the reading texts were authentic, reflected cultural elements and real-life language use. In addition, the majority of them (91.5%) acknowledged that reading instructions were clear and precise for students along with their agreement that the aforementioned instructions were carried out through three stages: pre-reading, while reading, and post reading (79.6%) as shown below:

Table 3

Frequency and Valid Percent of Items Related to the Purpose of Materials in the Coursebook

Item no	Items	SD	D	A	SA
5.	Students find reading- related activities meaningful and useful.	6	37	17	0
		10.2	62.7	28.8	0
6.	The materials teach a variety of reading strategies (e.g., predicting, skimming, scanning, summarizing, understanding the main idea, guessing meaning from context).	7	29	22	2
		11.9	49.2	37.3	3.4
7.	The reading texts are authentic, reflect cultural elements and promote real- life language use.	0	13	37	10
		0	22.0	62.7	17.0

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	SD	D	A	SA
8. The reading materials oblige students to read for different purposes (e.g., read for finding information, read to learn information, read to evaluate)	4 6.8	26 44.2	27 45.8	3 5.1
9. Reading instructions are clear and precise for students.	0 0	6 10.2	42 71.2	12 20.3
10. Reading instructions are carried out through three stages: Pre-reading, while reading, and post reading.	1 1.7	12 20.3	37 62.7	10 16.9

Note: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree.

Parallel to the questionnaire results, the qualitative analysis of the reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols revealed that the reading texts were effective in terms of authenticity, since they introduced the target culture and promoted general language use in real life. As indicated in the following excerpts, instructions were also found to be clear, short and went step-by step making the reading process easier:

> […] The DVD sections, podcasts and the function sections of the coursebook are useful; they develop general language use in real life and learn cultural elements (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] The instructions related to the reading texts are clear, short, and they go step by step which makes the reading process easier for the students (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] The reading text gave my learners a bigger picture of western teenage behaviors and manners as well as their parents' reactions towards them (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] The instructions were clear enough for students to understand. The students didn't ask for further clarification (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

Nevertheless, 72.9% of the instructors stated that students did not find related activities meaningful or useful; and more than half of the instructors (61.1%) disagreed that the materials teach a variety of reading strategies such as predicting,

skimming, scanning, summarizing, understanding the main idea, guessing meaning from context, which were also highlighted in the following remarks:

> […] Some tasks are meaningless. For example, there are only three open ended questions and one of them is asking about the students' opinion and has nothing to do with the text. Reading such a text for only barely related two questions is not an efficient and useful activity (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] The texts are not designed to improve reading strategies such as, skimming and scanning. For example, students are not expected to make inferences after they finish reading (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] The texts do not mainly focus on improving students' reading strategies. The students are mostly asked to summarize what they read. There is no focus on skimming, scanning, making inferences etc. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] The students skimmed for the main idea, scanned to find out details (true/false part) and guessed meaning from the context and matched them to the definitions given. They worked on their social, memorization and cognitive strategies; on the other hand, affective and metacognitive strategies were not focused on much (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

Surprisingly, half of the instructors agreed (50%) and the other half disagreed (50%) on the item which stated that the reading materials obliged students to read for different purposes such as reading for searching information, reading to learn information and reading to evaluate. However, this issue became much more evident in the qualitative data which indicated that the materials were limited in terms of reading purposes and there was a noticeable lack of providing variety of activities. Some of the participants made the following comments in this regard:

> […] Reading exercises should be more diverse than just True / False questions (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] Before reading the texts, students are usually asked to answer open-ended questions and this is quite clichéd. More variety is needed (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

> […] The students read to find information about the problems that they face with their parents (*Life on Planet Teen*). The texts are mostly prepared to introduce either grammar or vocabulary but from the contexts it is challenging for students to make such inferences (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015)

4.1.3 Learner Needs. Considering the learner needs, the responses of the participating instructors revealed that more than half of them (67.8%) believed that neither the reading activities were structured to respond to students' different learning styles nor they were enough to provide attractive visuals to motivate students to read (57.7% of the instructors strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with the mentioned item). Briefly, as is indicated in *Table 4* below, the instructors felt that the reading materials in the coursebook were inadequate to meet the needs of the learners.

Table 4

Frequency and Valid Percent of Items Related to Learner Needs in the Coursebook

Item no	Items	SD	D	A	SA
11.	The reading activities are structured to respond to students' different learning styles (e.g., visuals for visual students, listening materials for auditory students, and role plays for kinesthetic students).	8	32	18	2
		13.6	54.2	30.5	3.4
12.	The reading activities provide attractive visuals to motivate students.	6	29	24	2
		8.5	49.2	40.7	3.4

Note: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree.

