

T.C  
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İLİŞKİLER ANABİLİM DALI

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PRINCIPLES OF  
THE BOLOGNA PROCESS IN ENGLISH  
COURSES IN BACHELOR' S DEGREE  
PROGRAMMES IN TURKEY**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

SEVGÜL AKBUZ

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. VEYSEL KILIÇ

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## ÖZET

Bu tezin amacı, Bologna Süreci esaslarının, 'Türk Yüksek Öğrenim Sistemi' nde dört yıllık lisans öğrencilerine verilen İngilizce ders içeriklerine uygulanmasındaki etkileri incelemektir. Bu inceleme Yıldız Teknik ve Sakarya Üniversite' lerde dört yıllık lisan eğitimi alınan öğrenciler için verilen zorunlu İngilizce ders içerikleri üzerine geliştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, Avrupa Birliği (AB) tarafından bir eğitim reform hareketi olarak başlatılan Bologna Süreci' nin genişlemesini ve Türkiye' nin 2001 yılında sürece dahil olmasını takip eden dönemde, zorunlu İngilizce derslerinin Bologna temel hedeflerini gerçekleştirmedeki rolü üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu bakımdan, tez Bologna Süreci temel hedefleri olan öğrenci ve akademik kadro hareketliliği ve mezunların iş bulabilirliği konusunda, İngilizce dil öğreniminin rolü konusuna odaklanmaktadır. Sürecin ana özelliklerinin yanısıra, 'yeterlilikler', 'yeterlilikler çerçeveleri', ve yeterlilikleri oluşturan temel unsurlar gibi önemli kavramları içeren bir bölüm Bologna Süreci resmi dökümanlarıyla açıklanmakta ve irdelenmektedir. Tezin içerisinde yer alan kavramlar yukarıda adı geçen iki üniversiteden elde edilen verilerin değerlendirilmesinde yardımcı olmak için kullanılmaktadır. Bu çalışma, aynı zamanda, müfredat hazırlama aşamasında bahsedilen temel unsurlar ile zorunlu İngilizce dersleri arasındaki bağlantının önemini, bütün üniversitelerin lisans öğrencileri için İngilizce dil yeterliliklerini Türk Ulusal Yeterlilikler Çerçevesi ile birlikte tüm Avrupa Yüksek Öğrenim Alanında da tanımlanmış olması gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Tezin en önemli bölümü, Bologna Süreci temel prensiplerinin lisans düzeyinde verilen İngilizce derslerinin müfredat incelemesi kısmından elde edilen sonuçların değerlendirilmesi için ayrılmıştır. Ulaşılan sonuçların ışığında, Türk Yüksek Öğretim Sistemindeki lisans öğrencileri için hazırlanan zorunlu İngilizce derslerinin müfredatlarında Bologna Süreci' nden sonra görülen değişiklikler ya da yeni uygulamalar kapsamlı bir şekilde incelenmektedir.

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis aims at analysing the implementation of the Bologna Process principles on the content of English language courses for four-year Bachelor Degree students in the Turkish Higher Education. This analysis is built on the curricula of compulsory English courses offered in two Turkish Universities which are Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University. Following the extension of the Bologna Process, started as an educational reform by the EU, and Turkey's involvement in 2001, the contribution of compulsory English language courses for fulfilment of the major Bologna objectives has been emphasized in this present study. In this respect, this thesis focuses on the role of English language teaching/ learning in working towards the Bologna Process main objectives which are mobility of the students and academic staff and employability of the graduates. The background of the Bologna Process as well as its key features is explained and discussed through the official documents, including the reference points for some important concepts such as qualifications, qualifications frameworks, and the core key components of qualifications. The concepts presented in this thesis are aimed at helping the evaluation of the results obtained from the case studies taking place in two Turkish Universities mentioned above. This study then defines the relationship between these core elements and compulsory English courses while designing course curricula, suggesting that all universities should describe the English language qualifications for Bachelor Degree students throughout the European Higher Education Area as well as within the context of Turkish National Qualifications Framework. In particular, the important part of the thesis is then devoted to the evaluation of the results obtained from the curricula analysis part relevant to the implementation of the Bologna Process principles on English language teaching at Bachelor's Degree. In the light of the findings, the changes and new implementations seen in the curricula of compulsory English courses offered for Bachelor Degree students in Turkish Higher Education after the Bologna Process have been comprehensively explored.

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## THE LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AQF	The Australian Qualifications Framework
BFUG	Bologna Follow – Up Group
BPG	Bologna Preparatory Group
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CoHE	Council of Higher Education
EC	European Commission
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EIS:	Educational Information System
ELP	European Language Portfolio
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ESIB	National Unions of Students in Europe
EU	European Union
EUA	European University Association.
EURASHE	European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
JQI	Joint Quality Initiative
REHEQA	Register of European Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies
SCQF	The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO-CEPES	European Centre for Higher Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
YOK	Council of Higher Education in Turkey

## **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the decades, education has had a pivotal role in human life. It has undeniably been associated with political, economic, social and cultural issues. Especially, with the beginning of transition towards ‘knowledge-based economy’ which can be an effective push for growth, competitiveness and jobs for countries all over the world, economic sphere started to give shape to the quality of education. In a sense, education, along with its role in promoting social cohesion in society, has had to produce solutions to the problems and challenges arising from this new ‘knowledge-driven economy’. Regarding this increasing importance of economy, the higher education, other than any other educational levels, started to be recognised as a key factor to provide students with the opportunities to acquire necessary qualifications. Those students have been regarded as prospective workers who are needed in today’s globalising world. Therefore, it has to provide sufficient labour force fostering new developments in the fields of technology and science. In other words, labour market changes have become a driving force for the most countries both at national and local level, leading to the restructuring of higher education. Within the new borders of higher education shaped by rapidly changing, dynamic global economic and competitive environment, a considerable focus on the importance of increasing the quality of education has been developed. In this respect, knowledge is viewed as the central impetus in promoting economic and social progress. Hence, higher education institutions and universities are regarded as the centres to raise productivity and enhance competitiveness by creating an economic sector with productive and highly skilled workforce.

Given that the higher education has been situated at the core of social, economic and cultural progress, the European Union (EU) would not be unresponsive to this reality in order to be a central player in the economy driven by knowledge. Thus, it would have the chance to enhance its worldwide competitiveness as well as strengthen its integration process. Therefore, for about 30 years, policies and various programmes regarding higher education have been built up although education was absent as a policy domain in the preliminary years of the European integration. Starting from the initial

attempts, increasing number of member states and also some associated countries have been included in this process. All participants have been trying to keep up with the changes and developments concerning education both at national and the EU level. Since the 70s, some symbolic points have been put forward by the EU on education including various phases basically to respond to rapidly growing demand for education. Until 1983, the first phase of development in education had been completed in the EU. Almost all meetings resulted in either the establishments of some committees or adoption of a programme related to education. With the signature of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, a specific focus on higher education was included by formulating three priority areas regarding higher education. Within this process started with Treaty of Maastricht, a lot of programmes were extended in terms of their procedures and outcomes. Not surprisingly, the procedures were directed with the contributions of nation states and developed in line with the aims envisaging to create a common and functioning economic market determined by the founding treaties of the EU. While there was no explicit statement on education as a policy domain in those treaties, the importance and necessity of highly skilled labour force for the effective operation of the common market was underpinned in the following interpretations of the treaties.

In time, some more comprehensive and ambitious goals which were specific to higher education were defined in the subsequent treaties and meetings. In this context, the idea pertaining to a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) appeared. This was aimed to be achieved by the help of the actions undertaken voluntarily by the nation states' governments and higher education institutions. First step, on the way to establishing EHEA, was taken in the Sorbonne declaration signed by the ministers of education of France, Germany, Italy and the UK in 1998. That first call for the creation of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was followed by the signature of the Bologna Declaration by all the Ministers of the EU and the associated countries. That was also an action programme setting out some explicit goals to be reached by 2010. There are a number of key points developed within this programme started by the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations which are unprecedented in the field of educational policy. Surprisingly, this programme was transformed into a process, called the 'Bologna Process'. It was firstly formulated for the creation of the European Higher



Education Area (EHEA) which later became an integral part of an overall work programme 'education and training 2010' within the context of the Lisbon Strategy. With its each objective and action line, the Bologna Process has envisaged some reforms in higher education for three different cycles which are bachelor, master and doctoral degrees. While Bologna was changing into a process, its organisational aspects have become compatible with the work of the EU Commission. Although it was initially started as an intergovernmental process, the role of the European Commission increased to strengthen European cooperation in higher education. The Commission addressed the importance of higher education in the EU's competitiveness in international arena. Therefore, three major reform areas which were outlined by the EU Commission were related to main fields of reform such as; governance, curricular, and funding reforms. Among them, curricular reform with its three cycle system (bachelor, master and doctorate) and focus on the issues of recognition and competence – based learning has been promoted through the Bologna Process. The importance of curricular reform can be specifically examined within the Bologna perspective considering the role of higher education with its universities throughout the world to provide international market with competent employees. In this sense, curricular reform with an international aspect to meet the changing requirements of the knowledge-driven economy is the starting point for the determination of the topic of this thesis. Thanks to this, curricular reform for compulsory English courses will be put forward referring to the fundamental Bologna Process objectives which are mobility of students and employability of bachelor graduates. Today, thanks to the effective curricular reform which has been carried out by the Bologna Process, establishing a common higher education area can be a key way to increase mobility and employability. As the building blocks of the Bologna Process, mobility and employability have gained importance for many universities and it is revealed here that these two objectives have special ties with the English language teaching. In that way, it can be understood that English language teaching in higher education really contributes to the realisation of these Bologna objectives. This issue will be further linked to English language teaching in higher education and analysed based on the relationship between languages and mobility/employability concepts.

In the turn of the millennium, important structural reshaping of the higher education with the new three-cycle degree structure based on the Bologna Process has also been taking place in the Turkish Higher Education System. Based on the information explained so far, it can be noted that the topic of this thesis is shaped on the importance of English language teaching in higher education. It is strongly claimed in this thesis that the impacts of implementing the Bologna Process principles on the curricula design of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students in two Turkish Universities (Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University) are supposed to result in some changes and new implementations. Along with the analyses of the curricula of these English courses, the issue will be undertaken using the Bologna Process perspective. And thus, above mentioned new implementations and changes are expected to overlap the objectives of Bologna Process. Regarding the results obtained from the analyses of the course curricula have been completed, it is not possible to assert that there is a fully - conscious process of curriculum development for compulsory English courses at Bachelor's Degree Level in all Turkish universities within the context of the Bologna Process. On the other hand, it can be put forward in this thesis that the effective design of compulsory English courses curricula in line with the Bologna Process principles on the basis of English language qualifications can help the European Union attain its objective to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" through higher education.

## **Methodology**

To reach this ambitious goal of the European Union, a confluence of attempts for establishing a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and compulsory English language teaching/ learning in the Turkish Higher Education will be explored with the help of theoretical and implementation aspects of the Process. As an alternative approach to studying the Bologna Process and the reflection of its implementation on compulsory English courses in four-year Bachelor education in Turkish Higher Education, in this present study, two distinguished, progressive state universities -

Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University - have been chosen as case studies. There are two reasons why these two universities have been chosen as cases. To be examined. In the first part, the curriculum design of compulsory English language courses will be analysed in Yıldız Technical University. Yıldız Technical University has been chosen especially for the Business English courses offered for bachelor degree students. The analysis here is important to see whether these courses' curricula have been designed considering the importance of acquiring job-related language after the Bologna Process. The idea behind this is related to the probable contribution of such courses to the realisation of main Bologna objectives, mobility and employability.

As for the reason why Sakarya University will be handled as the second case is related to explicit attempts to implement the Bologna Process principles in all areas and develop a system considering the Process. It can be seen that the university is plainly aware of the Bologna Process because of these attempts of the university. The principles envisaged to be implemented within the context of the Bologna Process have started to be evaluated and put into practise in Sakarya University. In this respect, Sakarya University has emerged as a foremost Turkish university with its role in the Process together with its leaders taking place in the Process actively. Sakarya University states that the university has developed a roadmap that identifies new approaches to higher education with reference to the Bologna Process. While other universities have also taken some steps in line with the Bologna Process regarding main themes such as recognition and quality assurance, Sakarya University specifically aims at focusing on and revising the teaching – learning process as a part of the Bologna Process in depth.

Both universities chosen as cases are examined through the tools and concepts of the Bologna Process using the elements in their course curricula. To set a basis for understanding of this analysis part in Chapter 3, firstly, a general analysis of the Bologna Process built on the Bachelor English language qualifications and a through analysis of the concept of 'Qualifications' will be made. This will be carried out by the examination of legal documents of the Process giving special emphasis to English language teaching in higher education in Europe. With the help of the key concepts of qualifications, the idea of creating 'Qualifications Frameworks' and the place of

language qualifications definition must be explicated. It is important to underscore here that in the curricula analysis of compulsory English courses available in two case universities, the concepts and terms explained in Chapter 2 will be drawn upon. Especially, language qualifications in Higher Education in Europe with reference to language qualifications defined in European Language Portfolio (ELP) is referred as the major document which is frequently used at universities. It should be noted that, in Chapter 2, all the components of qualifications have not been deliberately dealt with in a detailed way as the emphasis is put on English language qualifications. Instead, selection criteria regarding the language qualifications examined here refer to officially accepted explanations by the EU.

It can be contended in this thesis that the issue of English language qualifications necessary to be acquired by four-year Bachelor Degree students at universities is highly important for the full implementation of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Together with the official documents mentioned above, objectives formed on the way to the establishment of a common European Higher Education Area (EHEA) are focused to emphasize the place of English language qualifications acquired in four-year Bachelor Degree Level at universities. In general terms, the case studies suggest that there are some differences in terms of the implementation of the Bologna Process principles on the design of compulsory English course curricula at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University as well as similar implementations. While some of the Bologna Process principles have been implemented and integrated into various departments and courses successfully, some principles concerning English language teaching have challenged the reform depending on the issues of awareness, mobility, employability, definition of qualifications, and learning outcomes in Turkish Universities. The results obtained from the case studies are discussed in terms of above mentioned issues. The predictions about possible Bologna Process implementations are made concerning the importance of the curricula development of compulsory English courses offered in Turkish universities within the context of this thesis. While evaluating the findings obtained from related departments of aforementioned universities, the criteria are formed considering these mentioned new implementations, the same or revised parts in the curricula designed for English courses in relation to the Bologna Process.

It should be noted that the analysis made in this thesis is also supported with the use of tables, figures and graphs. Especially the use of such tables is significant as they give opportunities to make inferences about the changes resulting from either the Bologna Process or any other reasons. A through examination of the facts and figures on the curricula of compulsory English language courses reflects the degree of Bologna Process principles implementation.

The research questions of this thesis are:

- How and to what extent have Sakarya University and Yıldız Technical University adopted the Bologna Process principles applied in the design of compulsory English courses' curricula in Bachelor's Degree with specific reference to Turkish Higher Education System?
- What can be the role of English language teaching/ learning in Bachelor's Degree Level in order to fulfil the main objectives of the Bologna Process to increase mobility and employability?

It is proposed that to investigate the curricula of compulsory English courses for four-year Bachelor Degree students in two Turkish universities and to indicate how much Turkey has adopted the principles of the Bologna Process are assumed important to achieve the purpose of the thesis underpinned so far. Therefore, the level of implementation of the Bologna Process principles concerning some aspects of compulsory English language teaching/ learning on the basis of the criteria proposed by the Common European Qualifications Framework will be questioned. This will be carried out by providing an examination of the explicit descriptions of curricula (course syllabi including objectives, content and methods which have been applied at both Yıldız Technical and Sakarya Universities). To achieve this goal, there will also be an analysis of whether English language qualifications for Bachelor students, defined by the Turkish National Qualifications Framework, have been internalised regarding the learning outcomes proposed by the EU. In the light of these investigations, this study will serve to present the main focus to emphasize the importance of the creation of a higher education system based on the defined qualifications since one of the key

features of the Bologna Process is to encourage each country to develop a ‘National Qualifications Framework (NQF)’. This NQF is expected to be congruous with the ‘Overarching Framework for the EHEA’. Essentially the reasons for determination of the competences and skills affecting curricular changes envisaged by the Turkish National Qualifications Framework for English courses are quite important tools used in this thesis. Depending on this, in these circumstances, how qualifications frameworks have become an indispensable medium in establishing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) will be explored. In order to form a basis for this aim, each relevant topic will be overviewed consecutively taking the establishment of the qualifications frameworks into consideration both at the EU and Turkey level.

To start with, in the first chapter, the thesis provides a short contextual background concerning the Bologna Process referring to its legal documents and its progress. And then the aims and objectives defined to be achieved by 2010 in the legal documents will be clarified soon after the analysis of each document singly. Along with the overview of English language teaching in higher education, the first chapter is concluded. Following, in the second chapter, it then gives a definition of Qualifications Frameworks and Recognition in the Bologna Process through various terms employed in this field of Recognition and International Recognition of Qualifications. These concepts will be portrayed in connection with the Overarching Framework for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and National Qualifications Frameworks with their developments in Europe. Later, through the analysis of English Language Qualifications which are based on European Language Portfolio (ELP), the mechanisms of curricular reforms will be described. This will be accomplished by focusing on the influences of Bologna reforms on the content of English courses with reference to the English language qualifications in higher education.

In the final chapter of the thesis, an overview of the Bologna Process implementation in the Turkish Higher Education system will be investigated. Together with the explanations about Bologna reforms on teaching English as a foreign language and language policy in the Turkish Higher Education, the issue of Qualifications

Frameworks and Recognition in the Bologna Process in Turkey will be outlined. Under this topic, the preparation of the Turkish National Qualifications Framework with its standards and qualifications specified for English courses given at universities will also be examined. After that, to set a background for the analysis part, the changes occurred in the curricula of English courses in two different universities will be analysed within the Bologna Process. Consequently, the evaluation of English language courses' curricula changes at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University which have been examined and analysed will take place to sum up the points of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **I. THE BOLOGNA PROCESS VIS-À-VIS A LITERATURE REVIEW COUPLED WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROCESS AND AN OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN EUROPE**

In this chapter, it is intended to capture and present the main legal documents of the Bologna Process exploring how this process of establishing a European Higher Education Area continues in the light of its major concepts. Also what the Bologna Process means will be explained referring to its aims and objectives in the light of emphasis on the most important action lines of the Process. These major action lines also give shape to the main idea related to importance of English language teaching at Bachelor's Degree suggested in this thesis. Therefore, this part will be concluded with the explanations about the importance of compulsory English language teaching/learning for Bachelor Degree students in higher education.

#### **1.1 Overview of the Bologna Process**

With the growing importance of higher education in Europe, the positions were taken into consideration at the EU level. In this sense, it was aimed to give a shape to European universities in order to modernise them as mentioned earlier. Since universities were born at the heart of Europe, it was acknowledged that knowledge and prosperity can be effectively distributed via universities throughout the continent. In this respect, all the national frontiers and barriers inhibiting Europe from growing closer in various fields would be removed thanks to the establishment of a common space for education. Therefore, the EU has taken its steps paying attention to creation of a higher education area by 2010. Thus, it could contribute to knowledge - based economy enabling better use of knowledge in various dimensions such as; social, economic, cultural and political and also establishing a more complete and far - reaching Europe. As explained in the Booklet on the Bologna Process and EHEA published by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research;



46 European countries participate in the Bologna Process. They are all party to the European Cultural Convention and committed to the goals of the European Higher Education Area. Starting from a non-binding agreement at European level (the 1999 Bologna Declaration), the Bologna Process has initiated sweeping reforms in higher education across Europe at system and institutional level (3).

The Bologna Process, mainly an initiative of creating a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), was built on cooperation between ministers, representatives of higher education institutions with the participation of students and staff from 46 participating countries. Besides, as underlined in the fact - sheet published by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, European Commission takes a voting member role. “The Council of Europe, ESIB (National Unions of Students in Europe), EUA (European University Association), EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education) and UNESCO-CEPES (European Centre for Higher Education) are consultative members” (4).