Apart from the quantitative analysis, qualitative data obtained from reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols revealed overlapping findings. As indicated in the following assertions the reading materials failed to meet the need of the students since they did not address the students with different learning styles, intelligences or interests and provided poor visuals with the learners:

[…] The texts do not provide auditory or kinesthetic learners with the necessary supporting materials or exercises. There are few visual materials, but they are not attractive and do not prompt students to read the texts (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

[…] To address the whole; the activities need to be enriched for students having different learning styles, intelligences and interests (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

[…] The visuals just provided them a depressive teenager model; they did not help with the understanding of any concepts or they did not infer any keywords or main idea by making use of visuals (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

[…] The background of the text was black. The color looked pessimistic, made it difficult to read and take notes on the text. The picture did not give many clues about the content. I prepared PPT to make the text more colorful and attractive (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

4.1.4 Vocabulary Development. In an attempt to evaluate how the reading materials contributed to the vocabulary development of the learners, the results indicated that almost all of the instructors (93%) stated that they included word recognition exercises. On the contrary, more than half of them (56%) disagreed that new vocabulary recurred and was recycled in subsequent reading texts within units. Furthermore, many of them (71%) also noted that the vocabulary items were not graded from common to rare *(Table 5)*.

Table 5

Frequency and Valid Percent of Items Related to Vocabulary Development in the Coursebook

Item no	Items	SD	D	A	SA
13.	The reading materials include word recognition exercises.	3	11	42	14
		5.1	18.6	71.2	6.8
14.	The vocabulary items are graded from common to rare.	6	37	16	4
		8.5	61.0	25.6	6.8
15.	New vocabulary reoccurs and is recycled in subsequent reading texts within units.	9	25	23	3
		15.3	42.4	39.0	5.1

Note: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree.

Moreover, considering the repetition and recycle of vocabulary items, the following reviews confirmed that the new words were neither repeated nor recycled in the following texts or exercises, thus the students could not make use of the new vocabulary items due to lack of exposure:

[…] New words taught to the students are not repeated nor practiced enough. Once they learn new vocabulary, they have to use it in a context such as in a sentence or a story; however, none of these are provided in the book (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

[…] The reading texts are not effective in word recognition because new vocabulary items are usually presented separately from the reading texts. They are not repeated enough, so the students can't remember them easily as they are not exposed to these words as they should be in the following units (Instructor, Reflective Essay data, 29th September, 2015).

[…] The worst thing about texts is that they do not contain the words students grasped in the previous units; due to lack of repetition. They tend to memorize the words by heart-out of context- by no means of listing the bold words in the texts (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

[…] Learning vocabulary is far from matching new words to the definitions; repetition doesn't take place at all. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

4.2 The findings of the major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials used in the Speakout coursebook

For the second research question with regard to the major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials in the coursebook, the data were obtained from reflective essays. The results demonstrated parallelism in accordance with the questionnaire results. The figure below lists the summary of strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials taking the four criteria into consideration; text appropriateness, purpose of materials, learner needs and vocabulary development. The data analysis process began with open coding and the codes were used to come up with the pre-set categories. Afterwards, according to the percentages of positive and the negative comments EFL instructors made, these categories were gathered under the two concepts of strengths and weaknesses. In order to identify the degree of inter-rater reliability, the categories were checked by two experts in the field of foreign language education. It appeared that the raters achieved close agreement on the pre-set categories.
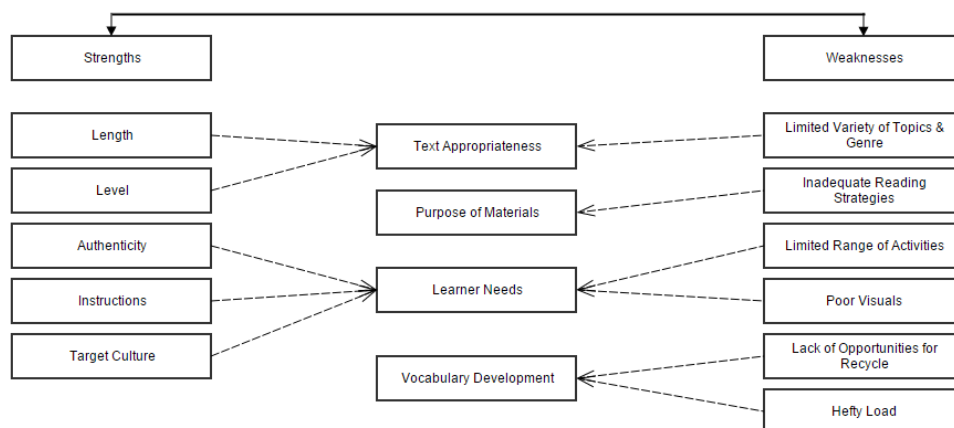
Figure 2. Major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials.