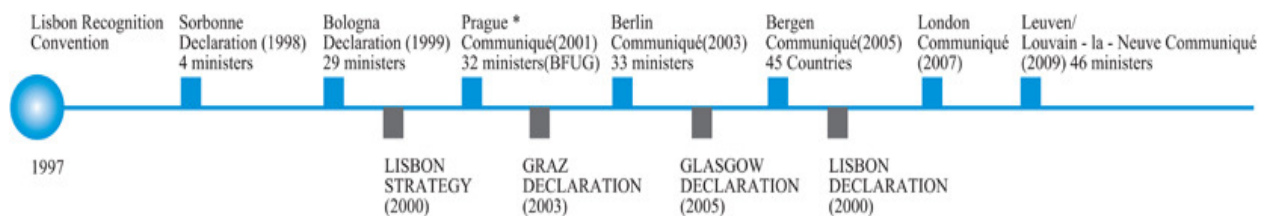
Overall, the goals implied in the Bologna Process are mainly related to strengthening the social and economic dimensions of the EHEA built on the cultural heritage of Europe aiming at increasing employability and facilitating mobility. As the basic aim of the Process was to establish that EHEA which brings about harmony and mutual understanding among the contributors and ensures its competitiveness, Bologna Process can be carried out by the “common understanding of the principles, objectives and commitments of the process” among the participating countries (From Bologna to Bergen and Beyond 3). As explained in Europe Unit, a web page designed for the UK Higher Education, this intergovernmental initiative was launched in 1999 when ministers of education of 29 countries signed Bologna declaration which also gave the process its name. This declaration is the central pillar of the Process. However after the Bologna Declaration, the ministers decided to meet every two years in order to assess the progress of the process and discuss to what extent the reforms have been implemented. The decisions taken in those meetings were presented as declarations which also include some new goals developed in accordance with the original ones adopted at the beginning of the Process. In that way, they became the main legal documents of the Bologna Process. Since 1999, the Ministers of Higher Education have

convened four times to assess the progress towards the establishment of EHEA; in Prague in 2001, in Berlin in 2003 and in Bergen in 2005 and in London in 2007. The last ministerial meeting took in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve in April 2009. (Europe Unit lines 1-20).

### **1.1.1 Main Legal Documents of the Bologna Process**

With the actions taken by the Ministers of Higher Education at different times, the Bologna Process and its basis were determined in its main documents. Then, the frame of the principles to be implemented was shaped and included in the documents as well. In her Change of Degrees and Degrees of Change, Witte said, “The core of the Bologna Process at the European level is a series of intergovernmental conferences of European education ministers at which programmatic declarations and communiqués were passed” (123). Signing of all these declarations, conventions and communiqués by the ministers of education from different countries pursued some goals in order to reform by 2010 at both national and the EU level. However, there have been some other declarations prepared as a result of the gathering of the Representatives of Higher Education Institutions which also strengthened and formed some bases for the ministerial summits. Therefore, the official documents of the Bologna Process have comprised of all declarations and reports of those meetings. As it has been explained, this part is structured along with both intergovernmental conferences of European Education Ministers and the ones of the EUA to pay attention to the events in between emphasizing the Bologna Process which is characterised by a “snowball effect” called by Zgaga (qtd. in Witte 124). That effect includes the transformation of an initiative with four participants into a process with the participation of 47 signatories by 2007 by extending policy agenda and setting action lines developed in accordance with the objectives of the Process. As seen in fig. 1, this timeline indicates the Bologna Process documents created as a result of the International Conferences of European Education Ministers and the Conventions of Representatives of Higher Education Institutions. These conferences and conventions will be dealt with regarding their consequences within the context of the Bologna Process.

## International Conferences Of European Education Ministers



## EUA: European University Association. The Conventions of Representatives of Higher Education Institutions

(\* ) indicates the involvement of Turkey to the Bologna Process in Prague Communiqué.

**Figure 1:** A Timeline of the Bologna Process Showing Overall Process of the International Conferences of European Education Ministers and the Conventions of Representatives of Higher Education Institutions.

### 1.1.1.1 Lisbon Recognition Convention

In 1997, an agreement for a multilateral legal framework to improve international recognition of higher education and periods of study was signed by all 47 members of the Council of Europe in Lisbon. In Lisbon Recognition Convention, it is stated that a course of study providing the student with a qualification of higher education after its completion can be recognised by the authority of a Party as pertaining to its system of higher education (5). In that way, the Convention aims at ensuring that a qualification recognised in one European country will also be recognised in another. It also supports the involvement of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in all participating countries to issue the ‘Diploma Supplement’ to their graduating students helping recognition by describing and explaining the content of a qualification in a format. In that way, it would make it much more understandable, easy to compare and give information about the structure of the higher education system (Lisbon

Convention 14). In this regard, Lisbon convention has become significant in the Bologna Process to set some standards for the signatory countries in recognition of the qualifications.

### **1.1.1.2 Sorbonne Declaration**

Although the process was officially launched in 1999 signing a declaration called Bologna Declaration, the preconditions for improving the institutions of higher education in different terms were determined previously in Sorbonne Declaration in 1998. At the very beginning of the declaration, following statement “Joint declaration on harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education system by the four Ministers in charge for France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom” has taken place (54). With the participation of those countries’ education ministers, the Sorbonne Declaration emphasized the importance and the central role of Europe universities in the following lines:

The European process has very recently moved some extremely important steps ahead. Relevant as they are, they should not make one forget that Europe is not only that of the Euro, of the banks and the economy; it must be a Europe of knowledge as well. We must strengthen and build upon the intellectual, cultural, social and technical dimensions of our continent. These have to a large extent been shaped by its universities, which continue to play a pivotal role for their development (54).

While the key point here is the importance of education to establish Europe of knowledge as an integral factor of social and economic development, parallel to this emphasis on the universities, student and staff mobility along with the mutual recognition of qualifications all over Europe are expressed as prerequisite for development. As it is stated in the Sorbonne Joint Declaration, “Undergraduates should have access to a diversity of programmes, including opportunities for multidisciplinary studies, development of proficiency in languages and the ability to use new information technologies” (55). Hence, the opportunities presented to the students and the research staffs are aimed at being designed in parallel with the improvements in technology and the pace of global development in the world.

### **1.1.1.3 Bologna Declaration**

Following the sign of Sorbonne Agreement, the work for development continued and on 19 June 1999 - one year after the Sorbonne Joint Declaration - Bologna Declaration was signed by the 29 ministers of education. The clauses emphasized in Lisbon Convention were ratified in Bologna Declaration since the main objective is to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The particular stress on the importance of education and the priority of cooperation in education was accepted as universally predominant in the meeting as suggested in document of the Bologna Declaration (58). Since there were a wide range of regional disparities in terms education, with the growing significance of education in economic and social development in Europe, the establishment of a Higher Education Area was emphasized as a key way to promote the mobility and employability of the citizens. The broad objective to enhance the attractiveness of European higher education worldwide and establish a common structure of higher education systems across Europe based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate was explicitly set out in the meeting. Thus, the aim for creating an EHEA by 2010 was declared in the meeting initiating the Bologna Process formally.

### **1.1.1.4 Lisbon Strategy**

After the Bologna Declaration, the follow up ministerial conferences took place every two years in different countries with the participation of education ministers of the countries. Also the Conventions of Representatives of Higher Education Institutions, following ministerial conferences, took place in order to support and monitor the implementation of the Bologna Process by taking actions and forming follow-up groups to work on the process. On the other hand, between the Bologna and Prague Conferences, important steps were taken towards the establishment of the formal structure of higher education area to support the Bologna Process. The Lisbon Strategy set in 2000 is a critically important event for the progress of the Bologna Process. Launching of Lisbon Strategy in 2000 laid out basically social and economic strategy for the EU by 2010. In this respect, as an action plan, Lisbon Strategy - also known as Lisbon Process - not only triggered a new process but also strengthened the objectives

of the Bologna Process in the light of one of the most ambitious goals to be realised by the Union. According to this aim, “The Union must become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (European Parliament Lisbon Strategy). Especially the EU’s confrontation with the changes in economy resulting from globalisation pushed the EU into a knowledge-driven economy. In Lisbon meeting, the ground was laid for applying the “open method of coordination (OMC)” to the education field for the first time (Gornitzka 3) a method for building up a high level of commitment compatible with the bounds of EU competencies in the education field suggested by Scharpf (qtd. in Witte 134). After the adoption of Lisbon Strategy in 2000, the EU established a new basis for policy cooperation under the ‘Education and training 2010 work programme’ (European Commission, “History”). In addition, as a part of Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, a modernisation agenda for universities was published by the European Commission. This agenda was comprised of three main reform fields of which were defined under three headings categorised as ‘Curriculum, Governance and Funding Reforms’. Particularly, the curricular reform has been promoted by the Bologna Process. Given the similarities of objectives and methods, the Lisbon Strategy contributed to the convergence between the Bologna Process and the EU’s actions. Therefore, the developments in the Bologna Process have been parallel to the programmes initiated by the Lisbon Strategy.

#### **1.1.1.5 Prague Communiqué**

Two years after the Bologna Declaration, the first Bologna follow-up conference took place in Prague on 19 May 2001. This time, higher education ministers of 32 participant countries, including Turkey, gathered so as to revise the progress of the Bologna Process. In the summit, priority areas were also determined for the upcoming years of the Process. In Prague Communiqué, as mentioned in its related document, the ministers verified that there was a need for a Bologna follow – up group (BFUG) involving Bologna preparatory group (BPG) which is responsible for monitoring the Process. BFUG chaired by the EU Presidency would be composed of representatives of all signatory countries, the European Commission and new participants. On the other

hand, BPG, chaired by a representative of the country hosting the next ministerial meeting, would include the representatives of the countries which hosted the previous ministerial meetings, two non-EU member states together with two EU member states (84, 88). Ministers decided that the next ministerial conference would take place in Berlin two years later, in 2003.

#### **1.1.1.6 Graz Declaration**

Between the Prague and Berlin Communiqué, there were major developments on the way to create a European Higher Education Area. In this context, Graz Convention on Higher Education Institutions (HEI) held by European University Association (EUA) in May, 2003, was an influential contribution to the Bologna Process. As it has been declared in the document of the convention, “it is the major EUA policy document resulting from the 2nd Convention of European Higher Education Institutions hosted by the three universities in Graz from 28 – 30 May 2003” (Graz Declaration 90). These statements make clear that the EUA has had an effective role in all follow – up seminars since Prague. Graz Declaration emphasizes the central role that universities should play in implementing the Bologna Process. Regarding this emphasized role of universities, strengthening the role of higher education institutions is also pointed out in Graz Convention pushing forward Bologna and Prague. Hence, the aim of Graz Convention was to highlight the importance of those institutions in the creation of European Higher Education Area in a globalised world because the results of the convention would be presented by the EUA in order to contribute to the subsequent ministerial conference in Berlin in 2003 (Working Towards Graz 2003).

#### **1.1.1.7 Berlin Communiqué**

With the participation of a new member state in 2003, the 33 signatory countries met in Berlin. Since Prague meeting, the progress and universities of Europe and their students have showed their commitment to the reforms of Bologna (Wincler EUA Statement). That is why; five topics were concentrated in Berlin ministerial meeting concerning main concerns of the Process. Those concerns were related to the Bologna action lines, the development of social dimension of EHEA regarding mobility of the

students, promoting European values and cultures respecting linguistic diversity, the governance of HE institutions to make the EHEA a success and the importance of research for universities of Europe. Highlighting the insistence about the importance of the social dimension of the universities stated in Graz Declaration, the same reference was given in Berlin meeting pointing out the mutual roles of the government, universities and the students in the Bologna Process. For this reason, the role of Higher Education Institutions together with their students for the creation of EHEA was emphasized by the ministers, which was firstly given as a message by the EUA arising from the Graz Declaration.

According to the explanations in the document of Berlin Communiqué, ministers actively took the results of the reports into consideration prepared by the follow – up group in order to figure out how much progress had been made since Prague meeting. They also examined the Trends – III Report presented by the European University Association (EUA) with all other seminar and conference results prepared by the Higher Education Institutions, students and other participants (98 - 99).

In terms of the creation of the European Qualifications Framework, ministers referred to an overarching framework of qualifications for the EHEA in Berlin:

Ministers encourage the member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (Berlin Communiqué 101).

Taking the statements of the ministers in Berlin into account, the first attempts for the overarching framework of qualification encompassing all qualifications in higher education can be seen in Berlin Declaration.

#### **1.1.1.8 Glasgow Declaration**

After Berlin Communiqué, the next step of the EUA was to work on Glasgow Declaration with the convention of 45 representatives of higher education institutions and 630 university leaders and partners in Glasgow in 2005. Glasgow Declaration was



important not only in setting the agenda of the EUA for the upcoming years but also presenting the common position of the EUA in the Ministers of Education meeting which took place in Bergen in May 2005. Glasgow Declaration, in that regard, formed the basis for the messages which would be conveyed by the EUA in the meeting of Bergen. In Glasgow, “the importance of strong universities in responding to the growing and varied societal demands of universities” was highlighted (Glasgow Declaration 4). The university leaders and partners gathering in Glasgow called for the recognition of pivotal role of Europe universities in cultural, social and political domains. In line with this statement focused in Glasgow, some actions and priorities for the universities were set out since major actors in shaping European knowledge society can contribute to the establishment of the EHEA.

#### **1.1.1.9 Bergen Communiqué**

As it has explained in the related document of Bergen Communiqué, in 2005, 47 ministers of higher education from 45 countries gathered in order to make an interval evaluation of the Bologna Process and to review the priorities and goals set to be attained by 2010. The resolution about the creation of a European Higher Education Area by 2010 is emphasized again. All the participant countries with the new ones confirmed that they would implement the reforms of the Bologna Process (108 - 112). Bergen is very important for the progress of the Process as it provided great awareness about it. The activity initially launched as an intergovernmental action turned into a process involving international institutions, higher education institutions, and the students. In that way, Bologna has become a new European Higher Education brand. Actually, the most important focus about Bergen Declaration for this thesis can be made by underlining the “Overarching Framework for Qualifications in EHEA” including three cycles. As stated in Bergen Communiqué document, that Framework created as predicated on the ‘Dublin Level Descriptors’, which were put on the agenda for the participating countries by the Berlin Communiqué, was designed only for higher education and it once adopted by the council became an important instrument for education and the member states (109).

#### **1.1.1.10 Lisbon Declaration**

Lisbon Declaration was adopted by the Council of European University Association (EUA) in 2007 after the discussions among the representatives of Higher Education Institutions. Lisbon was aimed at laying the groundwork for the subsequent conference of Ministers of Higher Education in London in 2007 similar to the other declarations of the Council of EUA. In the Declaration, the autonomy for the universities is demanded from the governments. The challenges of the process arising from the globalised world are announced to be handled and also the significance of cooperation between public authorities and universities is reiterated in Lisbon as it was stressed in Glasgow. Also, a strong emphasis is put on ‘social inclusion, attractiveness, mobility, and employability’ as the leading characteristics of the EHEA (EUA, “Lisbon”). Hence, universities and governments are required to reorganize their priority areas along with the overall objectives of the reform to ensure the above - mentioned characteristics of the emerging EHEA. Since the Lisbon increased the awareness about the importance of education systems in the establishment of EU’s social and economic future, European Qualifications Framework also contributed to the effective implementation of the Lisbon goals as mentioned in the final texts of Bergen Declaration.

#### **1.1.1.11 London Communiqué**

The Ministers of Higher Education convened two years after Bergen in London in May, 2007. By highlighting the statements from the Lisbon Declaration, the Ministers responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating the Bologna Process stated, “Building on our rich and diverse European cultural heritage, we are developing an EHEA based on institutional autonomy, academic freedom, equal opportunities and democratic principles that will facilitate mobility, increase employability and strengthen Europe’s attractiveness and competitiveness” (London Communiqué 1). To affect the success of the Process, the importance of the embedded characteristics of the EHEA is pointed out in this meeting. With the structural reforms to show expected results, it is clear that mobility, as the key component of EHEA, is related to social dimension of higher education. That is why; it was emphasized among

the other characteristics. In addition to the emphasis put on the social dimension of higher education in London summit, the education ministers reassured their determination to implement the process fully by addressing significant issues such as the recognition of higher education qualifications, prior learning and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (London Communiqué 3). Great emphasis was put on the importance of implementation of qualifications in each country and also of engaging in the process of implementation of a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies.

#### **1.1.1.12 Leuven/ Louvain – la - Neuve Communiqué**

Belgium hosted the last ministerial summit of the Bologna Process on 28 - 29 April, 2009 “to take stock of the achievements of the Bologna Process and to establish the priorities for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for the next decade” (Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué 1). It gives some background information about the Process and then summarises the priorities for future actions identified by higher education ministers. With the new member, the Republic of Montenegro, the total number of participating countries to the Process became 46. After London Communiqué, the ministers of higher education convened for the last time within the Bologna Process which had been envisaged to end next year in 2010. According to the decisions taken in that summit, The Bologna Process will continue beyond its anticipated end-date of 2010. The Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué suggested that “Since not all the objectives have been completely achieved, the full and proper implementation of these objectives at European, national and institutional level will require increased momentum and commitment beyond 2010” (2). Ministers from the 46 countries involved in the Process concluded that the objectives put forwarded by the 1999 Bologna Declaration, and the policies created in the subsequent years, are still valid. The current arrangements will continue to develop reform movements. However, the pace may slow down with higher education ministers gathering every three years to take the stock of the Bologna Process. According to the information gathered from assessment report about the Leuven summit prepared by e-note, the next ministerial summit is scheduled for Bucharest on 27 – 28 April 2012 upon Romania’s offer to host

the next summit. Prior to that, a celebratory anniversary summit will take place in Budapest and Vienna on 11-12 March 2010 (Europe Unit “Ministerial” 5).

As seen in all summits, the overarching objectives are examined through reviewing stocktaking process and the implementation of existing action lines of the Bologna Process. In terms of general assessment of the action lines’ implementation, ministers agreed that there is still much work to be done especially concerning lifelong learning and student mobility. Therefore, no new action lines were introduced in Leuven summit. While social, economic and political dimensions of the Bologna Process have been explained and assessed with the help of Bologna documents, most importantly for this thesis the significance of mobility and employability issues arising from labour – market needs are underscored in this communiqué again. Referring to the current economic crisis, ministers have highlighted the importance of training highly qualified graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competences so that they can “fully seize the opportunities in changing labour markets.” (3). The importance of curricular reform based on determination of learning outcomes and student - centred learning to increase quality of education and focus on increasing students’ competences for their future professional lives have been also pointed by the HE ministers in Leuven summit. Regarding the role of business in shaping course curricula, this point has become substantial. Depending on this, the topic which will be examined in a detailed way in the second chapter of the thesis is related to the development of national qualifications frameworks. There are also some references about this issue in the summit. It is restated in the Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué document that the implementation of lifelong learning can be realised by the development of national qualifications frameworks. “We aim at having them implemented and prepared for self-certification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area by 2012” (3). The issue of development of national qualifications frameworks has started to be seen as one of the priority areas of the Bologna Process. Hence, new objectives to implement the frameworks by 2012 have been determined by the ministers. The communiqué has also revealed that greater attention should be paid to implementation of the Bologna objectives in the future. Until the summit that will take place in 2012, the development and use of national qualifications frameworks, the

determination of learning outcomes for the courses will be particularly important for the implementation of the Bologna reforms and objectives.

### **1.1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Bologna Process**

Today's so-called Bologna Process which was formally initiated by the Bologna Declaration (1999) set out some objectives envisaged to have been realised by 2010. All of these objectives were introduced in the main Bologna documents explained by now. With the increase in the number of the participating states and changes in the course of the Process, the aims have been shaped and developed in time. In the initial phase however, a number of key areas are emphasized to achieve its central aim to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010 supporting the European Higher Education system world-wide.

According to information obtained from Europe Unit the key areas underlined in the Bologna Process are as follow. For the establishment of the EHEA, the basic requirement is the elimination of any barriers to students' mobility which will make new opportunities available to students and the teachers in European employment market. Another objective aims to cultivate a system of credits in the form of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) which would help "the development of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees simplifying comparison between qualifications across Europe" (Europe Unit "Objectives"). Thus, with the creation of a coherent and transparent higher education system, students and teachers will have their qualifications recognised much more widely facilitating high-level of employability, mobility and greater access. Among the main objectives, to increase the competitiveness of European Higher Education has an important role in the Process going on to aid the EHEA to be more attractive in the international platform. A prominent objective associated with the major aim of the Process is the adoption of a system based on two cycles called Bachelor and Master Degrees, which has already broadened with the doctoral level qualifications considered as the third cycle. Finally, as it is one of the most significant objectives of the Process for this study, the curricula and course development to reinforce higher education dimension of Europe must be touched upon.

### **1.1.2.1 Purposes and Action Lines of the Bologna Process**

To fulfil the aims of the Bologna Process, those objectives mentioned above have been declared as ten “action lines” over the course of the meetings in Bologna, Prague, Berlin, and London. The first six of these action lines were set in Bologna meeting, the following three in the Prague Declaration and the last one in the Berlin Summit. All these action lines were defined to set priorities for the successful creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Therefore, they cannot be considered apart and there is some overlap between them (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research “Bologna” 6). The action lines defined in different declarations are as described below:

Established in the Bologna Declaration of 1999:

1. Adoption of a system easily readable and comparable degrees
2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles
3. Establishment of a system of credits
4. Promotion of mobility
5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance
6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education

Added after the Prague Ministerial summit:

7. Focus on lifelong learning
8. Inclusion of higher education institutions and students
9. Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

Added after the Berlin Ministerial summit of 2003:

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area (Europe Unit “10 Bologna”)

The nature of the objectives is various while some of them are qualitative and touch upon a specific aim others serve for a common idea. That is why; some objectives overlap and some are inter-dependent, yet each aim is also important within itself. As mentioned above, two of the defined goals in the Bologna Process include the adoption

of a comparable degree system with two main cycles, aimed at facilitating movement of students and academic staff between countries. Thus, two important goals of the Process maintaining the establishment of EHEA can be realised with the removal of obstacles to the effective mobility of students and academic staff and employability. All in all, as the Bologna Process has developed, the action lines started to merge and this has resulted in introduction of new concepts beside the basic ones. As the head secretariat of BFUG, Per Nyborg specified, those action lines have been imperative for the dynamic of the Bologna Process. However, they do not expressly describe the ultimate purpose. The new concepts being developed can serve for this final objective. During the Berlin – Bergen period, priority is given to the development of; “a three-cycle degree system in each participating country, national quality assurance systems cooperating in a Europe-wide network, mutual recognition between participating countries” (Nyborg 2).

Most importantly, the origin of these action lines points out two basic objectives which are considerably important for the development of this thesis. These two fundamental goals are defined to enhance mobility of both students and academic staff and employability of the graduates. In that sense, the relations between language learning and mobility/ employability can be illustrated considering the Bologna Process. Before turning to the concept of qualification in the EHEA, these relations and how they fit together will be taken a closer look at in the next part of this chapter.

#### **1.1.2.2 The Relations between Languages and Mobility as an Objective of the Bologna Process**

From the aforementioned action lines, ‘adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees’, ‘establishment of a system of credits’, ‘promotion of mobility’, and ‘promotion of European dimension in higher education’ support the academic mobility of the students and staff directly. The last one basically underlies the establishment of European Higher Education Area. For many of the Bologna Process reforms, the establishment of a common higher education area is the basis of all the objectives set out during the Process. On the other hand, the creation of a comparable and readable degree system across Europe has also an important function to give support to the reforms to be achieved. As Tudor states, “Traditionally, national

educational systems in Europe have operated largely as discrete entities at national level with limited systematic cooperation with one another” (3). Therefore, the Bologna Process aims at establishing the EHEA designed to operate internationally as well as nationally.

It is intended that the comparability of degrees and the elimination of barriers to the recognition of degrees will mainly serve for the promotion of academic mobility which is one of the key objectives of the Process. The call for curriculum development and harmony in all curricula all over Europe likewise, ‘establishment of a system of credits’ such as ECTS can also be a push for promoting the student mobility across Europe. As already touched upon above, ‘promotion of mobility’, is one of the leading principles of the Bologna Process. Thus, the development of qualifications frameworks as well as other action lines mentioned contributes to facilitate mobility to a large extent. The internationalisation aims, which have been envisaged to be incorporated in all curricula, can assist the students’ mobility within the Bologna Process. However, Tudor argues that in today’s situation some drawbacks can be observed in the curricula and regarding that in student and staff mobility. Academic mobility with over 20 national languages among 33 countries requires certain significance of language skills (3). Simple common sense, the students and academic staff who benefit from mobility will need to undertake many efforts to learn other languages as they are required to perform various tasks in a foreign language. That is why; academic mobility facilitated by the European Higher Education Area entails a wide range of communicative skills. Most of the time, students and academic staff need the language skills to get information from written sources. On this account, English language has a special position among the other national languages as it has the potential to be a common language that every student and academic staff uses in academic environment. An exclusive emphasis on language skills are called for to be given to the need for this common language so as to gain access to specialised materials especially available in English and to take part in mobility programmes such as conferences, academic presentations, academic writing, etc (Tudor 4). This having been emphasized that, for the establishment of the EHEA as a factor to give rise to a new academic environment, it is definite that language is an effective communicative tool for the students and



academics with respect to academic mobility and internationalisation. Therefore, the Bologna Process which promotes increased academic mobility has a crucial role to make the students, academics and other actors taking part in the Process more aware of the importance of language teaching/ learning, exclusively English. In that way, effective English language teaching/ learning in higher education has a considerably crucial role in the development of a functioning EHEA.

### **1.1.2.3 The Relations between Languages and Employability as an Objective of the Bologna Process**

In the light of growing internationalisation and globalisation, the aim of creating a higher education area is promoted by various basic principles. These principles underlie the action lines defined and developed during the Process and the basic objectives of the Bologna Process. All of them contribute to the creation of a framework in order to be a leading participant for the development of the knowledge-based economy. In that case, promotion of employability and mobility are the overarching objectives in addition to enhancing the attractiveness of European higher education. Hence, it is clear that employability of graduates in labour market is regarded as the other key objective of the Bologna Process as well as mobility of academics and students while trying to reach a fully-fledged EHEA. As asserted by UK Bologna Seminar on Enhancing European Employability, to have a more comparable, compatible and consistent higher education system, the labour market should also be taken into consideration by creating some exit points in the structure of higher education (2). In this context, employability along with the mobility forms has become one of the most striking components of the Bologna Process.

It can be noted that as a part of the attempts and efforts to introduce a structural change in higher education, the importance of strengthening employability has been underpinned in Bergen Communiqué. It is stated that “There is a need for greater dialogue, involving governments, institutions and social partners, to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service” (108). It can be said that employability objective is targeted to be in the centre of higher education reforms that assures to make graduates more likely

to gain employment and be successful in their future careers. On the other hand, to achieve this goal, language skills gain importance with regard to employability. A linguistically able workforce constitutes an indispensable part of contributing knowledge-based economy. In the case of lack of adequate language skills among the employees, the performance may decline and thus so may the participation in the business environment in the international economy with a highly competitive capacity.

In the previous part discussing mobility as a crucial key objective of the Bologna Process, it is clarified that this aim can be fulfilled by adequate language skills. Similarly, high level of employability can also be achieved by the development of effective linguistic ability in higher education. As currently the foreign language most widely spoken in Europe is English, linguistic ability and use of language in business life increases the competition between European companies. Hence, the demand for the qualified employees from higher education institutions and universities arises from this situation. To support this idea Connell states that “A lack of (language) skills would appear to be a key inhibiting factor, preventing companies from expanding their horizons and breaking into new markets” (7). These remarks stress the role of languages for companies to participate in international economic arena effectively. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, identification with a common language, presently with English, is central to business life. If higher education is able to supply the bachelor students with effective English language education preparing them for their future career and the current international workplace, this would be a great contribution to foster the Bologna Process fulfilling its employability objective. Therefore, the curriculum for compulsory English language courses offered by universities should be rearranged by taking ongoing Bologna Process and its key objectives into consideration. As already stated, the importance of English teaching/learning must be highlighted in order to build up new higher education programmes aiding to prepare students for professional tasks.

In principle, language learning - English specifically as a common language - should be recognized as an indispensable part of a whole educational process which develops a potential in students for their subsequent professional life in business. Additionally, it can also be viewed “as an employability oriented educational activity in

its own right” (Tudor 7). On account of this, language politics deserves much attention in the course of the higher education reforms in Europe. Those objectives, mobility and employability, discussed in this part demand a strengthening of English language teaching in higher education area supporting with the changes likely to be made in the curricula of English courses designed for four-year Bachelor’s Degree Level. Taking national education systems into consideration, European Universities are expected to realize the requests formulated in the Bologna Process, thanks to its all participants’ attempts and efforts.

## **1.2 Teaching English in Higher Education in Europe**

In order to present a general overview of the spread and common use of English in higher education covering the whole of Europe, a short history of English in education and driving forces making English an international language can be looked over. As long as English is regarded as such an international or common language, anyone who is capable of using it as an effective tool for various reasons can potentially be good at the field of study that person specializes. However, there have been some key factors which gave way to the rise in use of English especially in higher education area throughout the decades. These key aspects of the use of English in Europe, along with a more ambitious expression the dominance of English, are related to different functions of English depending on the reasons increasing its use. English in a globalising world can be linked the concept of globalisation itself. Attempting to explain this link, Yano and Salverda pointed out “For many, the term globalisation is crucially linked with the rise of the English language” (qtd in Yıldırım and Okan 55). In the light of new requirements arising from globalisation, it is not difficult to understand the association built up between English and globalisation. However, the question of the current role of English teaching/learning in higher education in Europe has emerged as a principle in many of Council of Europe Recommendations and set as the objective of language education policies although plurilingualism has been pinpointed in the EU documents. To highlight the complexity of the issues including foreign language education is really necessary when cultural and social differences of the countries are considered.

The aim here is to review the issue of English language teaching in European Higher Education. It endeavours to describe the reasons why English has been an unchallenged language taught in higher education and of scientific publication throughout Europe, also all over the world, within a brief historical perspective.

### **1.2.1 English Language Teaching in European Higher Education in Early Beginnings**

As Altbach underlined in his The Imperial Tongue: English as the Dominating, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Latin, which gave permission to the internationalisation of universities, was the only language of teaching. The popularity of Latin also allowed Roman Catholic Church to dominate in academic life. After the displacement of Latin with national languages, German was commonly used as international scientific language by the late 1930s. The tradition of countries of using their national languages for university education continued until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He suggested that at that time, English could not become dominant until the 1950s although it was used in many countries as the language of academic studies. Altbach continued saying that this commitment to the national languages disappeared with the rise in the use of English that was enthusiastically welcomed by the national academic systems (2). As the globalisation reveals its effects on the world economy and science, the growth of English as the global language of education can be seen inevitable in time. The expected role of universities to educate qualified people to meet the demands of the globalising world order has had an important contribution to this growth.

### **1.2.2 Widespread Use of English in Europe in Relation to the Bologna Process**

In the course of transition to the modern times, the formation of the European Union saw English start to be dominant throughout Europe. Later, English became the most prominent working language of the European Union. This development may be resulted from European integration process and the need for an international language or a 'lingua franca' in Europe. On the other hand, as explored in the previous paragraphs, the Council of Europe has adopted a policy to enrich plurilingualism in Europe for economic, cultural and political reasons. But the problems of implementing

such policies in the face of an unchallenged increase in the use of English should be acknowledged. Therefore, in practice, the spread of English in Europe fulfils the function of a 'lingua franca' which does not exist officially in the European language policy and language legislation.

In this growth in use of English language, the impact of globalisation and institutionalisation should not be underestimated. As it has been revealed, the rise of English has been mostly affected by the consequences of globalisation. This idea can be supported by the following statements reported from an American Journal by Robert Phillipson. He quotes that "The term 'globalisation' is used exclusively to refer to the harmonisation of the EU market." And he continues that the tension between measures to implement a common market is the focus of the study he read, and "the principle of subsidiarity that entitles member states to legislate locally on, for instance, culture or language" (5). In this sense, the issue about deciding about a common language proposed by the EU especially as a working language in the market is genuinely controversial. Regardless of the arguments about plurilingual structure of the EU, there have been several factors to define the dominance of English language throughout years, and its importance which arise from this basic globalisation concept. Those factors can be specified consecutively as follows.

The first factor that aids English to become more preferable can be explained by the crucial role of higher education in language teaching. For several years, English has been growing more and more popular in any level of education and also in higher education in Europe. As higher education is the last door for the students to pass through in the educational process prior to entry to professional life, it provides opportunities for the students to acquire various qualifications including language when they graduate. As, herein, defined, English teaching in higher education in Europe has shown a great increase over time. According to Claude Truchot;

We are witnessing a general process of internationalisation of higher education. In a context of competition, English represents a selling point, an inducement. This trend will probably become more pronounced with the creation of a common European higher education area - the Bologna process, which has been embraced by a number of European governments. [...] Users of English will

probably be more highly prized than those using the national language as they will be considered better adapted to the globalisation context (9).

With the start of the Bologna Process, the picture displaying the place and role of English language teaching/ learning has become evident. This current university reform process has naturally been shaped also by language politics as a result of globalisation. Thus, globalisation gave impetus to the wide use of English in its adaptation process.

Regarding the important role of English language teaching in higher education, another factor that encourages the rise of English is the mobility and employability of the academic staff and students. These two main goals of the Bologna Process have already been analysed in this chapter in a detailed way. Languages and mobility/ employability are closely interrelated concepts. Also the driving forces behind these fundamental objectives of the Bologna Process are economic developments and the demands of several sectors. Truchot detailed this issue saying that during 19<sup>th</sup> and in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, economic relations were limited to national frontiers and economic development was obtained by their national languages. However, with the internationalisation of the economies of the European countries after the Second World War, most of the countries thought that their national languages were insufficient for trade. Scandinavian countries rapidly adapted to this new condition. Truchot commented on this issue exemplifying the situation in other western countries and evaluated the condition in rapid increase in the use of English in the workplace noticing the growth of language training in the 1970s and 1980s in those countries (12). Although English was not the only dominant language at that time; it protected and developed its importance within years parallel to the economic circumstances. The status of English language teaching with regard to employability and mobility concepts has been developed out of this economic concerns coming from the past. These objectives explicitly demand a strengthening of foreign language education, namely English language, in the higher education area and in the university curricula. As the trans-national mobility of academics and students increases within Europe and as competence in English becomes significant, more and more universities may tend to reorganise English courses at different levels. In a world of competition, which is determined by globalisation, mobility of students and professors and employability of

graduates have become a long term reality for Europe. Having mentioned the driving force behind the fundamental objectives of Bologna Process, the important note here is that all of the indicators about widespread use of English have contributed to understanding noticeable existence of English in higher education in Europe. No matter how English language is identified with what is global, international or 'lingua franca' concept, its genuine role can be conceived as an instrument. Therefore, it functions as a common language facilitating implementation of the fundamental objectives of the Bologna Process.

## CHAPTER 2

### II. AN OVERALL ANALYSIS OF QUALIFICATIONS CONCEPT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This section, made up of important component of this thesis, focuses on specifically qualifications which have become one of the essential instruments in developing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). As the ultimate objective of the Bologna reform is to create EHEA by setting more comparable and compatible academic degree and quality assurance standards, the qualifications constitute an important part of this process under the conventions and documents adopted within the Process. In the international convention of the Council of Europe, the Lisbon Recognition Convention which was signed in 1997, the main issue was the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education all over Europe. As mentioned in the previous chapter related to this Convention, it aims to ensure that holders of a qualification from one European country would have that qualification which is recognised in another. It can be understood that a great importance is given to the recognition of qualifications referring to this statement from the convention: “Convinced that a fair recognition of qualifications is a key element of the right to education and a responsibility of society” (64). In that way, academic recognition across Europe can be achieved within the context of qualifications. Regarding recognition of qualifications to meet the requirements of higher education access, all qualifications must be substantially defined based on knowledge, skill, and competence. All qualifications are envisaged to be defined at a minimum level for each higher education degree for all parties to recognize. This actually refers to the definition of the qualifications planned to be recognised by each signatory country. According to Mazza, the director of school, out-of-school and higher education, qualifications are not viewed as a stimulating topic today and she adds “there was a time when they were seen as the domain of highly specialised characters safely stored away in corner offices of higher



education institutions, ministries or national information centres on recognition” (5). Indeed, the importance of qualifications are understood by most of the policy makers in participant countries and it is time to take the qualifications for granted to attain the objectives of the Process. It can be comfortably said that a considerable attention has been attracted to the issue of qualifications. Hence, the view of qualifications has reasonably developed over the past few years becoming a central element of higher education reform.

In this part of the thesis, all frameworks formulated both at Europe and national levels, the components of qualifications and how qualifications have evolved linking to the relevant elements will be discussed in order to provide a comprehensive overview. This chapter covers the development of qualifications system which has reflected in the creation of overarching and national qualifications frameworks with the key concepts of qualifications. The concept of qualifications with its components benefits the development of curriculum, for this thesis English course curricula. Therefore, the definition of qualifications is necessary to facilitate all the Bologna objectives to be attained.

## **2.1 Qualifications**

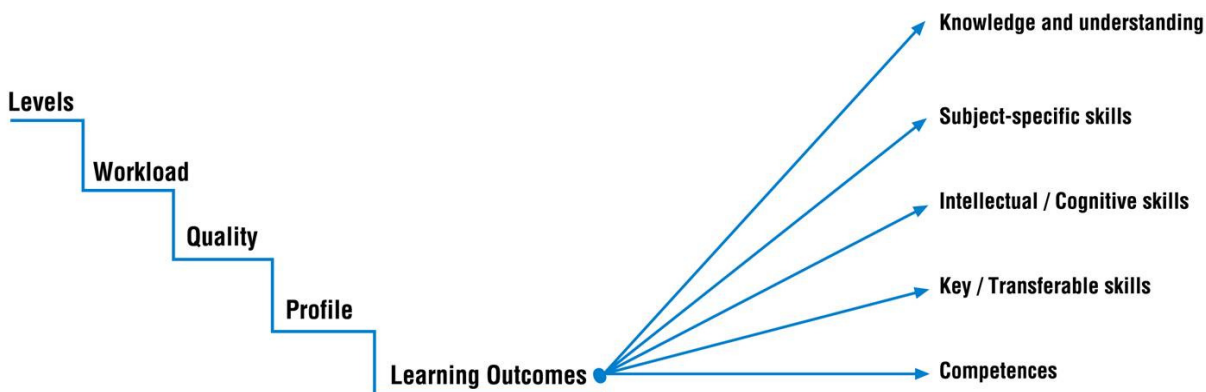
Qualification has the same meaning referring somebody who is qualified in everyday language. As a term, qualification can be explained as “the act of qualifying, the condition of being qualified” or “any quality, accomplishment, or ability that suits to a specific position or task” (“Qualification,” def.). It is widely used as in its second sense, however, in this thesis; a much more technical definition of qualifications which is accepted widely while discussing about the recognition of qualifications has been preferred. This definition was proposed by Council of Europe within the higher education context in Europe. According to the definition taken from the Lisbon Recognition Convention, higher education qualification refers to “any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting the successful completion of a higher education programme” (67). This accepted definition of qualifications, from one of the fundamental stages of the Bologna Process - Lisbon Recognition Convention - underlies the idea guiding discussions regarding reforms about recognition of

qualifications. Therefore, the necessity of describing qualifications for different fields of studies effectively at both international and national level ensures transparency among signatory countries.

### 2.1.1 The Key Concepts of Qualifications

In the previous part, the concept of qualification is mentioned on the whole. Nevertheless, there are some worthwhile concepts that aid an individual to comprehend this subject further. There are a number of key concepts associated with qualifications and they are essential to a full understanding of qualifications. Those concepts can be outlined as ‘level’, ‘workload’, ‘quality’, ‘profile’ and ‘learning outcomes’ (See fig. 2). These five elements constitute a kind of coherence as a whole which provides an opportunity to figure out the concept of ‘qualifications’. The following key concepts are defined and used as a basis for guidance to qualifications within the context of the Bologna Process.

#### The Key Concepts of Qualifications



**Figure 2:** The Key Concepts of Qualifications.

**Source:** Designed by the author on the information obtained from A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. (Feb. 2005), Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. Bredgade 43 DK 1260 Copenhagen K.

### 2.1.1.1 Levels of Higher Education

The following definition of 'levels' can be employed in this chapter to refer to the three - level division of higher education. According to that definition, "Levels represent a series of sequential steps (a developmental continuum), expressed in terms of a range of generic outcomes, against which typical qualifications can be positioned." (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation, "A Framework" 30). More specifically regarding this definition, in most of the countries, higher education is divided into three levels. As Bergan highlighted in his book, within the Bologna Process aiming to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010, what is generally named as 'three-tier structure' is quickly becoming common to all 45 participant countries making up the European Higher Education Area (72). In that sense, the European Higher Education Area prefers using the term 'cycle' instead of 'level' to display its use in the frameworks of qualifications. Therefore, a first degree (Bachelor) is a first cycle qualification. As for the second and third cycles, master and doctoral degrees follow. The aim of this 'three-tier structure' education system is to establish an academic degree system which is easily understandable and comparable across European universities.

In the first degree called as undergraduate in Bologna Declaration, it is stated that first cycle lasts at least three years. And it is also underpinned that "Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification" (60). As for the second cycle, it is envisaged to lead to master and doctorate degrees. On the other hand, as the Process has continued the third degree was added by Bergen Communiqué and three-cycle education system was shaped by bachelor, master and doctorate degrees replacing the system starting from undergraduate and graduate. Among these cycles, two basic degrees, Bachelor and Master, have been adopted now by each signatory country. The universities in those countries are presently in the implementation phase.

Since the Bachelor's Degree is accepted as the basis for specialized studies in the second degree, it must be taken into consideration that Bachelor and Master Degrees serve different purposes. That is why, qualifications of the Bachelor graduates must be

shaped not only having strong elements of a more general and comprehensive education especially in the first two years together but also enriching it for specialisation through majors and minors. Hence, qualifications defined for the Bachelor graduates to acquire must prepare them for the European labour market. Yet, there may be some provisions for the graduates in terms of language skills to take place in the labour market. Once the students graduate from university, they come across high expectations of the market demanding effective knowledge, skills and competence, as well as language skills, on relevant subject required to be employed. At that point, preparing graduates for European labour market became one of the most striking driving forces of the Bologna Process. It can also be promoted by enhancing the quality of language learning, as a common language English, in the light of the increasing demand for the workforce qualified with English language skills in the European workplace. In this context, the qualifications required and essential for Bachelor's Degree must also include a precise description of skills and knowledge of the English language. Level descriptions for English courses at Bachelor's Degree are critically important not to ignore the role of the English language teaching integration into the professional training offered to the students. Its importance is emphasised in the guidelines for foreign language requirements as a condition for stepping up at each milestone and for gaining a degree.