Considering text appropriateness in the coursebook, the findings revealed that the major strength was the length and level of the reading texts. More specifically, all (100%) the instructors claimed that length and level are appropriate for intermediate students and this aids reading comprehension to a great extent. As for topics, the instructors seemed to have negative attitudes and overwhelmingly stated that some

reading materials do not appeal to learners' interests at all. The texts are not engaging enough or related to the students' lives. In addition, more than half of the instructors (60%) claimed that most of the reading texts are presented in the form of articles, and they are merely written to introduce some grammatical features or vocabulary items. Thus, students are reluctant to read and contribute to the reading activities. According to some other instructors (20%), the students need exposure to different genres such as autobiographies, fables, poetry, folktales or fairy tales in order to have the chance to communicate with the writer and enjoy the reading process. The instructors also commented that a wide variety of topics and genres would be really useful to maintain student interest and motivation.

Secondly, considering the purpose of materials many of the instructors (86%) stated that the reading activities were practical in terms of introducing the target culture, which was regarded as one of the leading purposes. Moreover, the texts were noticeably authentic especially in DVD sections and the given instructions were clear and easy to follow. On the other hand, the reading materials were found to be inadequate to teach some specific reading strategies such as elaboration, inferences, critical thinking and bridging. The instructors (53%) concluded that students merely skimmed or scanned the text to be able to answer the comprehension questions or the text was used as a tool to introduce a grammatical item.

Parallel to the results of the questionnaire, all the instructors (100%) believed that the reading materials fell short of meeting students' needs. To exemplify, they did not provide the students with wide variety of activities to ensure engagement. The follow-up reading activities were quite repetitive and mostly limited to True/False and open-ended questions, which resulted in boredom. Furthermore, for better comprehension, students needed to make use of visuals. From the point of some instructors (40%), since visual content drove engagement it should not be isolated from the text, yet in the book the visuals were not attractive and they often failed to prompt students to read the text.

Finally, another weak feature of the reading materials is considered to be teaching vocabulary. All the reading materials in the coursebook aim to contribute vocabulary development, they introduce specific vocabulary items in each text and provide exercises in the form of matching synonyms, guess the meaning etc. However, almost all of the instructors (80%) stated that the reading materials do not

fully meet the need of expanding students' vocabulary knowledge. The vocabulary load is very intense in the texts and rarely recycled. The students are expected to learn the words, phrasal words and idioms through the texts by just reading and this does not help acquisition.

In summary, the data obtained from the reflective essays seem to verify the questionnaire results in many aspects. In terms of text appropriateness, the major strengths of the reading materials were found to be length and level of the texts; however the findings revealed that the topics and genre need to be improved to better serve the needs of the students. As for the purpose, the results indicated that the instructions are clear, texts are authentic and some of the texts especially in DVD sections play an important role in introducing the target culture. By contrast, the reading strategies are not emphasized enough to cater for teaching reading purposes. With regard to learner needs, the materials imply noticeable weaknesses such as lack of variety in activities and poor visuals to give clues about the content. Another major weakness of reading materials is considered to be vocabulary teaching since the words are neither recycled nor repeated in the following reading texts and exercises.

4.3 The findings of what modifications can be suggested for the reading materials in the Speakout coursebook

For the last research question of the present study, which investigated the necessary modifications suggested for the reading materials in *Speakout* coursebook, the data were obtained through stimulated recall protocols. During these protocols, the reading classes of the instructors were videotaped which were followed by interview sessions. In these sessions, the instructors reflected on the practices of reading activities in language classrooms.

After the content analysis of the interviews, what was immediately apparent from the transcripts was that almost all of the EFL instructors came up with the same experiences regarding their classroom practices. It was noticeable that the instructors' responses demonstrated parallel results with the questionnaire and reflective essays.

The frequencies of the important points that worked/did not work well in the classroom upon using materials were indicated in *Table 6*. In the end, the instructors

suggested some modifications in order to increase the effectiveness of the reading materials for further practices.

Table 6

The Interview Results of What Worked Well/ did not Work Well in Classroom Practices

Item no	Items		Frequency
1.	Was the topic of reading material interesting to the students?	Yes	1
		No	4
2.	Did the visuals attract students' attention and assist them in reading comprehension?	Yes	0
		No	5
3.	Do you think the reading activities addressed the students with different learning styles?	Yes	0
		No	5
4.	Did the reading activities employ various strategies during a class hour?	Yes	2
		No	3
5.	Were the instructions clear and carried out through three stages: pre, while and post?	Yes	5
		No	0
6.	Were the students willing to read the text?	Yes	2
		No	3
7.	Did the topic of the reading reflect target culture?	Yes	5
		No	0
8.	Were the students familiar with the mentioned genre?	Yes	5
		No	0
9.	Did the students have the opportunity to practice the new words in the subsequent exercises?	Yes	1
		No	4