This issue will also be explained in the part related to Dublin Descriptors.

#### **2.1.1.2 Workload**

Within the concept of level, there are a number of study programmes given for each degree. Normally, a Bachelor's Degree takes three to four years in the European Higher Education Area. With this four-year Bachelor Degree, emphasized part measured is not time but workload of the students. This can be made clearer by Bergan's statements "the degree requires three years of full-time study" (87). According to the term extensively used in EHEA and defining 'workload', it refers to the estimated time to finish the activities envisaged for every course unit. All learning activities constitute workload such as; lectures, examinations, practice, individual study, research, seminars, etc. as stated by underlined by Bergan (87). In principle, there is a close connection between workload and learning outcomes which is another indispensable

component of qualifications so that an effective quantitative measure of learning activities may be necessary to achieve the learning outcomes.

To measure student workload is really significant; however, study time cannot give detailed information. Therefore, other instruments to make more precise comparisons of workload can be used, for instance, the credit as the most common instrument in higher education area. In order to develop a kind of common credit transfer system within the European Union, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was built up in 1989.

ECTS credits are numerical values allocated to course units to describe the student workload required to complete them. They reflect the quantity of work each course unit requires in relation to the total quantity of work necessary to complete a full year of academic study at the institution, i.e. lectures, practical work, seminars, tutorials, fieldwork, private study - in library or at home - and examinations or other assessment activities. ECTS is thus based on a full student workload and not limited to contact hours only. In ECTS, 60 credits represent the workload of an academic year of study (1 credit = 24 hours of work) (“The Bologna”).

As it appears from this description, ECTS is a student-centred system and this is mostly seen the most effective and functional way for the transfer of credits (providing student mobility) and ‘credit accumulation’ between education systems in Europe. One of the key points of ECTS is student workload necessary for students to achieve anticipated learning achievements together with learning outcomes and competence. These concepts will be explicated in the following parts of the thesis. The original reasons why ECTS was developed were to “make learning and teaching more transparent and facilitate the recognition of studies (formal, non-formal and informal)” informing curriculum design and quality assurance. Its aim is to facilitate “planning, delivery, evaluation, recognition and validation of qualifications and units of learning as well as student mobility” (European Commission “European”). Based on these explanations, it can be said that ECTS is a kind of instrument to create transparency and to expand various choices available to students. Thanks to the use of widely and easily understandable measurements, it becomes much easier for the institutions to recognise learning performances of students. As explained in the related document of the ECTS, the credits originally devised to promote student ability have been proved that they are

also useful to display workload for students who take their whole degree in an institution. In time, ECTS has been accepted as a national credit system for the participating countries and adopted as a means to interpret national system of higher education (European Commission, “ECTS”).

### **2.1.1.3 Quality**

Apart from the assessment elements of a qualification that have been mentioned so far the quality of a qualification should also be highlighted. As Bergan has expressed, some information about the quality of the institution is necessary by taking their ‘quality assurance systems’ into consideration in order to be sure about trustworthiness of the institution and higher education system (101). Today, quality is a key issue and how it can be assured is focused on higher education qualifications. Also, Quality Assurance plays a crucial role in attaining aims of the Bologna Process to promote international competitiveness of higher education across Europe. It will make the comparisons of qualifications easier. Although all ministerial meetings have made reference to Quality Assurance, it was basically pointed as a priority area at Berlin summit emphasizing the responsibility for each institution. A mandate was given by the higher education ministers to the European Association for Quality Assurance in higher education (ENQA), which is a European forum for practise exchange in quality assurance. It is called on “to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance, to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Follow-up Group to Ministers in 2005” (European Commission “From”). In London, in 2007, ministers agreed to set up a Register of European Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies (REHEQA). After that European Quality Assurance Register was adopted. It is expected this will contribute to providing precise and reliable information to all higher education institutions and stakeholders.

In his book called, *Qualifications – Introduction to a Concept*, Bergan states that quality can be evaluated at two – individual and collective – levels (101). As it can be guessed, collective quality refers to the quality of institution in which qualification is acquired. Quality issue has become one of the corner stones of the European higher

education system with special reference to the qualifications frameworks being developed during the Bologna Process so that quality would be an essential part of education considered its meaning excellence. Thus, its contribution to setting down qualifications accordingly is underlined. Sjur Bergan detailed its description about quality saying, in terms of programmes and the expected qualifications from its graduates, quality refers to any mechanism functioning appropriately parallel to explicit goals set in the beginning and delineates if the goals are proper and probable for the students to achieve (101). In this regard, the quality of institution, programme, the course implementation and the results are important to develop models to be available by serving different requirements at the same time.

What is crucial here concerning quality issue for this study is to underline the importance of curriculum as an indispensable quality component as well as ‘learning infrastructure’ and ‘teaching-learning’ processes. Most specifically, the curriculum prepared for English language courses at Bachelor’s Degree, which is devised considering the content of the degree courses can foster quality of the programme. This consideration leads one to the fourth component of qualifications that of profile.

#### **2.1.1.4 Profile**

The definition of profile can be made based on distinctive features or characteristics of a person or an institution. In terms of its importance as an element of a qualification, profile is introduced in the Bologna documents. In Prague Communiqué, in 2001, it is stated that “Programmes leading to a degree may, and indeed should, have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs as concluded in the Helsinki seminar on Bachelor level degrees” (85). As it was underpinned in Prague Communiqué, the importance of profile was reaffirmed in the subsequent communiqués. In addition, Qualification Framework for the European Higher Education Area makes a comprehensive and general definition stressing “Profile can refer either to the specific (subject) field of learning a qualification or to the broader aggregation of clusters of qualifications from different fields that share a common emphasis or purpose; for example an applied vocational as opposed to more theoretical academic studies”

(Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation “A Framework” 47) Profile here refers to a specific field of learning of a qualification therefore, how profiles can be most effectively formulated is considerably important because a field of learning is at the core of higher education.

In terms of profile of a qualification mentioned in the Bologna Process, this concept encompasses both institutional/ programme and individual profile. Profiles must serve for various purposes taking into account several students’ needs, interests, and perspectives. Furthermore, there are a few distinctive elements composing a profile such as individual, society, academics, etc in a broad sense. According to Bergan, the overall profile of an institution or programme means that it includes a set of characteristics or features identifying the qualifications acquired in certain types of programme or institution (120). Those characteristics are shaped considering research dimension of the institutions underlined as criteria of the European University Association (EUA) both for associate and full membership. Most of the universities, other than other institutions, provide a broader range of programmes which underscore theoretical approach. When the situation is evaluated in terms of likelihood of finding a good job for graduates in accordance with the qualifications they have gained at university, graduates from a university where applied studies are integrated with theoretical ones can be more likely to succeed in seeking and finding a job in European labour market.

As for individual profile, the concept of ‘profile’ also refers to the characteristics of individual qualifications relating to the specialisations of the students at universities. In a specific subject area, students are offered a programme which includes major competence and specialization necessary to acquire a qualification. Even at first level degree, students are expected to receive several introductory courses and they develop a personal profile to a certain extent. However, they are required to take compulsory English courses along with their main and supplementary courses to strengthen the development of their profile during their four-year Bachelor’s Degree. No matter what subject they study, they must be equipped with sufficient knowledge and competence in English until they graduate from university. These English courses not only provide the



students with theoretical and practical knowledge of the language, but also develop a kind of new and broader perspective and background which prepare students for professional life after graduation.

So far, four core elements of the concept of qualifications have been explored; level, workload, quality and profile. Although they are closely related to each other, they need the last and the most essential ingredient showing how they fit together. The following component is learning outcomes.

### **2.1.1.5 Learning Outcomes and Dublin Descriptors**

Learning Outcomes have been frequently referred to in most of the Bologna Documents and many of the official seminar reports. They represent one of the essential building blocks for transparent higher education systems and qualifications especially while assessing qualifications since they combine all four components having been discussed so far. As stated in the United Kingdom Bologna seminar report presented in 2004, learning outcomes are thought to be likely to constitute a significant part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century approaches to higher education and the reconsideration of some important questions as to what, who, how, where and when to teach and assess (Adam, Using 3) Although there is no currently precise agreement about the definition of the term ‘learning outcomes’ all over the world, in a general sense, learning outcomes are commonly defined as “statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning” (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation “A Framework” 29). In other explanations about learning outcomes, the contributory factors are underlined and the only changing part in these core elements explained is the way how they are phrased. According to one of the most acceptable definitions which is pointed out by Stephen Adam in his book,

A learning outcome is a written statement of what the successful student/ learner is expected to be able to do at the end of the module/course unit, or qualification. The key aspect each of the definitions has in common is the desire for more precision and consideration as to what exactly a learner acquires in terms of knowledge and/or skills when they successfully complete a period of learning (Adam, An Introduction 2).

Based on this definition, it is said that learning outcomes can take many different forms. They can be either broad or narrow in nature.

When learning outcomes are examined in terms of curriculum development, they seem important for educational change targeted in the Bologna Process. The emphasis on ‘teaching’ has switched to ‘learning’ which is also known as student-centred approach. In the traditional approach to teaching which is called teacher - centred, professor lectures during the class time and the students watch and listen to the lecture. There is no active participation of the students in the class hour. They just work individually on assignments. On the other hand, student – centred approach points out to the shift in the focus of activity from the professors to the students. Active learning of the learners is encouraged supporting their collaborative studies with their peers in the classroom. In accordance with this piece of information, it must be highlighted with the suggestion of Bloom that learning outcomes are part of an ‘output-based’ system which is essentially student-centred. These learning outcomes seek to define the learners’ learning progress in terms of the knowledge, the comprehension of that knowledge and the capacity to analyse and assess (qtd. in Adam, Implementation 2). This process is primarily connected with learning outcomes, level, level descriptors, credits, and teaching, learning and assessment.

Fundamentally, the necessity of setting out a range of outcomes specifically associated with a level connotes the issue of level descriptors and they help positioning of qualifications in levels. On these grounds, level descriptors are important for learning outcomes because level descriptors also deal with knowledge, understanding and its application. They also deal with learning skills, and making judgments. Hence, they should be read in relation to each other taking all degrees into consideration to make sense. Because of the importance and attention given to the level descriptors, working on them is not less extensive than that on learning outcomes.

These two concepts – learning outcomes and level descriptors – were included in the agenda for participating countries in the Bologna Process by Berlin Communiqué.

Ministers encourage the member states to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should

seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area. Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs. First cycle degrees should give access, in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, to second cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies (101).

Here, it is significant to realize the connection between levels, level descriptors, credits system, learning outcomes, evaluation of teaching and learning. As they cannot be seen as separate elements in the Bologna Process, to identify level descriptors are important as long as there is also a direct relationship between level descriptors and learning outcomes. Today learning outcomes can be taken to a further level as they are matched with 'Dublin Descriptors'. In March 2002, 'Dublin Descriptors' were produced by the 'Joint Quality Initiative' (JQI) for Bachelors and Masters. In the meeting taking place in Dublin in March 2004 'Dublin Descriptors' were extended to Doctoral degree. The same meeting proposed that for a "better understanding of the 'Dublin descriptors' in the context of the Berlin communiqué and their possible future usage, alternative headings [...] may be more appropriate" ("Shared"). Dublin Descriptors developed within the Joint Quality Initiative (JQI), encompasses 'generic competences' (skills and knowledge) and attributes such as the capacity to learn, the capacity for analysis and syntheses.

After all in the light of Dublin Descriptor, the place of learning outcomes and its importance can be much more clearly conceived. Learning outcomes have implications for all 10 action lines and the priority areas taking place at the centre of the Process affecting employability, mobility, quality assurance, workload, credits system (ECTS), curriculum development, qualifications frameworks, levels, profile, recognition, transparency, and lifelong learning. They have appeared in every ministerial summit except for the Bologna Declaration and Prague Communiqué. The author of "Using Learning Outcomes", Adam maintains that learning outcomes are accepted as the basic building blocks of the Bologna Process educational reforms to transparent higher education systems. Learning outcomes applications have three distinct levels;

- (i) the local level of the individual higher education institution (for course units/ modules, programmes of study and qualifications);
- (ii) the national level (for qualifications frameworks and quality assurance regimes);
- (iii) internationally (for wider recognition and transparency purposes) (Adam, Using 3).

From this point, it can be argued that the last and the most significant product of the Bologna Process are qualifications based on learning outcomes. Depending on this idea, the main issue is to be able to find effective ways to develop a common understanding about learning outcomes across Europe. If it has already been said that learning outcomes are the building structures of a transparent higher education system, it is also composed of some components which help learning outcomes to be understood in a detailed way.

#### Knowledge and Understanding

In a specific field of study, it refers to the knowledge which has been learnt, understood and repeated if necessary (“Learning” 5).

#### Subject Specific Skills

These skills refer to “the skills applied to the fields that need special ability and the learning outcomes here express the efficiencies of doing a job easily and skilfully by making an effort in art, sport and likewise” (“Learning” 6).

#### Intellectual / Cognitive Skills

They refer to the efficiencies of students’ understanding newly learnt complex subjects, making comparisons, assessing through analysis and synthesis, applying and commenting (“Learning” 6).

#### Key/ Transferable Skills

These are the skills of;  
Using the official language of his own country,  
Socializing and the sense of citizenship,

Using the foreign languages,  
Mathematics knowledge, perceiving the science and technology,  
Computer literacy,  
Learning the learning,  
Working independently,  
Communicating,  
Management of the data,  
Evaluating yourself,  
Group work and flexibility,

Some concepts are valid for all higher education degrees such as “applying the initiative, cultural sense, expressing yourself” but efficiencies expected from individuals are seen in different levels (“Learning” 6). As shown above, using foreign languages are among key skills which can foster the development of any other skills.

Competences:

They refer to the use of acquired knowledge and skills in an effective way and efficiently by means of their combination with environmental data in various and complex situations and subjects encountered (“Learning” 7).

Additionally, learning outcomes promote better matching between education and the needs of European labour market thanks to the qualifications and standards. What is crucially important within the Bologna Process and in this thesis about learning outcomes is their impact on the process of curriculum development. As it has been explained and underscored in a project managed by Loukas Zahilas,

The curriculum can be seen as an expression, by the education and training providers, of the education-training standards and, more indirectly, of the occupation standards. The increased emphasis on learning outcomes could potentially change curriculum development, bringing profound implications in defining, designing, organising, planning and implementing learning activities and for making systems more learner-centred (“EU Policy”).

This project puts an emphasis here on the impact of learning outcomes on curriculum development. In terms of curriculum development, learning outcomes stand at the very forefront of educational reform and changes. However, the development of the curricula in terms of learning outcomes does not happen in a vacuum. Appropriate reference points guide the module/unit and programme learning outcomes. Therefore, the learning

outcomes are developed within the concepts pertaining to institutional, national and international reference points. Along with the adoption of student-centred education taking into account of teaching – learning process and its evaluation, learning outcomes play a major role in developing and implementing qualifications. This relationship between teaching-learning and assessment is of utmost importance for curriculum development.

As for this thesis, the determination of each level learning outcomes as well as levels of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students at universities is an influential tool to enhance effective implementation of the qualifications frameworks. Paying attention to the academic needs of the learners, trying to specify learning outcomes for a specific and common language –English - can open the way towards meeting the learners’ essential linguistic needs when they graduate from university. It is important to identify the learning outcomes for English language courses in order to enhance the employability of graduates irrespective of their disciplines. In that regard, the qualified workforce can serve for the European labour market combining knowledge of their discipline in which they are specialised with their language abilities. These abilities are supposed to be developed in accordance with the knowledge and understanding presented through learning outcomes. It can be arguable that the employability of learners who achieve the given learning outcomes of English courses at Bachelor’s Degree would be guaranteed. Therefore, concrete and precisely defined learning outcomes provide an apparent arrival point which is envisaged for the students by the end of the programme of the study. In the long run, well-defined English language learning outcomes can promote academic expertise, integration and cooperation between universities across Europe giving way to high level of graduate employability. This issue requires great attention for; employability is one of the prior aims of the Bologna Process. Major issues with regard to employability that include curriculum change, determination of levels, workload, profile, learning outcomes of qualifications secure the establishment of a framework setting an example for the other member universities. The expected level of knowledge, understanding and ability pertaining to English language will be mentioned further in the part related to English

Language Qualifications in this thesis. The subsequent section is related to qualifications frameworks.

### **2.1.2 Qualifications Frameworks**

The objectives of the Bologna and Lisbon Processes raised awareness about the significance of education to be effective in building up Europe's future economic and social dimensions. Within the Bologna Process, 'Qualifications Framework' is an important subtitle and a stepping-stone in the implementation of the Bologna Process objectives. As Bologna Declaration has been implemented, there have been some debates among the participants and stakeholders both at national and European levels, particularly within the Council of Europe. Now, a common understanding of multiple purposes of higher education which includes "preparation for labour market, "preparation for life as active citizens in a democratic society", "personal development", and "the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base" has been growing (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation "A Framework" 23). All the explanations made so far demonstrate that these four purposes are interconnected to some extent and normally how improving one should influence others. However, the first three goals point at individual acquirement of a qualification while the fourth one much more focuses on societal dimension.

According to the definition made by European Council, 'Qualifications Frameworks' describe "each qualification within a given education system as well as the way in which the various qualifications of that system interacts" ("Qualifications" 3). In other words, it includes all the qualifications in a higher education system. As it is frequently uttered as the most essential instrument of the Bologna Process, Qualification Frameworks play an important role in the implementation of the Process together with recognition of qualifications and developing degree systems. Basically, qualification frameworks should focus on learning outcomes and also the transparency between the universities. In the Bologna Process, Qualifications Frameworks, principal components of which have been analysed, appeared at two levels. The first one is an 'overarching framework' that has been adopted for the EHEA in Berlin Communiqué in 2003. In Berlin Communiqué it is stated that; "Ministers encourage the member States to

elaborate a framework and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems [...] They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area” (101).

### **2.1.2.1 European Overarching Qualifications Frameworks**

In discussing overarching qualifications frameworks, the overall purpose should be considered as the one which is pointing at guaranteeing consistency between systems in Europe. Sjur Bergan discusses that they can be recognised as a face of qualifications defined in Bologna Process. These frameworks are especially beneficial for the students who want to make use of moving their qualifications from one system to another (160). In other words, they facilitate movement between systems. It is important to say that there are two types of overarching frameworks in Europe to serve for above mentioned aim. The first framework that the ministers adopted is called ‘The Overarching Framework for the European Higher Education (EHEA Framework)’. A new overarching ‘European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF/ LLL)’ covering all aspects of education provision and developed for the EU member countries in the context of the Lisbon strategy, was adopted.

#### **2.1.2.1.1 The Overarching Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF – EHEA Framework)**

The working group defined EHEA Framework in the proposal they elaborated as: “... an overarching framework makes transparent the relationship between European national education frameworks of qualifications they contain. It is an articulation mechanism between national frameworks” (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation, “A Framework” 29). In that sense, the overarching framework determines the parameters within which each country will develop its own national framework, and it is the national framework that most directly affects study programmes (“Qualifications”). In London Communiqué in 2007, Ministers further underlined the importance of qualifications frameworks saying that;

Qualifications frameworks are important instruments in achieving comparability and transparency within the EHEA and facilitating the movement of learners



within, as well as between, higher education systems. They should also help HEIs to develop modules and study programmes based on learning outcomes and credits, and improve the recognition of qualifications as well as all forms of prior learning (3).

The Ministers highlighted the role of qualifications frameworks along with learning outcomes, recognition issue and credits in these lines. Additionally, consideration should be given to the effort for designing qualifications frameworks to encourage mobility of both students and academics and promote graduate employability which are indispensable and ultimate purposes of the Bologna Process.

With the help of the EHEA Framework, learners are provided opportunities to study in other countries which recognise their qualifications. The requirement of international transparency and recognition of qualifications have become important within the European Higher Education Area. EHEA Framework has a kind of complementary role for the national qualifications frameworks other than providing a description of a European higher education system and the broad structure within which future national qualifications frameworks will be built up. For this reason, Bergan describes EHEA framework as less operational than national frameworks since it does not deal with the degree students can get in education systems (160). In this context, the EHEA framework determines the limits for the national qualifications to be prepared in a detailed way which is compatible with the overarching framework. EHEA framework is envisaged to achieve this by taking the unity in diversity notion as a basis emphasizing the balance between them. In this way, unity expected to be created between frameworks will also flourish international mobility of students and graduates.