10. Did you make use of any kind of supplementary material?   Yes   5

No   0

Based on the table above, the instructors recommended that the items such as topics, genre, visuals, activities, strategies and word recycle should be closely addressed in the process of preparing reading materials to ensure their effectiveness. The following part demonstrates the stimulated recall excerpts in relation to the interview questions presented in the table above:

Topics and Genre:

Considering questions 1 and 8, the EFL instructors stated that the range of topics and genre should vary considerably according to the age, culture, language level and interest of the students from all over the world. The following excerpts from protocols support these issues:

> […] The topics should not solely mirror the daily routines, culture and habits of Western countries; in contrast, they should also bring out similarities and differences between target culture and the culture of students. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015)

> […] The reading texts should not depend on the same sources frequently. They all give information about the programs on BBC. My students complained that they got so familiar with BBC and they put that they wanted to read something with no reference to BBC programs (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] I think it is a good idea to include different examples of genre in the coursebook. The students got overfamiliar with the articles, interviews and narrative paragraphs. It would be very interesting to read a poem, lyrics of a song, parodies, fables or fairy tales (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

Visuals:

As shown it the comments below, the students could not make use of visuals depicted in the coursebook which was mentioned both in the questionnaire and reflective essays as a weakness. In order to overcome this issue, the instructors

recommended that some changes should be made in terms of the design and layout particularly on the visuals as shown in the following ideas:

> […] The visuals of the reading texts are mostly small in size. Thus, I always need to bring extra materials to introduce the texts; attractive videos, comics or PPTs with colorful pictures. I believe that the design and layout of the pages should be reconsidered. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015)

> […] The visuals should encourage students to make some comments about the reading texts; however, many of them simply depict a regular man, woman or portraits of celebrities (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] The visuals related to the reading texts can be extraordinarily boring, simple and poor (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

Reading Activities / Strategies

Considering questions 3 and 4, all the instructors stated that the reading activities did not address the students with different learning styles and they did not focus on extensive reading either. In the following excerpts, the instructors proposed their concerns on this issue:

> […] The reading texts cater for visual learners to some extent; however, for auditory or kinesthetic learners they should be revised. Maybe listening parts related to the text can be added (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol).

> […] The reading activities did not address the students with different learning styles in my class. To do so, for kinesthetic learners; I benefited more of a game. For auditory learners, I brought a short trailer of a movie to activate students' background information about the topic. The book lacks these kind of activities. (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] None of the reading activities create curiosity for extensive reading, I believe that the reading activities that occur in the classroom may help students gain reading habits (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

Word Recognition / Recycle

As reflected in the EFL instructors' papers, one of the major weaknesses of reading materials in Speakout coursebook was related to vocabulary development. In

the same way, the real classroom practices verified that students did not have the opportunity to practice the new words in the subsequent exercises which affected their vocabulary development. The instructors touched upon some points in the following quotations:

> […] Reading text is an effective tool to introduce new words, yet we cannot expect the students to acquire them right away. The reading text or the following texts should include more recycle activities or the post stages of reading activities should require writing tasks in which the new words are repeated (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015).

> […] In this coursebook, many words are introduced through reading texts. However, the words in vocabulary bank are not related to the texts and we have to teach them in isolation. They are neither repeated nor recycled in the following texts (Instructor, Stimulated Recall Protocol data, 12th October, 2015 data, 12th October, 2015).

Based on the excerpts above, it is clear that modifications regarding topics, genre, visuals, activities, strategies and word recycle should be addressed for the effectiveness of the reading materials in order to aid with the language learning process of the students.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of the reading materials used in Speakout coursebook which is designed and developed as an instructional material for EFL learners at the intermediate level of proficiency. For these purposes, data were collected both qualitatively and quantitatively; and a mixed method research design was adopted for analysis. This chapter, in the first place, discusses the results of this study referring to each research question. Then, theoretical and pedagogical implications are provided offering recommendations for further research and practice.

5.1.1 Discussion about the perceptions of the EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of the reading materials in the Speakout coursebook. The first research question attempted to investigate the perceptions of EFL instructors towards the effectiveness of the reading materials used in the Speakout coursebook in terms of text appropriateness, purpose, learner needs and vocabulary development.

5.1.1.1 Text Appropriateness. Considering text appropriateness, the results assured that the level and length of reading texts was appropriate for intermediate students and the reading texts were free of racist and sexist elements. The percentages of the instructors who agreed on these two statements were remarkably high, so one can conclude that almost no instructor has experienced such issues in their classroom practices. The results also demonstrated that the reading materials are not effective enough from the points of topics and genre. As it is understood from both questionnaire and reflective essay results, the reading topics were not appealing to the students and they failed to stimulate student motivation. Moreover, the genre of reading texts was limited to articles or narrative paragraphs with which students were overfamiliar. This can also be an important reason why students showed reluctance to pay attention to the reading texts. It may be suggested that the topics and genre should be revised and renewed according to the interests, preference, culture and age of the students. Similarly, by adding lyrics, poems, fables, fairy tales or epics, the examples of genre could be enriched. Since, in the study of Kayapınar (2009) it was underlined that topics and genre of the materials were among the

crucial elements what make coursebooks a very popular choice in the English learning curriculum.

5.1.1.2 Purpose of Materials. Considering the purpose of materials, the findings revealed that the reading texts were authentic, reflected cultural elements and promoted real-life language use. As McDonough and Shaw (2011) mentioned previously in the literature, most of the texts function as 'text as process' to draw attention of the reader to authentic functions and meaning. Moreover, reading instructions were clear, precise and carried out through three stages: pre, while, and post reading. On the other hand, the results showed that the students did not find reading-related activities meaningful and useful. Furthermore, the majority of the instructors concluded that the materials neither taught variety of reading strategies nor obliged students to read for different purposes. One can conclude from the excerpts that reading activities were quite repetitive and limited to True/False, open-ended and matching exercises. Thus, some strategies such as skimming and scanning were overwhelmingly dominant. This could be overcome by including such exercises which activated background information, let interpretation, and promoted critical thinking and made connections to the real-life by employing wide variety of strategies.

5.1.1.3 Learner Needs. As for learner needs, the instructors seemed dissatisfied since the reading activities were not structured to respond to students' different learning styles. Basically, the activities are appropriate for visual learners; however, for auditory learners listening exercises are rarely included and for kinesthetic learners the instructors have to make preparations beforehand. These findings are in accordance with the findings of Çakıt's study (2006), previously mentioned in the literature review, which assessed the effectiveness of an intermediate coursebook. In her study, she also revealed that the reading materials failed to address different learner styles such as the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.

One can also conclude from the findings that the reading materials lack in providing attractive visuals to motivate the students. These findings echo in Zohrabi's (2011) study which aimed to evaluate the coursebook "Reading English in Action". In this study, the researcher advices including drawings, figures and images so as to increase student interest and stimulate them for more intimate learning.

5.1.1.4 Vocabulary Development. Regarding vocabulary development, the results revealed that the reading materials include word recognition exercises and the vocabulary items are graded from common to rare. The instructors seemed to be convinced with the idea that the reading materials aim to teach vocabulary to some extent. However, most of them do not reoccur or are not recycled in subsequent reading texts within units.

Based on the excerpts from the reflective essays, it is possible to say that the reading materials neither guarantee acquisition nor help students expand their vocabulary knowledge. These findings are also parallel to Azarnoosh's study (2014) which aimed to evaluate "Select Reading" for upper-intermediate learners. This study also demonstrated that vocabulary items are presented in different ways; however, the book falls short as the activities do not provide student enough practice and recycling. From these findings, it is possible to say vocabulary recycle and practice is not emphasized enough and it is an important area to be revised and developed.

In brief, it is possible to conclude that the perceptions of the instructors towards the effectiveness of text appropriateness, purpose, learning needs and vocabulary development differ in many ways. Regarding text appropriateness, they seem satisfied since the length and level of the materials are appropriate, similarly, the texts are free of sexist and racist elements. However, they have some serious concerns about the topics and genres. With regard to purpose of the materials, the instructors thought that reading activities and strategies are ineffective and need close attention before practiced. As for learner needs, it is concluded that the materials lack addressing the students with different learning styles and attractive visuals. Finally, it is noticeable that inadequacy of practice and recycle is one of the major concerns for vocabulary development. For these reasons, the reading materials in the coursebook need modifications.

5.1.2 Discussion about the major strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials in the *Speakout* coursebook. The second research question of the study aimed to determine the strongest and weakest aspects of reading materials used in Speakout coursebook. The findings based on the analysis of reflective essays revealed that the weaknesses of the reading materials outnumbered the strengths.

Whereas the book had some strengths in terms of text appropriateness and purpose of the materials, considering learner needs and vocabulary development it was found to be weak in many aspects.

The results showed that the major strength was the length and level of the reading texts under the title *text appropriateness*. From the perspectives of the instructors, it is possible to claim that the students did not have comprehension problems because of the length or level of the reading texts. As for weaknesses, topics and genres were found to be insufficient to stimulate student motivation and did not appeal to learners' interests at all. The type of genre was limited to articles, interviews or narrative paragraphs. Therefore, it is possible to say that both topics and genre of the materials need to be revised and renewed.

Other strengths of the reading materials under the title *purpose of materials* were listed as authenticity, clear and precise instructions and the way the coursebook introduced the target culture. One possible reason of authenticity could be that many of the reading texts in *Speakout* are sourced from the *BBC*. However, the reading materials were found to be inadequate to teach some specific reading strategies such as elaboration, inferences, critical thinking and bridging. The instructors concluded that students merely skimmed or scanned the text to be able to answer the comprehension questions or the text was used as a tool to introduce a grammatical item. Based on the statements above, it is noticeable that some specific strategies dominated the others; however, in order to ensure effectiveness material writers should put equal emphasis on the aforementioned strategies such as activating the schemata, making connections between the text and real life.