#### **2.1.2.1.2 European Qualifications for Lifelong Learning Framework (EQF - LLL)**

While the EHEA Framework covers higher education, the need for a framework for vocational education and training (VET) has arisen. Therefore, the ministers asked the Commission to elaborate a framework for vocational education and training and lifelong learning. The European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) has been developed by the European Commission which was signed in April 2008 by the European Parliament and European Council Presidents (European). This framework

was designed to include the qualifications acquired at the end of any formal, non-formal and informal education such as primary, secondary, vocational and higher education. It was concluded by taking the points of views of 32 member, candidate countries of the EU included in 'Education and Training 2010' programme. European Qualifications Framework (EQF) aims at improving transparency within Europe with respect to qualifications as well as the EHEA Framework. As stated in the words of the Commission proposal,

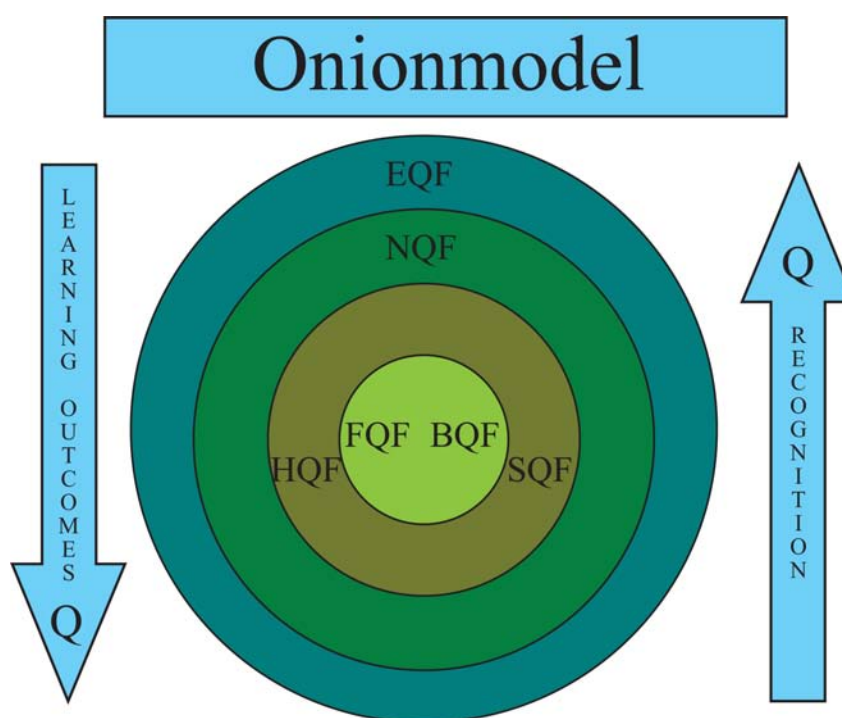
The main purpose of the (EQF) is to act as a translation device and neutral reference point for comparing qualifications across different education and training systems and to strengthen co-operation and mutual trust between the relevant stakeholders. This will increase transparency, facilitate the transfer and the use of qualifications across different education and training systems and levels (Implementing 2).

It also encourages participating countries to make their qualifications systems compatible with the EQF by 2010 and promotes lifelong learning by the validation of non - formal and informal learning. Once the EHEA and EQF frameworks are fully implemented, the recognised level of qualifications could be understood by any countries. As a result, the recruitment of the graduates will be improved thanks to the links of frameworks with labour mobility all over Europe.

As for the relationship between the two overarching European frameworks, while the EHEA Framework contains 45 countries, the EQF applies to the member countries of the European Union and the European Economic Area. However, the number of countries can possibly increase in the future. Both frameworks have aspirations to support the recognition of qualifications by forming a basic reference level for the countries. Unlike the EHEA Framework, EQF applies to all types of education including school education, academic and vocational. Eight levels for lifelong learning qualifications framework have been determined and four of them are under the primary and secondary levels, the others are under higher education level. Even though there is no overlap between EHEA and EQF Frameworks for levels below higher education, they have similarities for higher education along with the divergences. These similarities and differences arise from the interpretation and descriptors of these frameworks. After all, it can be comfortably said that one common and key purpose of

the EHEA Framework and EQF is to build up a single framework to describe qualifications necessary for higher education, its stakeholders, academics and learners. As two overarching frameworks are intended to provide guidance to national frameworks, each country takes responsibility to build up its own framework compatible with the overarching frameworks.

Since it is surely of vital importance to describe qualifications explicitly within a qualification framework, developing a national framework has become one of the most significant features of the Bologna Process for each participating country. On the other hand, it is quite apparent that the EHEA, EQF, all national and institutional qualification frameworks are interdependent. To explain the structure of qualifications framework and make their relations obvious an onion model has been developed. The following ‘Onion Model’ comprises all of them to present the whole picture about the qualifications frameworks.



**Figure 3:** Onion Model Explaining the Structure of Qualifications Framework and Their Relations

Source: Gehmlich, Volker. “How to move from a European Qualifications Framework to a National or Institutional Approach – Experiences of the Project HE\_LeO.”

Implementing Competence Orientation and Learning Outcomes in Higher Education. Eds. Eva Cendon, Katharina Prager, Eva Schacherbauer, Edith Winkler, © Krems, Jul. 2008.

According to this onion model, in the outer wall of the onion the EQF is situated. The next wall towards interior part is accepted as National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Another layer indicates HQF (Higher Qualifications Framework). Thus, it is seen that the EQF encompasses all the frameworks built up in the context of the Bologna. The other frameworks which are SQF (Sectoral Qualifications Framework), FQF (Faculty Qualifications Framework), and BQF (Business Organisation Qualifications Framework) will not be further outlined in this study however; an individual should understand that there are more options for the design of frameworks than the ones specified here. Within the perspective detailed, Lifelong Learning should not be neglected within the Bologna Process as an indispensable part of the EQF and be integrated into the Bologna Process. As ministers emphasized in Prague Communiqué, a number of points including the statements explain Lifelong Learning as an essential element of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Lifelong learning strategies will be important to struggle with the challenges of competitiveness and the new technologies to be used and “to improve social cohesion, equal opportunities and the quality of life” (87). Although this idea has remained secondary to the main interests of the Bologna Process, in the issue of development of national qualifications, the definition of qualifications cannot be considered separate from Lifelong Learning. Considering the establishment of a European Higher Education Area with a standardized qualification system functioning in a good way, it is impossible to think lifelong learning and higher education qualifications apart from each other. Hence, in the process of formation of National Qualifications Frameworks, Lifelong Learning should be supported to form a basis for the establishment of the qualifications at the national level. For instance, to reach the desired level of English language teaching at universities, lifelong education should educate and prepare students for the future higher education in terms of qualifications. In this way, the students can reach a standard level until they come to higher education. Now, examination of the qualifications frameworks can be pursued with National Qualifications Frameworks in Europe.

### **2.1.2.2 National Qualifications Frameworks in Europe**

According to the working group elaborating the proposal for an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area, a national qualification framework is defined as:

The single description, at national level or level of an education system, which is internationally understood and through which all qualifications and other learning achievements in higher education may be described and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between higher education qualifications (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation “A Framework” 30).

In simple terms, a national qualification framework describes the qualifications within an educational system and how they interlink. A national Qualifications Framework envisages a system that includes descriptions and approaches close to the economic, social and cultural realities of the countries.

As the existence of the EHEA is a reference point for the national frameworks, while developing the national qualifications frameworks, there have been some criteria to provide compatibility between the EHEA and National Framework. As Bezinović explained national ministry that is responsible for higher education designates the national framework for higher education qualifications and the body responsible for its development. He also added that there is an obvious connection between qualifications defined in national frameworks and “the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework.” Another criterion for the compatibility what Bezinović stated is the learning outcomes which are the basis for both the national framework and its qualifications and the qualifications are related to ECTS credits (11). Therefore, ECTS allocation at universities can be regarded as a step towards definition of learning outcomes.

As indicated above, the overarching frameworks are less operational than national qualifications frameworks. Qualifications are becoming the focus of higher education, the development of the national qualifications frameworks started at national level first in Europe (Bergan 147). National frameworks have existed in different countries in Europe. There are various forms of frameworks developed at national level

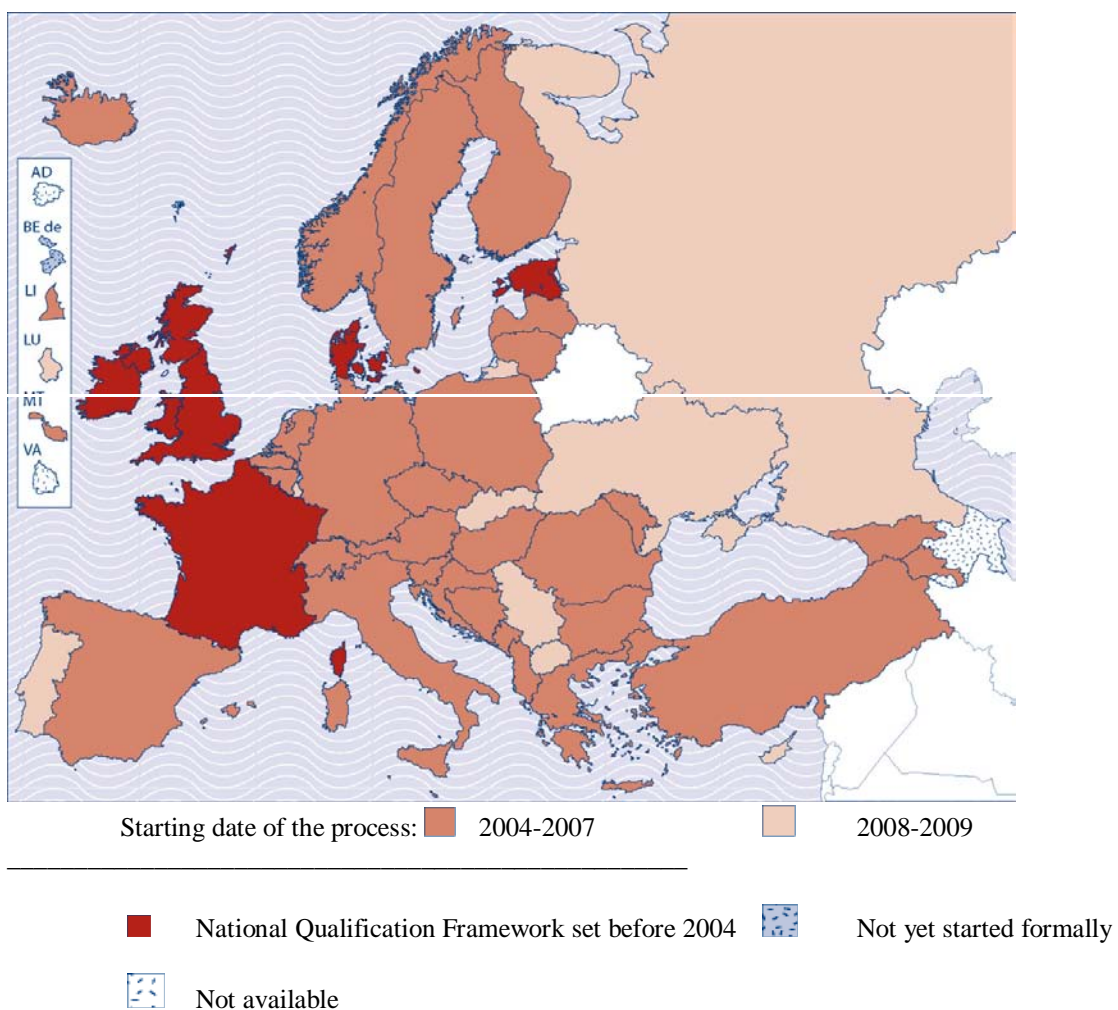
regarding their purposes, levels, and types of qualifications. Although 40 national frameworks, which are linked together through an alignment to an overarching framework of the EHEA, have been developed all over Europe and the legal arrangements have been completed significantly. When the results of Trends V Report are assessed, it demonstrates that there have been remarkable changes in European Higher Education however; except for a few countries where ‘the National Qualifications Frameworks’ have not been fully developed and implemented.

#### **2.1.2.2.1 Countries Developing National Qualifications Frameworks**

The National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) sets out the levels for qualifications which can be recognised in each country at national level. The process of developing more precise levels at higher levels of the NQF has been going on in most of the countries and has been completed in some of them. Following the ministerial meetings, participating countries both in and outside Europe, attempted to prepare their own NQFs parallel to the European Overarching Qualifications Framework. As revealed in Eurydice ‘Higher Education in Europe 2009: Developments in the Bologna Process’ document, “Prior to the adoption in Bergen of the European Qualifications Framework for higher education, few countries had experience of developing frameworks based on learning outcomes, level/cycle descriptors and credits.” And there were only a few countries which had adopted a national qualification framework before Bergen, 2005. These are Estonia and the United Kingdom (Scotland) (1997), the United Kingdom (2001), France (2002), Denmark (2003) and Ireland (2003) (“Higher” 37). Since Bergen Communiqué, other countries started the process of developing their NQFs trying to verify the compatibility of their National Qualifications Frameworks with the Bologna Framework. “The main wave of development started in 2005 and within 3 years (2005-2007) more than 27 countries had launched the process. Cyprus, Portugal (2009), Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine (2008) are the countries that have only started very recently” (See fig. 4) (“Higher” 39).

According to fig. 4 presented by Eurydice, countries have started the process at different times so that the level of process has differentiated in terms of implementation in each country. Additionally, currently explained exact number of countries that have

formally adopted a national qualifications framework for higher education is around one third of the Bologna signatory countries as revealed in Eurydice document published in 2009. Five of these countries, Belgium – Flemish Community, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, can be considered to have completed the process involving the self certification of its compatibility with the Overarching Framework for the European Higher Education (EHEA Framework) Seven countries, Belgium – French Community, Denmark, Estonia, France, Iceland, Malta and Sweden, are using the NQF in re-designing study programmes (“Higher” 42). In recent years, an increased emphasis has been placed on the importance of qualifications being recognisable, in both European and national level. In this respect, the NFQs are national initiatives linked with similar developments that are taking place in other countries as well as European level. To make this picture more precise, the attention will be turned to the process in some other countries which are at different levels of the creation of their NQFs.



**Figure 4: Starting date of the process towards establishing a National Qualification Framework**

Source: Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Higher Education in Europe 2009: Developments in the Bologna Process. Brussels, Mar. 2009

**2.1.2.2.1.1 *The Irish National Qualifications Framework***

In Ireland, the National Qualifications Framework studies started before 2004 in 2003, two years prior to the establishment of the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA. According to the result of a survey of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, applied in 2006 about the Development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in various countries, it has been maintained that Irish authorities have taken charge in the development of the EHEA Framework and it is considered that the Irish Framework is congruous with the EHEA one. A formal process for verification of the compatibility is to be completed by October 2006 (Development 2).

The NFQ of Ireland was introduced by the Authority in consultation with stakeholders and was launched in 2003 as a 10 level framework stakeholders and was launched in 2003 as a 10 level framework. In Ireland, the studies to create its National Qualifications Framework started before 2004. NQF of Ireland was introduced by the Authority in 2003, two years prior to the establishment of the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA. According to the result of a survey of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, applied in 2006 about the Development of a National Qualifications Framework in various countries, it has been maintained that Irish authorities have taken charge in the development of the EHEA Framework and it is considered that the Irish Framework is congruous with the EHEA one. A formal process for verification of the compatibility is to be completed by October 2006 (Development 2). According to the Irish National Framework of Qualification, the 10 Levels include all learning, from the very initial stages to the most advanced. They have formed a 'fan diagram' illustrating the levels and the 'Major Award types' included in it. And in 2006, Ireland became the first European country which verified the compatibility of its National Framework of Qualifications with the Bologna Framework.



All framework awards which have an NFQ Level (1-10) telling one about the standard of learning and an NFQ Award-Type which explains about the purpose, volume and progression opportunities in respect to a particular award. According to this ‘fan diagram’ displaying levels, universities take place in the seventh level under the heading of ‘ordinary bachelor degree’. This framework is composed of the qualifications achieved in higher education. These qualifications are quality assured and the providers that deliver programmes and give way to qualifications in the Framework are also quality assured.

Another point necessary to be emphasised about Irish NQF is the descriptors defined for each level. In the final report published in 2006 named Verification of Compatibility of Irish National Framework of Qualifications with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, it is stated that;

The Irish Framework is required in law to be based on learning outcomes (or as the legislation states, ‘standards of knowledge, skill and competence’. The descriptors for the major award-types in the framework are based on strands and substrands of learning outcomes as follows:

- knowledge: breadth and kind
- know-how and skill: range and selectivity
- competence: context, role, learning to learn and insight (13).

These descriptors of the higher education listed here have been agreed to be used as the descriptors of the awards. Irish National Qualifications Framework structure which is based on learning outcomes has been shaped with the help of these descriptors. As already explained, Ireland has evolved in line with the introduction of its NFQ. Hence, it facilitates the recognition of qualifications gained outside Ireland.

Next country the framework of which is under development is Scotland.

#### **2.1.2.2.1.2 *The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)***

As for another national qualifications framework, the development of Scottish national qualifications framework can be analyzed as an example. According to information obtained from the survey about the development of a National

Qualifications Framework - NQF, a separate framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland has been mentioned. Work to build up the framework started in 1998 in Scotland. It was terminated and launched in January 2001. Since 2003 – 2004, Scottish higher education institutions' programmes and qualifications have been fully in accordance with the Scottish NQF. This framework is an integral part of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), which is a framework for lifelong learning. The SCQF conforms to the structure of the EQF for the EHEA. Furthermore, it is one of the two pilot projects for self-certification of NQFs within the Bologna Process (Development 5). In 2007, Andrew Cubie, chair of the Scottish Credits and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership suggested that the SCQF has progressed as well as its implementation to a stage of further development at a national context since its establishment in 2001 (i).

In Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) web page, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is pointed out as “a new way of understanding qualifications in Scotland.” Furthermore, its central purpose has been defined “to make the relationships between qualifications clearer. This, in turn, will make progression and transfer between qualifications easier” (Scottish). In a general sense, Scottish framework describes all qualifications in terms of their level and credit value like the other frameworks. However, unlike Irish Framework which has 10 levels, Scottish Framework includes 12 levels. Within these levels, higher education is seen at level nine with graduate degree (bachelor's degree). The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) has also level descriptors to make understanding of each level much easier. According to The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), five headings for each level have been determined to make the descriptors manageable and these are “knowledge and understanding — mainly subject-based, practice: applied knowledge and understanding, generic cognitive skills, e.g. evaluation, critical analysis, communication, numeracy and IT skills, autonomy, accountability and working with others” (2). Using these descriptors, characteristic outcomes of learning at each level includes the abilities to do certain things.

### **2.1.2.2.1.3 *The Australian Qualifications Framework***

Australia can be the next example country which involved in the Bologna Process outside Europe. Australian has been developing its National Qualifications Framework. The development and the current state of NQF can be explored in this section. In consideration of the Framework, as survey on the Development of a National Qualifications Framework applied in 2006 revealed, a discussion process had already begun when a NQF was introduced for the first time. And its completion is seen as an open process with several aspects. There was no date indicated for its completion since introduction will take place in different steps (Development 1).

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a system of national qualifications integrated in vocational education, schools, and the higher education sector. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) comprises fifteen qualifications. These fifteen qualifications are grouped according to the sector with authority for setting the standards of each qualification. Senior Secondary Certificate of Education; Certificate I; Certificate II; Certificate III; Certificate IV; Diploma; Advanced Diploma; Associate Degree; Bachelor Degree; Vocational Graduate Certificate; Vocational Graduate Diploma; Graduate Certificate; Graduate Diploma; Masters Degree; Doctoral Degree. As explained in the Implementation Handbook of AQF, “There are no standardised rankings or equivalences between different qualifications issued in different sectors, as these qualifications recognise different types of learning reflecting the distinctive educational responsibilities of each sector” (2) The levels have not been defined by the same descriptors systematically, as indicated Irish and Scottish National Qualifications Framework. Naturally, the characteristics of learning outcomes are not listed according to the determined levels valid for each level. The reason why AQF have not determined the level descriptors is associated with the expectation of Australia for the descriptors to be defined in the survey (Development 1).

After the attempts of a few countries’ to develop their NQFs have been examined, a consideration of how language qualifications issued within the concept of Qualifications Framework will be the topic of next section of this thesis.

## **2.2 Language Qualifications in Higher Education in Europe with Reference to Language Qualifications Defined in Europe**

In the previous parts discussing ‘Languages and Mobility’, ‘Languages and Employability’, and ‘Teaching English in Higher Education in Europe’, the importance of language skills for the labour market which demands linguistically able force has been stressed. In this part, the significance of language learning/teaching will be underscored in line with the definition of language qualifications in higher education in the Bologna Process. Language has an important role in the adaptation process to the new lives and cultures and it can be regarded as a door which may lead the one to the social and economical achievement. In other words, learning a foreign language may be considered both as a means of communication, and as an expression of individual and collective identity. While all societies are changing, the direction and way of these changes can be affected by some factors. As Byram emphasized in his article titled Language Teaching, Politics and Cultures - Some Comparative Perspectives that; “Dewey's ideal was that societies should change towards a situation where all individuals and groups interact with each other in a full and free expression, sharing some common values even if they maintain some values and ideas which are specific to them” (qtd. in Byram 1). The impacts of language learning/teaching demonstrate that it is necessary to ensure interaction across national boundaries. By its nature, it has cultural, social and political dimensions together with its educational aims which can also serve for economic demands as asserted. Now that language skills are important for integration and social cohesion, language teaching has called out attention throughout the history in Europe as well as all over the world.