When it comes to learner needs and vocabulary development, it is possible to say that instructors were not really satisfied with the activity type, visuals and vocabulary range and load in a text. From their remarks, one can understand that the reading materials did not provide the students with wide variety of activities to ensure engagement. The follow-up reading activities were quite repetitive and limited to some certain types. In addition, the findings claimed that visuals did not aid reading comprehension and they were not attractive enough to encourage students to read the text. In addition, teaching vocabulary through reading texts was regarded as the major weakness. According to Stahl (2005), students have to see a word more than once to place it firmly in their long-term memories. "This does not

mean mere repetition or drill of the word," but seeing the word in different and multiple contexts. In essence, it is important that vocabulary instruction should provide students with opportunities to encounter words repeatedly and in more than one context (p.95). Based on the findings it is possible to conclude that the vocabulary load is very intense in this book, yet the target words are rarely recycled or repeated in different contexts.

To summarize, the findings of second research question showing the strong and weak aspects of the reading materials confirmed the arguments of some researchers (Cunningsworth, 1984; Graves, 2000; Richards, 2001). They all claimed that coursebook evaluation was necessary to define how effective the materials were or in what ways they fell short in order to take the steps for improvement.

5.1.3 Discussion about the modifications suggested for the reading materials. The last research question of the present study investigated what modifications can be suggested for the reading materials based on the reflections of the EFL instructors on their classroom practices. The data were obtained from 5 instructors through stimulated recall protocols. The findings based on the stimulated recall protocols revealed that the instructors highly recommended that the reading components such as topics, genre, visuals along with activities/strategies and word recycle should be closely addressed in the process of preparing reading materials to ensure effectiveness.

To begin with, many EFL instructors that took part in this study recommended that topics and genres of the reading activities should be diverse in order to promote all the students' curiosity. Specifically, they should not heavily depend on one single source or praise specific culture but also bring out similarities and differences between target culture and the culture of students from different sources. In addition, they thought that immediate alteration is required in genre type; studying a poem, lyrics of a song, parodies, fables or fairy tales would be really appealing to less motivated students. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) expressed that material developers should diversify language instruction as much as possible based upon the variety of affective attitudes likely to be found amongst a typical class of learners. He suggested this by providing choices of different types of text and

activities and catering for the diverse interests of the identified target learners as well as being aware of the cultural sensitiveness.

In the literature, the illustrations in coursebooks are seen of great importance in determining the effectiveness of the materials (Ellis, 1994; Ur, 1996; Arıkan, 2005; Özdemir, 2007). Keeping this in mind; the reading materials in this coursebook found to be ineffective. From the classroom practices, it was obvious that the students could not make use of the visuals due to their poor quality, small size or simplicity. The EFL instructors urged that the design and layout should be reconsidered in order to encourage learners to make comment on the readings or simply attract them.

This study also underlined the fact that reading activities in this coursebook did not address the students with different learning styles; visual, auditory, kinesthetic, experiential and analytic learners. Thus, as Ellis (1994) also highlighted the material writers should be aware of this variety and cater for differences in their materials. From what EFL instructors stated in their excerpts, one can understand that the reading materials lacked bringing in learner awareness of reading strategies, either. Cunningham & Allington (1994) offered some reading strategies such as using background knowledge, predicting, self-monitoring and self-correcting, identifying etc. that help students enhance their reading comprehension and increase their reading ability. In this essence, it is possible to conclude that the reading materials should include more of those strategies so that the learners are able to become better at monitoring their comprehension, review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know, inspire students to make real-life connections and learn more about the world by gaining insight towards specific concepts. Apart from that, it was surprising to find out that the EFL instructors wanted their students to pursue extensive reading through those reading materials. They recommended that the material developers should also consider the role of the texts they choose as they may build reading confidence and contribute the reading habit of the learners.

Finally, parallel to questionnaire and reflective essay results, the real classroom practices also verified that the reading materials failed to provide the students with the opportunity to practice the new words within the texts. This issue was also held in Azarnoosh's study (2014) which concluded that vocabulary recycle and practice

should be emphasized enough in the reading texts since vocabulary was considered as an integral part of reader's overall competence. The EFL instructors in this study demanded the same things mentioned above by adding that reading passages needed to be simplified in terms of vocabulary load in order not to lose the learner while reading.

To summarize, the findings of the last research question confirmed the argument of Tomlinson (2011) who stated that materials should have a notable effect on learners and this can be achieved by novelty (unusual topics, illustrations, activities), variety (breaking up the monotony of a unit routine with an unexpected activity, using many different text types from different sources), attractive presentation, appealing content and achievable challenge.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

This study has noticeable implications for coursebook evaluation. As discussed before a number of researchers have underlined the importance of post-use evaluation of a coursebook as it provides data regarding the actual effect of the materials on the users (Mukundan & Ahour, 2010; Skierso, 1991; Tomlinson, 2003). Many studies (Azarnoosh, 2014; Çakıt, 2006; Gutiérrez Bermudez, 2014; Kesen, 2010 Özdemir, 2007; Sabzalipour & Kooshato, 2014) in the literature called for micro evaluation in order to complete the evaluation process with a narrow and comprehensive focus. In this sense, this study was designed as a post-use evaluation at micro level to provide an in-depth analysis of reading materials for particular group of learners. Furthermore, this study is rare as it did not involve learners in the evaluation process; on the contrary, the materials were evaluated from the perspectives of experienced EFL instructors to identify both weaknesses and strengths. The data depended heavily on their real classroom practices so as to reflect on how tasks and activities worked in the classroom. Upon being recorded in the classroom, the instructors took part in stimulated recall protocols and suggested necessary modifications.

In this context, this current study has some important implications for EFL instructors and material developers. To begin with, it helped EFL instructors become more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the reading materials they used in their own classrooms. In addition, the instructors had the opportunity to reflect on

the actual use of the materials in their classroom practices and suggested some modifications for future use of the same materials. In this sense, they may decide to make adaptations, by adding or omitting the mentioned reading texts or exercises which in turn will influence reading proficiency level of the students. Material developers can also benefit from this study by gaining closer insights into the certain features of reading materials. These insights can help them when they are developing local materials for a particular group of learners in Turkey. Since this study introduces some important features of effective reading materials, the recommendations should be implemented in order to improve the state of the teaching and learning of reading skills in the country.

Regarding the points mentioned above, the findings of this study are unique and crucial for the effectiveness of reading materials in coursebooks. It also aims to serve as a model study for other post-use micro evaluation studies in the future.

5.3 Conclusions

The results of this study indicated that an in-depth analysis of reading materials has made a great contribution to see the effectiveness of a coursebook in its local context. The data collected through questionnaires, reflective essays and stimulated recall protocols show that all EFL instructors are quite contented with certain components of the reading materials such as length, level of the texts along with authenticity and introduction of target culture; however, some modifications with regard to topics, genre, visuals, strategies, activities and word recycle were still required to be closely addressed.

To conclude, the purpose of this thesis was to assess the effectiveness of reading materials used in the Speakout coursebook designed and developed as an instructional material for EFL learners proficiency at a private (non-profit foundation) university in Turkish EFL context. Therefore, the study specifically focused on reading materials to find out their effectiveness in terms of text appropriateness, purpose of materials, learner needs and vocabulary development; strengths-weaknesses of reading materials and necessary modifications from the perspectives of EFL instructors. With the obtained findings, this study identifies certain aspects of reading materials that are satisfactory or should be improved and

provides basis for designing effective reading materials for coursebooks in EFL context.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

This study has some important recommendations for further research. To begin with, a further study could be conducted to examine reading materials in other coursebooks that are designed for other levels in the series in order to ensure the cohesiveness.

Secondly, as the current study is the first to evaluate the reading materials of the 'Speakout' coursebook, the results need to be verified with a larger group of EFL instructors and learners from different districts.

This study may also be replicated within or out of Turkish EFL context to see the differences along with stronger and weaker points which may better help for the improvement of reading materials.

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A. Questionnaire Sample

Dear colleagues,

I am studying on my Master's degree in English Language Teaching Program at Graduate School of Educational Sciences at a private university in Istanbul, Turkey. The main purpose of my thesis is to evaluate the reading materials of the *Speakout* coursebook. This questionnaire has been prepared to serve as a data collection instrument for my study and it consists of two parts. The first part aims to obtain specific information about your personal profile, while the second part intends to gain your perceptions towards the nature of reading materials in the related coursebook.

In this questionnaire, you are asked to reflect not only on the nature of the reading materials considering their content, activities and exercises but also on the effectiveness of the materials with your students.

Your sincere and frank comments and experience will provide me with valuable data.

I assure you that the information will be confidential and used for research purposes only. For any further questions, you can email me from the address below.

Thank you for your contribution and cooperation.

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PART 1: Background Information

Please answer the questions below. Indicate your answer with a **TICK (√)**.