According to the Council of Europe, Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon 2000, the European Council confirmed the principal aim of education and training in order to “become the Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (“Lisbon). To achieve this ambitious goal, modernisation of education systems is one of the steps of the change in Europe within the framework of the Bologna Process. In this perspective, one of the most important tools to realise the

above mentioned aim is plurilingualism. For the development and modernisation of education systems, various action lines have been determined and initiatives aiming at enabling Europeans to develop professional qualifications via university education have been undertaken. Among all these, language learning has an important role which is also a key tool in the issue of European dimension.

The aim of foreign language learning in Europe can be associated with language diversity and multilingualism. This issue is also highly debatable; therefore, lots of discussions have been taking place in Europe about the future language policy for years. The following excerpt is taken from a policy paper prepared by the Council of Europe named From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education: Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe:

The Council of Europe and its member States have taken the position that it is the promotion of linguistic diversity which should be pursued in language education policy. For in addition to mobility, intercomprehension and economic development, there is the further important aim of maintaining the European cultural heritage, of which linguistic diversity is a significant constituent. Thus it is a question not only of developing or protecting languages but equally of enabling European citizens to develop their linguistic abilities. This means, then, that language teaching must be seen as the development of a unique individual linguistic competence ('knowing' languages whichever they may be). This competence needs to be developed not just for utilitarian or professional reasons but also as education for respect for the languages of others and linguistic diversity (7).

This policy is embedded in the objectives of language teaching in Europe and there have been several statements, expressions and the EU directives built upon fostering linguistic and cultural diversity, and support for learning European languages. As Coleman discusses in his article, multilingualism and plurilingualism are emphasized in the official policies of the Council of Europe, European Union, and the Bologna Process for harmonizing Higher Education promises 'proper provision for linguistic diversity' (Coleman 9). As it can be conceived from these explanations, the attempts of the European Union to keep alive 'Unity in Diversity' motto, which was adopted for the European Union by the Constitutional Treaty signed in Rome on 29 October 2004, have been reflected in its policy statements especially concerned with multilingualism. On the other hand, fully-fledged implementations of such policies have not been carried out

yet due to the inevitable increase in the use of English. This may be because of the changes in the context of acceleration of globalisation and initiatives for creation of a functioning market system in other words marketisation. Hence, the global sway of English can be resulted from its use as an international language mostly needed in as a language of business. Whatever the driving forces affecting the increase of English language education in higher education, the main language taught most widely at universities throughout in Europe is still English. It seems that within the borders of European Higher Education, English teaching/ learning will go on spreading throughout Europe and the world as an international lingua franca.

As for the powerful connection between higher education and language learning in Europe, higher education institutions influence these issues through their language policies as language issue is strategic regarding the implementation of broader goals of the Bologna Process. Owing to the fact that lack of language skills in labour market is a great challenge that stands in front of the companies, higher education programmes which can prepare students for professional tasks setting out language learning objectives can minimise this inhibiting factor for companies to break into new market. On these grounds, the expansion of foreign language teaching/ learning in higher education will be carried out by descriptions of qualifications, learning outcomes and competences of language learners in the field of languages.

The purpose of the following part is to investigate the growing importance of teaching/ learning English as a foreign language in Europe and how language skills in higher education can be developed with determination of language qualifications for Bachelor Degree students in Europe. This part will aim to give brief background information for each of these aspects taking English as the most commonly used foreign language and it suggests the basis of the European Language Portfolio together with some example countries implementing the portfolio.

A linguistically able and skilled workforce is increasingly identified by the governments as a key stone to economic development, mutual recognition of qualifications as an important policy area for establishing an efficient EU-wide labour market. While doing this, the problem of lack of language skills in some areas has been

frequently addressed. As it has been suggested, the Europe of knowledge is aiming at giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new world order. Stevens supports this idea saying that “growth and diversification of higher education, employability of graduates, shortage of skills in key areas, expansion of private and trans-national education” and as an exterior factor globalisation of education have arisen as new challenges in higher education (3). The focal point of the Bologna Process is to promote mobility of learners and academics and employability of graduates by giving support to the overall development of the continent thanks to the establishment of the European Higher Education Area. Those objectives related to mobility and employability obviously requires a strengthening of foreign language teaching in higher education and university curricula. In that sense, as the most commonly taught language is English all over Europe, English courses should be developed considering learning outcomes since acquiring effective language skills are prerequisite for the implementation of the aims mentioned above. Therefore, the elimination of obstacles to free mobility of students and employability of graduates can be secured through the trans-national recognition of qualifications concerning graduates’ language skills acquired in Bachelor’s Degree.

In terms of English language teaching and its contribution to receiving better information about business life and enabling dynamic participation of the graduates to business life, it can be said that the description of language qualifications to enable standards for language teaching is crucial to make compatibility and comparability easier between universities. Graduates’ mobility and employability thus has become a key mission for universities and other higher education institutions. This should be reflected in the design of the courses. Since most universities offer compulsory English language education for students who are specialising in various academic disciplines in Bachelor’s Degree, English language courses should be designed according to the reforms realised within the Bologna Process. For the attainment of this purpose, the definition of English language qualifications with specific reference to European Language Portfolio (ELP) and Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is primarily important.

### **2.2.1 European Language Portfolio (ELP)**

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) was first launched as a European concept in 1997, on the basis of Proposals for development [CC-LANG (97) 1] (2). The European Language Portfolio (ELP), derived from Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and officially launched in 2001, is a tool in order to record the language level of learners. Basically, it stands for the provision to learners of language and tools suggested in the CEFR (Council of Europe “European”). It also provides both language learners and instructors records of language learning qualifications and competence as language learning helps learners get opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning in the learning process. Therefore, the attention given to autonomous language learning has been aimed to increase in Europe. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) makes an important contribution to language policies and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). According to the suggestion of Gaullier, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), also adopted by the European Union as a standard for defining language levels, is getting an essential tool for European countries to establish a common European educational area in the field of modern languages (6). This document (CEFR) provides a practical tool for setting standards envisaged to be attained at consecutive stages of learning and for evaluating learning outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. In this way, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) becomes a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, so aiding educational and occupational mobility.

To clarify the concepts of CEFR and ELP, firstly, it is necessary to explain the relationship between them. In simple terms, ELP has been designed for the learners while CEFR is aimed at foreign language teaching policymakers. In that sense, these two tools are complementary for each other and inseparable. CEFR’s prior aim is to serve as a descriptive tool providing the people with opportunities to compare their teaching options, objectives and learning outcomes by identifying language use and competences. In that way, CEFR can provide comparability and transparency in foreign language teaching and most importantly language qualifications mentioned above. So it



enables users of a language to communicate with each other. Actually, this document has been designed as a frame of reference regarding qualifications and learning objectives which can be described. Kozymyrska explains that the most distinctive characteristic of CEF is that it is not composed of recommendations, suggestions, and outlines and is a “descriptive framework” (“Using”). The language levels specified in the CEF are taken into account in the creation of National Qualifications Framework concerning foreign language qualifications. As stated in CEF, the set of competences such as ‘linguistic, pragmatic, socio-linguistic and strategic competence’ that a language user must have and they apply them to what they need to do with language (3).

On the other hand, this thesis does not convey the full advantages of CEFR. Instead, the overall goals of the ELP to create an instrument for learners and teachers, to create an official document of language competence, and to contribute to the students’ mobility in Europe will be exclusively concentrated as an underlying tool for the definition of language qualifications.

A specific issue concerns the certification of foreign language competence. The Council of ‘European Language Portfolio (ELP) which allows language learners and language trainers to assess students’ competence in terms of skills such as reading, writing or listening in a variety of situations and at a variety of levels. A Portfolio will consist of three parts - a passport recording formal qualifications, a language biography describing language proficiency and learning experiences, and a dossier in which the learners’ own work can be included (“Language” 13).

In the light of these statements about ELP obtained from the document of a round table debate of the Council of Europe’s Higher Education and Research Committee, it can be pointed out that the definition of the portfolio is not going to be complete. And it is mainly related with the relevance of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) regarding the description of language qualifications. To Bergan’ s knowledge, he underlined in his book called ‘Qualifications, Introduction to a Concept’, the best developed qualifications’ descriptions at international level are reached in languages with regard to foreign language learning (36). In this part, the focal point is the qualifications defined for English language courses. As the European Language Portfolio enables a basis as a framework for foreign language learning at the EU level, the mainly concerned part

which will be underpinned in relation to the ELP will be the description of qualifications for languages.

The ELP, which enables language users record their language skills, is composed of three components stated above. They can be looked into by expanding each part of the definition. In the language passport part, qualifications refer to the skills as follow;

UNDERSTANDING (LISTENING and READING), SPEAKING (SPOKEN INTERACTION and SPOKEN PRODUCTION), and WRITING; while the levels, derived from the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework*, are BASIC USER (A1: BREAKTHROUGH and A2: WAYSTAGE), INDEPENDENT USER (B1: THRESHOLD and B2: VANTAGE), and PROFICIENT USER (C1: EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL PROFICIENCY and C2: MASTERY). [...] the inclusion of self-assessment in the passport emphasizes that the ELP belongs to the individual learner, not to the issuing body or institution (Little and Radka 2).

The levels from A2 (way stage level) to B2 (vantage level) refer to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages edited by the European Union in 2000. In a broad sense, the students at European Universities are expected to achieve B2 language proficiency level required for a Bachelor's Degree (Kozymyrska). As explained earlier, levels define the degree of proficiency which learners are supposed to demonstrate. Thanks to this level of proficiency, mobility of learners can be facilitated and graduates can be provided with a platform to shape their future careers. Apparently, the ELP that is based on the CEF is a beneficial tool and a framework to design curricula and report learning outcomes in a transparent way. With the increasing importance of language competence in the European Union, the European Language Portfolio is being adapted and used within University curricula at first for foreign language learning. This has created a new structure for universities' language policies, subsequent to the demands of the European reform process.

Along with the definition of language qualifications, curriculum design issue should also be clarified. Therefore, it is necessary to highlight two fundamental points of language qualifications point which are pointed in the ELP. One point is related to different levels defined in the ELP and their use with respect to different functions of

the language. In this regard, this is seen useful by Bergan (37). With the help of these levels and functions at global scale described in the European Language Portfolio, learning outcomes and achievements in different areas of studies such as maths, geography or history can also be described imagining similar formats indicated in the ELP. Second point is again explained by Bergan as follows; “the European Language Portfolio underscores that learning achievements need not be equal in all areas of a field – in our case, with regard to all language functions” (40). In this way, it would be usual for a foreign language learner to have different levels for different language skills and functions.

### **2.2.2 The Implementation of ELPs in English Language Programmes in Some Participant Countries**

Based on the aspects of the ELP pertinent to educational systems, it is crucial to understand that implementation strategies are shaped according to bottom-up and top-down strategies of the countries. Instead of discussing which strategy is the most effective, a sustainable and carefully arranged learning environment is a pre-requisite for implementation of the ELP to succeed. As language learning is interdependent with other disciplines and the implementation of the ELP is highly related to political level, the applications in each country should be considered in a global context.

Since there is no single version of the ELP, several versions of ELP have been piloted in fifteen member states of the Council of Europe and by three international non-governmental organisations from 1997 to 2000:

Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom; also in private language schools under the auspices of EAQUALS (European Association for Quality Language Services) and in universities in various countries under the auspices of CERCLES (Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues de l'Education Supérieure) and the European Language Council. Pilot projects have been undertaken at all educational levels – primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, vocational, university, and adult – on the basis of a variety of pedagogical assumptions (Little and Radka 17).

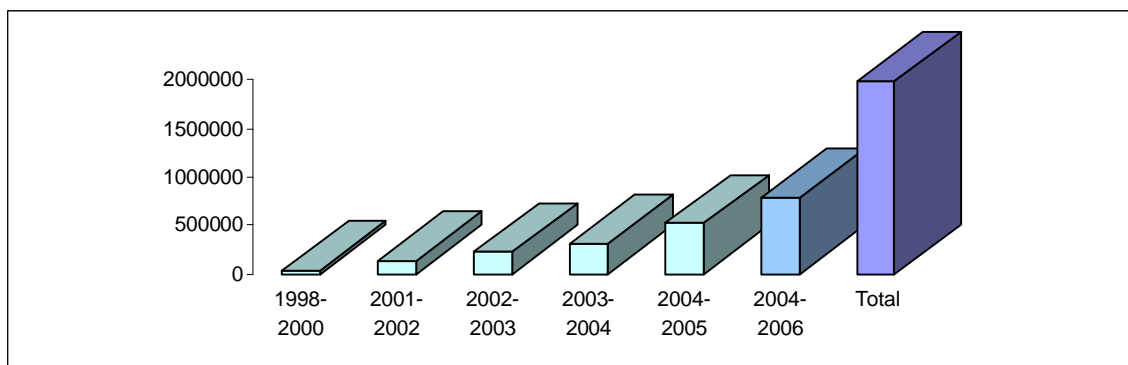
Among these projects, the ones which took place at universities are revealed in European Language Portfolio Interim Report. The data obtained from the reports give way to come up with new approaches for the use of the portfolio as a tool for English language curriculum development or particular English language programmes designed for Bachelor Degree students at universities. This fundamental reason has aroused attention in the borders of nation states. With the help of these reports, it was aimed to make ELP serve as an instrument of renewal in national systems by developing learners' language qualifications.

As previously stated, European Language Portfolio (ELP) document was prepared by the Council of Europe and then a variety of ELPs had been developed and a standard adult passport had been designed by the end of the pilot projects, in 2000. However, the leaders of the project convened twice a year to identify ELP's "common European core" as well as sharing experience. These have been defined as a set of Principles and Guidelines which have been in use since 2000 and remained compulsory regarding the design and validation on ELPs (Council of Europe "Principles" 3). In abstract terms, the Principles and Guidelines identify the common of the EU. They are composed of a compulsory three-part structure; a concern with plurilingualism, intercultural learning and learner autonomy; and the use of the Common Reference Levels of the Common European Framework for self - assessment. However, the standard adult passport is not part of the 'common core' since it is not compulsory. On the other hand, as it is used by all validated ELPs aiming at learners of 15 years and over, it appears to be moving towards de facto "common core" status (Council of Europe "European" 3). One year after the design of Principles and Guidelines in 2001, the Council of Europe founded a 'Validation Committee'. The responsibility of this committee is defined to analyse ELPs and to award them an accreditation number if they can correspond to the 'Principles and Guidelines'. By June 2006, 75 ELPs displaying great variety of design and content had been validated and several more were being revised prior to validation (Little 19). During this ELP implementation process development, new ELP models were designed and prepared for validation. Within this process, the number of copies distributed and reported figures at different points of time provide important information.

The interim report findings displaying the implementation of ELPs in some countries paying attention to the figures in higher education in different countries can be presented here. It is stated in English Language Teaching News based on the explanations made by David Little that according to reports coming from the Council of Europe’s member countries, more than 1,250,000 language learners have received an ELP and have worked with it more or less intensively for a shorter or longer period (19).

As indicated in Graph 1, the extent of the dissemination process is shown by the number of copies distributed throughout the years. However, according to results reported in Interim Report, not all ELPs which have been distributed are used. For 2005-2006 academic years, an increase of 45% over the previous year is stressed.

**Graph 1:** “European Language Portfolios distributed: Total number reported ~ 2 million”

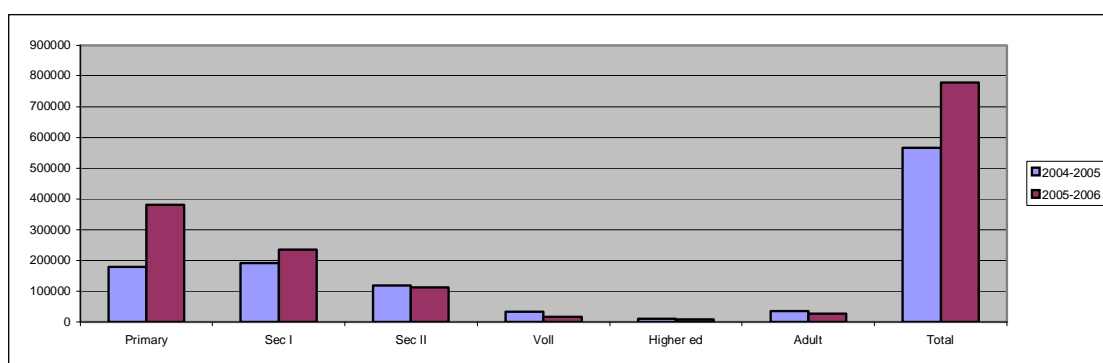


Source: Council of Europe. European Language Potrfolio: Interim Report 2005 with Executive Summary. Rolf Schärer, General Rapporteur. Dec. 2005. Language Policy Division, Strasbourg. (5)

While a huge increase in the use of ELP is shown in the primary sector in Graph 2 due to the pilot projects targeting the learner groups in primary education, the European Language Portfolios used in higher education has shown little increase between 2005 – 2006 years. The ELP has been widely used for exploring the better language learning in European countries nowadays. According to the reported activities of the member countries between 2001 and 2006, different ELP models have been made

more available for the higher education. For each country which reported some activities, the results about the number of learners at universities with an ELP are provided in tables indicating the results in interim report of the Council of Europe in 2005. Based on these results, it can be comfortably said that the European Language Portfolio (ELP) has successfully been integrated into the mandatory school systems of several European countries. However, little is known about the applicability of the ELP in higher education when compared to the data taken in the field of primary and secondary education. On the other hand, some countries have also shown some increases in the use of ELP in higher education.

**Graph 2:** “European Language Portfolios in use: Estimate for the school year 2005-2006”



Source: Council of Europe. European Language Potrfolio: Interim Report 2005 with Executive Summary. Rolf Schärer, General Rapporteur. Dec. 2005. Language Policy Division, Strasbourg. (5)

Although several member countries have reported activities related to the use of ELP, few of them demonstrated its use in higher education. In Bulgaria, between the years 2002 – 2003, 450 learners were exposed to an ELP model carried out as a Leonardo project 132078: titled European Language Portfolio: Promoting a Lifetime of Vocationally-Oriented Language Learning, ELPVOLL by Sofia University (Council of Europe, “ELP Interim”, 11). Another country with its 200 learners in 2003-2004 is Czech Republic. The number of learners with ELP increased during 2004-2005 and became 300 in Czech Republic. The impact of the use of the ELP has been observed and in the following years, within 2005-2006 the number pointed out 400 learners

(Council of Europe “ELP Interim” 12). In the search for the growing language learning needs of students, other universities have also attempted to apply the ELP. Considering the numbers demonstrated in the reports of Finland, under the ‘National ELP Dissemination Project 2001 - 2004’ in which six universities (Helsinki, Joensuu, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu) and three polytechnics (Tampere/Pirkanmaa, Turku, Lahti) have been involved, the numbers of learners with ELP in Finland were determined as 150 for the 2002 – 2003 years and 100 for 2003 – 2004 years (Council of Europe “ELP Interim” 14). When the attempts are examined in France, after the Minister of Education underscored the interest in introducing the ELP into the pedagogic practice in 2001, the ELP then started to be mentioned repeatedly in pedagogic recommendations together with programmes for modern languages for all levels. In higher education area, within the years 2003 – 2004, the numbers of learners with ELP were stated as 2200. After the decision taken to disseminate the ELP, the Academy of Strazbourg envisaged for the equipment of every language learner with an ELP by 2007 (Council of Europe “ELP Interim” 15). Next, as a part of implementation and development process of the ELP models, the figures obtained from officially recommended ELP models by the Russian Ministry of Education took place in the same report. In the table including numbers of ELP users in higher education, a linear increase can be observed. Each year, the numbers are growing such as; within the years 2001 – 2002 the number was five hundred, that number reaches 1170 in 2002 – 2003, during the years 2003 -2004 the number of the learners becomes 2000, in the following years respectively 5000 and 6000 (Council of Europe “ELP Interim” 26).

According to the interim report prepared by Rolf Schärer in 2005, the countries’ numbers of learners including the ones from Turkey with ELP have been demonstrated in different tables. The statistics about the use of European Language Portfolio (ELP) in Turkey are only supplied with the numbers indicating the implementation taking place in primary, secondary education and with adults (Council of Europe “Interim” 26)

**Table 1:** Numbers of Learners in Turkey with an ELP

Numbers of learners in Turkey with an ELP					13 09 05
<b>Educational sector</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2005-2006</b>
<b>Primary</b> 1) Validation pending 5-9			<b>150</b>	<b>300</b>	
<b>Secondary I</b> 1) + 2) Validation pending 10-14 Validation pending 10-14			<b>300</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Secondary II</b> 19.2001 47.2003 15-18 2)		<b>500</b>	<b>750</b> <b>750</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>1500</b>
<b>Adult</b> 56.2004 3)				<b>5000</b>	<b>10000</b>
<b>Total Turkey</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>7300</b>	<b>12000</b>

Source: Council of Europe. European Language Potrfolio: Interim Report 2005 with Executive Summary. Rolf Schärer, General Rapporteur. Dec. 2005. Language Policy Division, Strasbourg. (31)

This project which was implemented in Turkey was developed by Bilfen Schools for primary and secondary educations. For adult education, Ankara University, TÖMER was the developer. At that time, there was no study carried out at universities in Turkey which has been evaluated here. This interim report (2005) concludes that some common goals are pursued and targets are aimed to be met by these countries concerning the implementation of the ELP. Although there are some information gaps introduced in empty boxes in the tables, collective figures can be obtained and come to a general conclusion about the number of ELP users in Turkey in 2005.



## CHAPTER 3

### III. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BOLOGNA REFORMS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN TURKISH UNIVERSITIES WITH THE EVALUATION OF THE CURRICULA OF ENGLISH COURSES AVAILABLE IN YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY AND SAKARYA UNIVERSITY

#### 3.1 Overview of the Bologna Process Implementation in the Turkish Higher Education System

The rapid increase in globalization, the rise of information society and the ambitious goals defined to reach knowledge based economy have had significant influences on education both in Europe and in other countries. Since the beginning of the new millennium, Europe has taken all of these factors into consideration and has made some reforms mostly aiming at facilitating employability and mobility of the students and academic staff. Thus, they have aimed at having the potential to take part in promoting labour market integration. In that sense, the higher education institutions have taken a new meaning to meet the demands of the world of work. So far in this thesis, higher education policies and changes adopted within the framework of setting up the European Higher Education Area have been outlined and examined. Also the implementation of various action lines of the Bologna Process has been examined at international level. As mentioned earlier, Turkey participated in the Bologna Process joining as a participant country in 2001. Since then, considerable number of changes and new implementations has been observed. Turkey has also undergone great changes before its involvement in the Process. Therefore, presenting this section which is structured along with the current structure of Turkish Higher Education system dating back to the first years of the 80s, the implementation of the Bologna principles and reflection of the reforms which are parallel to the Bologna and Lisbon Processes within the years in the Turkish Higher Education System will be analysed.

Besides changing circumstances, the Turkish Higher Education has undergone great changes over the past years. In the report titled The Current State of the Turkish

Higher Education prepared by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), it is stated that the current higher education system which has been taken from the western system took place of the previous system of higher education (YÖK “Current”). Based on this information, some turning points in the history of the Turkish Higher Education can be discussed. The first turning point took place in 1981 with the grouping of all higher education institutions under the governance of one body, the ‘Council of Higher Education (YÖK)’. Additionally, opening of a degree programme at any level is subject to ratification of the Council in the same year. The year 1992 was another turning point in the Turkish Higher Education since the biggest increase in the number of Turkish universities was observed in the same year (YÖK “Strategy” 63). After two turning points have been expressed, the impact of the Bologna Process and Turkey’s involvement in the Process in Prague Summit, in 2001 can be regarded as another turning point in the Turkish Higher Education. In that year, Turkey became a part of Lisbon Strategy after signing the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 2004 and put it into force in 2007. When these two processes are viewed from a broader perspective, it is seen that they have resulted from the EU – Turkey relations that started with the application of Turkey for associate membership in 1959 developed with the full membership application of Turkey in 1987. With the Helsinki European Council Summit held in 1999, Turkey was recognized as a candidate country for accession. This opened a new era in Turkey – EU relations. In this way, Turkey gained the opportunity to take place in the Bologna Process thanks to its nominee country status. Thus, Turkey became one of the signatory countries of the Bologna Process in Prague, in 2001. This participation has led to some outstanding changes and adaptations in Turkish Higher Education System.

Turkish Higher Education System has been evaluated by the follow-up group formed according to the Prague Declaration. The follow – up group made some evaluations about the progress made by Turkey in Bergen ministerial summit in 2005 taking some action lines of the Bologna Process into account such as, ‘Quality Assurance, Two-cycle Degree System, Recognition of Degrees and Periods of Study, Lifelong Learning and Joint Degrees’. In this evaluation, these three main areas concerning the Bologna Process and its priority action lines are taken as the basis. The

progress has been assessed and presented in the Bologna Process Stocktaking Report from a working group appointed by the follow – up group. In the report, it has been underlined that Turkey has made considerable progress in some areas concerning action lines such as, the implementation of two-cycle system, access from first cycle to second cycle, stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement and stage of implementation of ECTS. Also, in accordance with this report, “Work on the establishment of a national quality assurance system has begun. Universities and programmes have already performed several assessment and accreditation exercises” (104). In a broader sense, Turkey has shown good performance for each action line except for the Quality Assurance according to this report about Turkey published in 2005. However, the Turkish higher education institutions as the central figures of the Process did not efficiently take an active role in the Process at that time. As Reichert and Tauch stressed, the assessments by European University Association (EUA) about the Bologna Process on behalf of the higher education institutions do not seem as optimistic as the BFUG’s assessments (5). Two years after this report, the national report about Turkey’s developments comprising changes in institutional structures with explanations was published in 2007. In the main developments section, it is strongly stated that Turkey has shown a great progress in each topic of the Bologna Process since 2007. It is alleged that Turkey made a significant progress regarding Quality Assurance (QA) topic compared to the former report prepared in 2005 (Reichert and Tauch 2). Together with the remaining two action lines except for Quality Assurance, the success of implementation of the two cycle degree system and Diploma Supplement/ ECTS systems are emphasized again in the scorecard of Turkey in 2005 shown in the national report of Turkey. In consideration of stocktaking reports involving scorecards of all participating countries presented in 2007 in London, these statements have been included;

Key developments since 2005 include: adopting a number of regulations to take forward Bologna reforms; completing the ratification process for the Lisbon Recognition Convention; establishing the independent Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education Institutions (YODEK), a national student council and a commission to develop a national qualifications framework; mandatory introduction of ECTS and diploma supplements; enabling joint degrees; widening access for disabled

students; and preparing a Report on the Strategy for Higher Education to 2025 (Stocktaking 78).

Two years after London ministerial summit, in Leuven, in April 2009, the last stocktaking report including scorecard about the development of Turkish NQF was presented. According to Turkey's scorecard, key developments can be seen in internal Quality Assurance processes. The point given for the current state of NQF is 3 (Good) in this report. Concerning the development of qualifications framework, it has been stated that a commission and a working group have been formed. Also the timeline which has been decided for the completion NQF is specified in the report (Stocktaking 120). Some key developments and also possible future challenges for Turkey in various areas in the course of the Bologna have been highlighted in all these reports. Unlike the previous stocktaking report published in 2005, the creation of national qualifications framework took a great attention and a few initiatives have been mentioned in 2007. This issue has started to be reflected as a considerable concept together with the presentation of 2007 – 2009 national report of Turkey. Therefore, it is touched upon in a comprehensive way. In the interest of developing national qualifications framework, some steps, which have been taken, are mentioned in the 'main developments' part of the national report.

### **3.1.1 Qualifications Frameworks and Recognition in the Bologna Process in Turkey**

For the purpose of this thesis, the most significant aspect of the European university model is that it provides an institutional qualifications framework. This is also one of the most important action lines of the Bologna Process as underlined so far. Preparation for Higher Education Qualifications still continues in Turkey. The creation of qualifications frameworks and the development of the framework have been explained in the report titled The Higher Education Strategy Book prepared by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) in 2007. As indicated in that report, the studies related to the action line about the development of higher education qualifications framework are being carried out by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) in Turkey. The studies regarding the levels of qualifications frameworks will have been completed in two months starting from the date the report published. While the studies pertaining

to engineering qualifications have been planned to be finished by 2007, the remaining ones related to other sectors were aimed to be completed by the end of 2008. Regarding the completion of National Qualifications Framework for higher education, as displayed in 2007 - 2009 national report for Turkey, “[...] a Commission and a Working Group have been formed to carry out the work on the establishment of NQF for HE and determined a clear timetable for each step to be taken. According to this timetable, the consultation process with different stakeholders will be completed by 12/2008, the pilot implementation is foreseen on 2010 and full implementation by 12/2012” (2007 – 2009 National Report 2). That is, the approval of the Turkish National Qualifications Framework by the CoHE will be finalised by March 3, 2009 and “the related administrative set up will be completed by 05/2009” (2007 – 2009 National Report 17). The dates related to pilot and full implementations of the National Qualifications Framework have been determined respectively as 2010 and 2012. Since 2007, the study for the completion of National Qualifications Framework has been carried out and this year, in 2009 the final national report about Turkey’s progress in the Bologna Process has been presented as an interim report of National Qualifications Framework.

The steps to create the Turkish National Qualifications Framework have been revealed in the interim report of NQF. According to the statements taking place in this report which was published in January 2009, framework is at the level of administrative set – up in 2009. The next step that is foreseen to start is implementation stage. This will occur in two stages; for the pilot implementation in 2010, and institutional implementation in 2012. In the upcoming years, inclusion of the qualifications has been planned to be completed by the years 2010 -2015 (Türkiye Yükseköğretim Ulusal Yeterlilikler Çerçevesi (TYUYÇ) 23).

While some parts of Turkish NQF are still under development, some of them have already been shaped to some extent. For instance, the levels of higher education have been determined as three levels. While the first level corresponds to the Bachelor’s Degree, the second and the last ones are respectively arranged as Master’s and Doctoral Degrees. However, the number of all levels in the Turkish educational system including the levels EQF and LLL is eight. Above all, a difference in the establishment of the

Turkish NQF can be noticed and compared to the other national qualifications frameworks as well as Higher Education Qualifications (YÖK Ulusal Yeterlilikler Çerçevesi (TYUYÇ) 26). Within the levels defined for these two types of qualifications, the related parts have been shaped by the Council of Higher Education in terms of qualifications, profiles, and level descriptors for each level. When the current situation of the Turkish NQF is examined by taking the level descriptors into consideration, the process can be observed by the help of defined individual and professional competences. As indicated in the interim report of NQF, there are three basic descriptors in the framework. First one is ‘Knowledge and Understanding’ (Theoretical and Practical knowledge), ‘Skills’ (Intellectual/ Cognitive and Practical Skills) and lastly competences with four subtitles; ability to work freely, taking responsibility, having learning competence, communication and social competence, subject specific and occupational competence (YÖK Ulusal Yeterlilikler Çerçevesi (TYUYÇ) 29). Along with these descriptors, qualifications for each level have been explained in general terms. The qualifications concerning language competence is also underlined in the part about communication and social competence under the ‘competences’ headline.

### **3.1.2 The Preparation of Turkish National Qualifications Framework Regarding English Courses Offered in Turkish Universities**

As a National Qualifications Framework, designed and prepared compatible with the European Overarching Qualifications Frameworks, embodies all nationally recognized qualifications and credits. It provides an infrastructure to build up consistent curricula for each course offered at universities. In conjunction with the learning outcomes determined for the Bachelor degree students, qualifications and standards should be interrelated to enhance and facilitate career pathing. For this reason, qualifications frameworks are also relevant to the labour market. As time passes, much greater attention is being devoted to train up qualified people for the workplace. Up to now, the importance of evaluating learning outcomes and developing relevant curricula has been explored in various studies. Likewise, there have been some attempts to define learning outcomes for various courses in different subject areas in a national qualifications framework in the Turkish Higher Education. The level of improvement and change is necessary to the implementation of a full-fledged framework however; it

has been considerable in some areas while it has been minimal or insufficient yet in others. On the other hand, the definition of the competence for a foreign language has been decided upon and stated under the heading referring to the Communication and Social Competence. In the Turkish NQF, it has been explained that the European Language Portfolio has been taken as a basis to define a foreign language competence at Bachelor's Degree. Therefore, Level B1 is accepted as the standard level for a Bachelor Degree student. Thus, a student is expected to be able to deal with the knowledge in his/her own field of study and communicate with the colleagues using a foreign language. With this definition, the essential level for language learning has been revealed in qualifications frameworks. In that way, the European Language Portfolio has become a tool to report learning outcomes in a transparent way and also to design curricula of English courses given at Bachelor's Degree.

### **3.2 Teaching English as a Foreign Language; Language Policy in Turkish Higher Education.**

The importance of foreign language competence and skills has been emphasized to take the attention towards the language qualifications determined for the graduates. As foreign language learning is an essential prerequisite for international cooperation in higher education, higher education students and especially graduates need solid competence and skills that can help them be effective in their own fields of studies and be eligible as qualified candidates for international workforce. Today, English is important for most of the sectors of the current economy. And majority of the employers reckon that English is the most useful foreign language for the labour market. Due to the fact that English language has been learned as a kind of 'lingua franca' for the last fifty years in some parts of the world, it has become a common language which is widely taught and learned as a foreign language. With the combination of these two above-mentioned points, career has significantly gained importance for the last decades since universities are the most important institutions which train students for their future careers. Therefore, the important role of language learning in international area and the undeniable priority of English learning as a foreign language, teaching a foreign language - most widely English - at universities have

become evident. Notwithstanding the focus on multilingual skills is repeatedly underlined and included in any discourses of the European Union, English still remains as a preferred option. The case for Turkey about teaching English is not different. Turkey as a member of the Bologna Process has adopted the use of the European Language Portfolio as an instrument which has been designed to allow learners to describe their language competence regardless of the way how it has been acquired (“Language”).

When the development of English language teaching in Turkey is considered closely, the demand of the English language teaching/ learning with importance of the governmental attribution to the language is clear. Most of the students start learning English in Turkey, at the latest, when they start secondary school. Even though English was introduced to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as an obligatory subject in around 1997 – 1998, the struggle of learning English in a better way continues up to university education. The underlying reason behind this enthusiasm to learn/ teach English in Turkey can be associated with economic and political reasons as it is in any other developing countries. As a global scale economic integration of Turkey into global economy contributes to the teaching/ learning English. On the other hand, especially, Europe has always been on the political agenda of Turkey. For the last decades, Turkey has integrated into the European Union to a great extent in terms of economic development. Turkey’s request to be a full member of the EU is still at stake and therefore; Turkey expects being a member of the European Union soon. To attain this ultimate goal, Turkey has been trying to ensure that it has equipped with the necessary qualifications required to join the EU. Hence, educational improvements in some areas are critically important. Turkey must be prepared to meet the demands of the market, competent in English. For this reason, teaching/ learning English has been promoted gradually within years in Turkey.

In addition to primary, secondary and high schools, universities also have increased in the wide use of English. In Turkey, there has been an increase in such studies to enhance the effectiveness of language teaching/learning activities and expand English teaching at universities. Foreign Language Education at universities in Turkey



has been shaped according to a regulation. ‘The regulation concerning the principals to abide by in foreign language teaching and foreign language teaching in higher education institutions’ prepared by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). The 6<sup>th</sup> article stated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Section of the regulation is related to the compulsory foreign language courses at universities. According to this regulation, the students who fail or cannot take the exemption test are required to take the foreign language courses and pass the tests in accordance with the item (i) of 5th article of the law numbered 2547. Moreover, the compulsory foreign language courses are scheduled and offered at least for two semesters, on condition that not less than 60 hours (Resmi Gazete “Yükseköğretim”). These compulsory courses given for the Bachelor Degree students are scheduled autonomously in each Turkish university in terms of its contents and objectives. For this reason, the curriculum development and objectives involved in the curricula of these universities should be considered and evaluated independently.

### **3.3 The Improvements and Changes in the Curricula of Compulsory English Courses with Regard to the Bologna Process in Two Distinguished Turkish Universities.**

In the course of the Bologna Process which is the most important and wide ranging reform in higher education in Europe, Turkey has undergone important changes and experienced adaptations in various areas regarding the objectives of the Bologna Process as it has been outlined in the previous parts. Basically, three main themes, Qualifications Framework (NQF competences), Recognition (ECTS) and Quality Assurance (National QA Agency) growing out of the Bologna Process action lines have attracted attention during the Process in all signatory countries as well as in Turkey. Hence, some attempts have been forwarded in the establishment of National Qualifications Framework as well as the other themes in Turkey. Since Turkey is full of dynamism in educational issues, the objective of building up a National Qualifications Framework can be regarded as an attainable objective when final results of the reports concerning the current situation of the Turkish NQF which are evaluated in the previous parts of this thesis. The studies aiming to develop a full-fledged NQF have introduced several revisions in Turkish Higher Education System. Activities include Recognition

and the determination of the ECTS for courses given in higher education, Diploma Supplement, Quality Assurance about which each university is responsible for and the work of which is carried out by the CoHE (Council of Higher Education) within the process of establishing the European Qualifications Frameworks. On the one hand, these studies have been carried out to fulfil the final objective targeting establishing a NQF. Besides, written regulations for access to the programmes at universities with comprehensive definitions of the element related to the course content such as course objectives, course outcomes, and programme outcomes have been put into practise to some extent.

As the projects to develop a common higher education area have been outlined by the concepts of transparency and coherence in higher education throughout Europe, on the way to reach these aims defining syllabi for courses or making necessary changes has become significant. Among these courses, foreign language teaching/ learning policy can also attract some attention so that language qualifications and curricula can be fostered in connection with the Bologna objectives. European University Reform and its restructuring of the course system, as stressed here for compulsory English courses offered in Bachelor's Degree Level education, is a predictable consequence of the extension of compulsory language lessons for students of most of the faculties of Universities. This subject is attributed to the development of the content and arrangement of these English courses. For this reason, a common European six-level scale of language proficiency (European Language Portfolio, ELP) has been developed and is widely used as an original plan to facilitate transparency of qualifications. Therefore, ELP has also been adapted to a certain degree in different levels of education in Turkey and it has been used for supporting the Turkish university students' English learning mostly through preparatory programs of the universities.

In this section, this thesis aims to examine and evaluate how a university's related department (modern languages department or school of foreign languages) can shape its English language teaching/learning education to better meet the demands set by changing higher education environment. It addresses the question of how curriculum restructuring for compulsory English courses offered to Bachelor Degree students

affects education at English language teaching level. To illustrate the effects of changes in curricula both on theoretical and practical levels, the curriculum development carried out since Turkey's involvement in the Bologna Process in 2001 will be analysed in two universities. However, it must be remembered that it is often difficult to gauge the degree to which English language teaching programmes in Turkish universities have been reformed as a result of the Bologna Process. Therefore, these compulsory English courses offered at Turkish universities in Bachelor's Degree will be examined with regard to curriculum design of the courses in connection with the course objectives, contents, course materials, their relations with the program outputs and activity reports, if available, including statistics about the success rate of the students for a specific course. The case demonstrates a systematic procedure for curriculum evaluation and the possibilities it provides for a fundamental renewal of the curriculum for the future. It must be noted that not any attempt to make a uniform English curriculum is expected during this study as diversity in curricula fosters mobility across Europe. One element which should be emphasized here is the determination of learning outcomes of these compulsory English language courses due to the general shift from defining aims and objectives solely into learning outcomes. This illustrates predominantly one of the main changes in the Bologna Process. Therefore, findings will both specify whether the curricula applied in departments are aligned with the objectives of the Bologna Process within the framework of language qualifications and the changes occurring in curricula after Bologna.

Moreover, they will explore the awareness of the lecturers who design the curricula about the Bologna Process and its impact on determining course objectives accordingly. In that sense, to evaluate how the recent curriculum works regarding the findings obtained from information about the course contents and the teachers' perspectives thus, to provide data on this topic by stressing the changes arising from the restructured curricula are the objective of this study. To reach the data, there will be some criteria to analyse the curricula of compulsory English courses structured after the Bologna Process in these universities. Looking at the present situation of each university, those criteria can be categorised under the headings as "similarities" seen in the curricula, "new implementations" which arise from the needs along with the

objectives of the course, and lastly “the success of the students” considering the contents and course objectives at universities which will be taken as case studies in the subsequent part.

As a result of the analyses conducted both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University, whether there has been any contribution or reflection of the key objectives of the Bologna Process (mobility and employability) with possible impacts on the curriculum design of the courses will be focused on at the end of this chapter. An evaluation of the analyses part regarding the information obtained from the course plans of the courses offered both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University will take place at the end of Chapter 3.