1. Age

___ 25 ___ 25-30 ___ 31-35 ___ 36-40 ___ above 40

2. Years of teaching experience

___ 1-4 ___ 5-9 ___ 10-14 ___15-20 ___ above 20

3. Settings in which you have taught.
(You may choose more than one option, if appropriate).

___ State school   ___ Private College
___ State university   ___ Private University

Others (specify) _____

4. Years of experience at Beykent University

___ 1-4 ___ 5-9 ___ 10-14 ___15-20 ___ above 20

5. All levels at which you have taught reading skills at Beykent University.
(You may choose more than one option, if appropriate).
Beginner ____ Elementary ____ Lower-intermediate___
Intermediate ____ Upper-intermediate ____ EAP___

6. Qualifications
___ BA Field: _____
___ MA Field: _____
___ PhD Field: _____
___ Other: _____

PART 2: Perspectives on the nature of reading materials in *Speakout Coursebook*

The following items are related to the nature of reading materials in *Speakout Coursebook. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the statements listed using the scale below and tick (☑) the appropriate response.*

SD = strongly disagree
D = disagree
A = agree
SD = strongly agree

Item no	Items	SD	D	A	SA
	TEXT APPROPRIATENESS				
1.	The length and level of reading texts is appropriate for intermediate students.				
2.	The topics of reading texts are interesting to students.				
3.	There is a variety of reading genres (e.g., articles, letters, manuals, advertisements, scientific reports, stories, jokes, poems, songs, riddles, crossword puzzles) included in the coursebook				
4.	The reading texts are free of racist and sexist elements.				
	PURPOSE OF THE MATERIALS				
5.	Students find reading- related activities meaningful and useful.				
6.	The materials teach variety of reading strategies (e.g., predicting, skimming, scanning, summarizing, understanding the main idea, guessing meaning from context).				
7.	The reading texts are authentic, reflect cultural elements and promote real-life language use.				
8.	The reading materials oblige students to				

read for different purposes (e.g., read for searching information, read to learn information, read to evaluate)

9. Reading instructions are clear and precise for students.

10. Reading instructions are carried out through three stages: Pre-reading, while reading, and post reading.

LEARNER NEEDS

11. The reading activities are structured to respond to students' different learning styles (e.g., visuals for visual students, listening materials for auditory students, and role plays for kinesthetic students).

12. The reading activities provide attractive visuals to motivate students.

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

13. The reading materials include word recognition exercises.

14. The vocabulary items are graded from common to rare.

15. New vocabulary reoccurs and is recycled in subsequent reading texts within units.

B. Reflective Essay Template

Think about the reading materials in the 'Speakout' coursebook and write a reflection paper referring to the following criteria:

- Text Appropriateness
- Learner Needs
- The Purpose
- Vocabulary Development
- Positive and Negative Aspects

C. Stimulated Recall Protocols Template

Interview questions:

1. Was the topic of reading material interesting to the students?

2. Did the visuals attract students' attention and assist them in reading comprehension?

3. What kind of reading strategies did the students employ during the class hour?

4. Do you think the reading activities addressed the students with different learning styles? If yes, to what extent? If no, why not?

5. Were the instructions clear and carried out through three stages: pre, while and post?

6. For what purposes did the students read? (Read for searching information, read to learn vocabulary &grammar, read to find information, pleasure etc.)

7. Did the topic of the reading reflect target culture?

8. What was the genre of the reading material? Were the students familiar with the mentioned genre?

9. Did the students have the opportunity to practice the new words in the subsequent exercises?

10. Did you make use of any kind of supplementary materials?

D. Curriculum Vitae

Personal Information

Surname, Name: Korkmaz, Hülya

Nationality: Turkish

Date of Birth: 05/07/1989

Phone: 0506 345 9662

E-mail: hulyagir@gmail.com

Education

- MA, Bahçeşehir University, English Language Teaching, 2016

- BA, Dokuz Eylül University, English Language Teaching, 2011

- BA, Erasmus UCC College, Copenhagen, English Language

Teaching, 2011 Spring

Work Experience

- English Language Instructor – Bahçeşehir University (2015-…..)

- English Language Instructor – Beykent University (2013-2015)

- English Language Instructor- Ankara University (2011-2013)

- English Teacher- Ankara- Çankaya Public Education Center (2011-2013)

Certificates

- Bahçeşehir University, *TEFL Research Summit, Code-switching* - Speaker, May 23, 2015

- Bilgi University, *5th ELT Conference*, *Code-switching* - Speaker, May 9, 2015

- Terakki Foundation Private Schools, *ELT Conference: From Here to Where,* March 2014

- Beykent University, *Reflective Practice & Instructional Coaching &Creativity,* February 2014

- Ankara University Development Foundation Private Schools, *8th ELT Conference,* March, 2013

- Ankara University School of Foreign Languages*, Pearson Education 'New Total English' introduction* December, 2012

Interests

- Material Development and Design in EFL classes

- Coursebook Evaluation in preparatory programs

- Code-switching in EFL classes

Personal Skills

Communication skills:

- good at convincing people; establish good communication and information flow with others.

Job related skills:

- good at finding immediate effective / innovative solutions for risky issues

- holds her position with great responsibility

- serves as helper, self-learner and counsellor

- motivated , enthusiastic, open minded

Computer skills:

- Good command of Microsoft Office™ tools