### **3.3.1 General Description of Yıldız Technical University and Its English Language Teaching Policy**

While the Bologna Process is aiming at establishing a European Higher Education Area by 2010, Turkey, as a participating country, has been integrated into the Process to contribute to the cooperation among European universities with its 97 state and 44 private universities. Yıldız Technical University, which is one of the most respectable universities of Turkey, will be examined as the first case in this chapter. Yıldız Technical University's mission is to produce the most capable graduates by equipping them with necessary skills. It also adopts lifelong learning as a principle by preparing its students for the experiences including a wide array of avenues for developing abilities for analysis and synthesis. The vision of the university has been shaped to become an internationally accredited university with the developments in educational, research and cultural areas (Yıldız). In today's globalising world, while the demands of the societies have been changing, Yıldız Technical University intends to catch up with the pace of universal development in higher education. In that sense, in its current situation, “Yıldız Technical University continues education and instruction with its 8 faculties, 2 institutes, School of Vocational Studies, School of Foreign Languages and its students over the number of 17,000” (Yıldız, General Information). Presenting a framework of the mission of Modern Languages Department under School of Foreign Languages, the consequent part examines the curricula designed for compulsory English

courses offered by Modern Languages Department. It might be appropriate to take a brief look at the language policy to comprehend the place of English teaching/ learning for the university.

Modern Languages Department in the School of Foreign Languages offers common compulsory foreign language courses including both English and German at various levels such as elementary, intermediate and advanced. English courses are obligatory for all students and offered in four semesters. In the vision of Yıldız Technical University stated, it aims to get its students acquired the ability of using English as a foreign language effectively via contemporary teaching methods which the department has accepted to use. To attain this aim, the mission of Yıldız Technical University is to reinforce knowledge and competence in four skills in upper-intermediate and advanced levels that the students have acquired during compulsory Preparatory Class year (Yıldız, Yabancı Diller).

The students of Yıldız Technical University take compulsory English courses in six semesters during their bachelor education. Four of these courses are offered by the Modern Languages Department. Those courses which are listed according to their course numbers are as follow; 9051031 Advanced English I, 9051032 Advanced English II, 9052031 Advanced English III/ Reading and Speaking in English, 9053032 Advanced English IV/ Business English. Two remaining compulsory courses are called Professional English I and II and they have been offered by the related departments. These two courses are not compulsory for all students. In this sense, they will not be included in the analysis of curriculum design of English courses offered in Yıldız Technical University in this thesis.

On the 11th of March 2005, Council of Higher Education in Turkey (YOK) adopted the obligation of use of the Diploma Supplement, which was designed according to a model developed by the cooperation of the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/ CEPES on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004, in the signatory countries' higher education institutions in accordance with the article IX.3 of "Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region" adopted in 1997. As a result, universities in Turkey have given a

copy of Diploma Supplement confirmed by the Council of Higher Education to their graduates together with their diplomas (Türkiye'nin Yüksek Öğretim Stratejisi 22). Considering that, the curricula of the courses which have been designed and implemented since 2004 will be analysed to judge the impact of the Bologna Process and if they exist to what extent it can be realised. It is also aimed to reveal the level of compatibility of English language teaching/ learning at Yıldız Technical University in relation to the Bologna Process in terms of learning objectives. The criteria which have been formed to analyse these courses have been identified as “similarities” seen in curricula, “new implementations” arising from the needs along with the objectives of the course, and “the success of the students” by taking into consideration the contents and the course objectives.

### **3.3.2 Curriculum Design Analysis of Compulsory English Courses Offered by the Modern Languages Department**

#### **3.3.2.1 9051031 (9101021) *Advanced English I***

To take this course, students are required either to complete Preparatory Program successfully or pass the proficiency test. The students who have to take this course can also take the exemption test held either in September or June. In this test, they have to take at least 65 points in the pass degree or above over 100 points to be exempted from that compulsory course. (That passing grade may be changed with the decision of the administration) With the help of preparatory programme or the tests, the University sets a standard for its students who will take compulsory English courses during their four - year Bachelor Degree education. For each compulsory course, an equivalent course which has the same contents and objectives exist. The equivalent of Advanced English I (9051031) is called 9101021 (Advanced English I) designed for the students entering university after 1998 -1999 and 1999 – 2000. (All courses starting with the numbers ‘910’ fall under this category and these courses will not be examined separately from current compulsory courses starting with the numbers ‘905’ because the content of all these courses is the same. All these courses are identical in terms of the content except for their course numbers and sometimes credits.) While the courses listed with the course numbers starting with ‘910’ refer to the lessons which have been

required for the students since 1998 – 1999 education year, the ones starting with the numbers ‘905’ refer to the courses which have been compulsory for the students subject to the new education programme since 2003 – 2004 education year (YDYO Öğrenci Kılavuzu). As time passes, the students taking the courses listed with the course numbers ‘910’ will be completely removed due to different automation systems established for the students. The courses which will be explored in the following parts will be the ones listed with the course numbers ‘905’.

Regarding some syllabi of these 9051031 course, which have been prepared in different years ranging between the years 2004 - 2009, the course credits, contents, objectives, outcomes, materials both produced by the lecturers and picked for the course, prerequisite courses, and course evaluation criteria will be examined accordingly. Additionally, contribution to the Departmental Program Outputs will be clarified for these courses to highlight student success at the end of the semesters.

Following table summarises curriculum change based on the information taken from the first (fall) semester course training programme forms of the 9051031 Advanced English I course pertaining to different years. It gives an overview of the endorsement with the eight elements of the course (regular semester, ECTS, course materials, contents, course objectives, course outcomes, homework/ projects and course plan/ contents), which are used to indicate the changes or new implementations in the curriculum during the years.

**Table 2:** The Curriculum of Advanced English I (9051031)

<i>9051031</i>	<b>2005 – 2006 Fall</b>	<b>2006 – 2007 Fall</b>	<b>2007 – 2008 Fall</b>	<b>2008 – 2009 Fall</b>
<i>Advanced English I</i>				
<b>Regular Semester</b>	1 (Fall)			
<b>ECTS</b>	3			
<b>Prerequisite Courses</b>	Students are required to complete Basic English Department successfully or pass the proficiency exam given by the department.			
<b>Course Materials</b>	Broukal, Milada, 1996. <i>Weaving It Together</i> , Book 4,	Brenda Bushell, Brenda Dyer, 2003. <i>Global Outlook</i> , Mc Graw Hill Publishers		

	Heinle and Heinle Publishers)	
<b>Contents</b>	Developing various reading skills, doing writing activities, vocabulary study	In this course, the first five units will be studied and students will do response activity concerning the reading texts in the book
<b>Course Objectives</b>	Learning reading strategies over various texts, practising certain writing techniques and studying grammar and vocabulary items related to the texts.	To learn efficient top – down reading strategies over various texts. With the help of critical reading strategies, to make students develop new perspectives and express these insights in a well-organised way. To study vocabulary items related with the text.
<b>Course Outcomes (The knowledge and the skills that the students will gain at the end of the course)</b>	<p><b>Grammar:</b> Reviewing and revising the sentence structure, learning and using punctuation marks, developing vocabulary with prefix, suffix, suffix and word formation studies.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Building basic reading knowledge and skills.</p> <p><b>Listening and Speaking:</b> Following course outcomes identified for grammar and following and participating in academic discussions in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Writing paragraphs on the topics discussed in the class</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b> Making predictions about the reading texts with pre-reading activities, skimming, scanning, extracting main ideas, reading for implied meaning, guessing the meaning of the words out of the context, adapting critical reading strategies to different texts.</p> <p><b>Speaking:</b> Following and participating in discussions in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b> Identifying and using appropriately widely – used expressions and words.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Writing “response paragraphs” on the topics read and discussed in the classroom.</p>



	<p>paraphrasing the outline of the ideas and information extracted from the texts; writing academic essays including introduction, body, conclusion parts taking unity and cohesion into consideration; identifying and writing thesis statement and topic sentence; combining the sentences and paragraphs with appropriate linking words and transition signals; preparing an outline before writing</p>	
<p><b>Course Plan – Contents</b></p>	<p><b>Reading Topics from <i>Weaving It Together</i>:</b></p> <p>-</p> <p>Reading Passages on ‘Frida Kahlo’, ‘The World of Virtual Reality’, ‘Body Language’, ‘Extraversion and Introversion’, ‘Cleanliness’</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Introduction to the essay – writing thesis statements, and topic sentences, developing body paragraphs and conclusion, outline,</p> <p>- writing opinion essay from weaving it together chapter 8 and extra</p>	<p><b>Reading Topics from <i>Global Outlook</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Note: Integrated with writing activities</u></b></p> <p>- ‘The Millennial Generation’, ‘An American Finding Her Chinese Face’ (Input on Response Paragraphs), ‘A Clean Break’, ‘Consumer Lifestyle’, ‘How to Grow Old and Stay Young’ (Analysing the Response written on this reading text), ‘Youth Takes Action Against Child Labour’.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing activities for each reading passage</li> <li>- In Class Writing</li> <li>- Feedback on Response Paragraphs during the term</li> </ul>

	<p>material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selecting research topics, do research on it, bringing sources to the classroom.</li> <li>- Quoting, paraphrasing, summarising, in-class practise, making in-text citations according to APA style,</li> </ul>	
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Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008, 2008 – 2009 Fall Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the 9051031 Advanced English I Course. Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

### **3.3.2.1.1 2005 – 2006 (Fall Semester) Course Training Programme Form:**

In the 2005 -2006 spring semester course training programme form outlined in Table 2, the prerequisite courses are noted as completing the Basic English Department successfully or passing the proficiency exam given by the department. It means that neither 9051031 nor 9101021 course is prerequisite courses for 9051032 or 9101022 course. Weaving It Together, Book 4 written by Milada Broukal had been used for a couple of years as the textbook of the course and supported by some additional course materials prepared by the instructors in Modern Languages Department by 2005. The textbook,

Weaving it together connects high-interest readings with clear writing activities to help students be more confident in their ability to understand and express ideas in English. Each level of Weaving It Together 2/e contains eight thematically organized units, each of which includes two interrelated chapters. Robust activities, structure lessons, and plenty of writing practice help students develop their ideas clearly and with confidence.

This book was chosen to help students fulfil the course objectives both for developing reading and writing skills. Carefully structured writing models and activities assist students move from guided exercises to free writing activities. And readings are chosen from engaging topics related to international customs or academic content. For two

courses, 9051031 and 9051032, the contents were shaped according to the reading texts chosen from the textbook, *Weaving It Together*. To develop writing skills, students are taught how to write opinion essays, select research topics and do research on it, learn how to write thesis statements, and topic sentences, write academic essays including introduction - body - conclusion parts, quote, paraphrase, summarise, make in-text citations according to APA style, paraphrase the outline of the ideas and information extracted from the texts. In the first term, as 9051031 and 9051032 courses are complementary to each other, they aim to make students get acquainted with writing academic essays practising how to write paragraphs and then specific types of essays thanks to the *Weaving It Together* which has an academic content enriched with “New variety of vocabulary, editing, grammar, and writing activities expand the readings and help learners develop strong academic skills” (Broukal).

When the content is examined in that semester, the essential emphasis is clear on writing activities aimed at writing paragraphs, essay types and lastly academic essay writing. Considering the course objectives, it can be said that the contents have mainly been developed complementary to course content which aim to help students learn reading strategies over various texts, practise certain writing techniques and develop four basic language skills. In addition, the course outcomes indicating the knowledge and the skills that the students will gain at the end of the course have been formed and presented in the same programme form. In this part, each language skill listed as grammar, reading, listening and speaking, writing has been explained in a detailed way in the light of course outcomes. As these course outcomes are basically determined to reach expected results or consequences of the course which aim to develop students’ reading skills. Thus, they will be able to make predictions about the reading texts with pre-reading activities, skimming and scanning, extracting main ideas, reading for implied meaning, guessing the meaning of the words out of the context, adapting different strategies to different texts (School of Foreign Languages “Course”). As underscored here, reading is structured on various exercises aiming at building basic reading knowledge and skills for all the students from different departments in their first year at university. In course outcomes part, grammar is also given importance and it is intended to help students review and revise the sentence structure, learn and use

punctuation marks, develop vocabulary with prefix, suffix, and word formation processes. Listening and Speaking skills envisaged for the students to acquire follow course outcomes identified for grammar and students are expected to follow and participate in academic discussions in the classroom. Besides the skills explained, writing is also included in the course outcomes. The students are supposed to write paragraphs on the topics discussed in the class paraphrasing the outline of the ideas and information extracted from the texts, write academic essays including introduction, body, conclusion parts taking unity and cohesion into consideration; identify and write thesis statements and topic sentences; combine the sentences and paragraphs with appropriate linking words and transition signals; prepare an outline before writing (School of Foreign Languages “Course”). When writing skills are especially considered, it can be concluded that this course is fundamentally focused on academic writing following necessary steps beginning with writing paragraphs and then developing writing essays using references.

**3.3.2.1.2 2006 – 2007/ 2007 – 2008/ 2008 – 2009 (fall Semester) Course Training Programme Form:**

After examining the 2005 – 2005 Spring Semester Programme for Advanced English I course, in the subsequent years, the course was offered again in the same form except for some newly restructured parts of it. To start with, it should be underlined that regular course semester and course credits (ECTS – 3) remained the same. However, after the replacement of the textbook ‘Weaving It Together’ with ‘Global Outlook’ a publication of Mc Graw Hill Publishers and written by Brenda Bushell and Brenda Dyer, the course contents, objectives and course outcomes have changed accordingly. In this book, the content has been designed to help students expand their knowledge and build a global perspective of world issues and social trends. This contributed to the restructuring of the course contents of 9051031 and 9051032 formed in the course plan. Regarding the function of the book on reading skills, it can be deduced that Modern Languages Department has attempted to assist students to acquire the skills that fluent readers of English use unconsciously. As indicated in the course training forms submitted in 2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008 and 2008 - 2009 spring terms, reading activities

which foster response writing activities are emphasised. Based on this focus on the course content and objectives have been aligned with the content and modified to provide an important focus to learning. As for course outcomes which point out the knowledge and the skills that students will acquire at the end of the term, again students are expected to be able to develop four basic language skills. Although the expressions to describe course outcomes have shown some changes in the course programme forms compared to the ones written in the past semesters, the basic idea underlying course outcomes have remained the same. However, the aim for developing writing skills has been replaced with the idea of teaching response writing other than academic writing.

The introduction of course plan/ contents part can provide some information regarding new implementations after replacement of the course book. New implementations are flexible and adaptable so that they can also serve for the objectives of the course. As shown in course plan/ contents part in Table 2, reading passages are also integrated with “response writing” activities. For each reading passage, the lesson ends up with “response writing” activities and the instructors give feedback on response paragraphs of the students during the term. Unlike classroom writing before 2006 – 2007 education year, academic writing activities including writing topic sentences, thesis statements, developing introduction - body – conclusion paragraphs, teaching APA style, quoting, paraphrasing and summarising activities do not exist in the new course curriculum of the 9051031.

### **3.3.2.2 9051032 (9101022) Advanced English II**

9051032 Advanced English II, which is the equivalent of 9101022 Advanced English II, has been basically designed to develop reading and writing skills of the students and is a continuation of Advanced English I (9051031) course. According to training programme form of the 9051032 Advanced English II, available from 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2007 - 2008 education years, the regular semester is spring (2) and the ECTS of the course has been determined as 3. In the following table, curriculum change in the spring (2) semester course training programme forms is shown. As three forms are available for 9051032 course, they are going to be analysed comparing regular semester, ECTS, course materials, contents, course objectives, course outcomes,

homework/ projects and course plan/ contents in each semester to see whether any new implementations have occurred.

**Table 3:** The Curriculum of Advanced English II (9051032)

<i>9051032</i> <i>Advanced English II</i>	<b>2005 – 2006 Spring</b>	<b>2006 – 2007 Spring</b>	<b>2008 – 2009 Spring</b>
<b>Regular Semester</b>	2 (Spring)	2 (Spring)	2 (Spring)
<b>ECTS</b>	3	3	
<b>Prerequisite Courses</b>	9051031 Advanced English I and 9051032 Advanced English II are not prerequisites of each other.		
<b>Course Materials</b>	Broukal, Milada, 1996. <i>Weaving It Together</i> , Book 4, Heinle and Heinle Publishers)	Brenda Bushell, Brenda Dyer, 2003. Global Outlook, Mc Graw Hill Publishers	
<b>Contents</b>	Each chapter aims at enabling students have essay type writing skills and reading comprehension. Throughout this term, ‘comparison and contrast’ and ‘cause and effect’ essay types will be studied	Learning various reading strategies studying on different texts; studying on some specific type of writing expressing the ideas of the reader (response writing); doing grammar and vocabulary exercises to reflect the ideas about the text the students read.	
<b>Course Objectives</b>	Learning reading strategies over various texts, practising certain writing techniques and studying grammar and vocabulary items related with the texts.	<p><b>Reading:</b> Learning and applying new reading strategies</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Students will write about opinions and information that they get without breaking down of communication; to learn how to write using technical rules of writing; learn how to summarize a piece of writing.</p> <p><b>Listening and Speaking:</b> Participate in successfully in class communication and discussions.</p>	
<b>Course Outcomes</b>	<b>Grammar:</b> Reviewing and revising the sentence structure, learning and use punctuation marks, develop		

	<p>vocabulary with prefix, suffix, suffix and word formation studies.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Building basic reading knowledge and skills.</p> <p><b>Listening and Speaking:</b> Following course outcomes identified for grammar and following and participating in academic discussions in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Writing paragraphs on the topics discussed in the class paraphrasing the outline of the ideas and information extracted from the texts; writing academic essays including introduction, body, conclusion parts taking unity and cohesion into consideration; identifying and writing thesis statement and topic sentence; combining the sentences and paragraphs with appropriate linking words and transition signals; preparing an outline before writing</p>	<p>Students are expected to be able to guess the context before reading the text through pre-reading activities, to gain skimming and scanning skills; to get the main idea; to study reading for implied meaning; to deduce the meaning of a word, phrase or unfamiliar lexical items in a reading passage; to apply different reading strategies on various texts; to be able to produce writing about the passages read in the classroom; to have the ability to summarize the main idea deduced from the reading text; to learn how to write an academic paragraph including introduction, body and conclusion maintaining unity and coherence.</p>
<p><b>Homework/ Projects</b></p>	<p>Students learn two types of essay and do writing activities concerning them</p>	<p>Students learn how to write response essays during two semesters. Therefore, students do writing essay activities. This makes up 10% of total gradeStudents do activities for writing summaries</p>
<p><b>Course Plan – Contents</b></p>	<p><b>Reading Topics from <i>Weaving It Together</i>:</b></p> <p>- Reading Passages on ‘Coconut and Satellite’, ‘The Toe of the Shoe’, ‘Trousers and Skirts’, ‘Food Additives’, ‘Crippled by Computers’</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Introduction to the essay – writing thesis statements, and topic</p>	<p><b>Reading Topics from <i>Global Outlook</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Note: Integrated with writing activities</u></b></p> <p>- Reading Passages on ‘Piracy in the Music Industry’, ‘The Invasion of Work’, ‘Inequality in the World’, ‘Poorest Women Gaining Inequality’ (Analysing the Response written on this reading text), ‘Advice to my son’, ‘Endangered Languages’, ‘Protecting the</p>

	<p>sentences, developing body paragraphs and conclusion, outline,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- input on general essay</li> <li>- input on comparison &amp; contrast essay</li> <li>- input on cause &amp; effect essay</li> <li>- input on argumentative essay</li> <li>- selecting research topics, do research on it, bringing sources to the classroom.</li> <li>- Quoting, paraphrasing, summarising, in-class practise, making in-text citations according to APA style,</li> </ul>	<p>Wild'</p> <p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing activities for each reading passage</li> <li>- In Class Writing</li> <li>- Feedback on Response Paragraphs during the term</li> </ul>
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Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2008 – 2009 Spring Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the 9051032 Advanced English II Course. Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

### 3.3.2.2.1 2005 – 2006 (*spring Semester*) Course Training Programme Form:

As stated in the form of 9051031, Weaving It Together course book was used for Advanced English I course shown in Table 3 together with some additional course materials prepared by the instructors in Modern Languages Department. While the course objectives and the course outcomes are the same with the ones of 9051031, only essay types (cause & effect, comparison & contrast and argumentative) taught during the semester have changed as a part of the process of learning academic writing. It is stated that throughout the semester in the Course Training Form of the course, ‘comparison and contrast’ and ‘cause and effect’ essay types will be studied” (School of Foreign Languages). The topic of teaching response writing skills relates to a considerable change on the concept of teaching academic writing. In the following year, Modern Languages Department decided to work with response writing projects both in 9051031 and 9051032 courses.



### **3.3.2.2.2 2006 – 2007/ 2008 – 2009 (spring semester) Course Training Programme Form:**

Restructured parts of the Advanced English I course remain the same for Advanced English II 2006 – 2007 and 2007 – 2008 academic years. With the use of ‘Global Outlook’ course book, Advanced English I course mostly stands out with response writing as well as reading strategies and other language skills like listening and speaking. Information obtained from the course content part involved in training forms implies that the change coming after choosing another course book does not constitute a radical foundation for the course content. Bringing back to mind the major objectives of the course are based on mostly studying reading strategies and writing response paragraphs on the topics read in the classroom, Modern Languages Department has created the course objectives and outcomes consistent with the ones defined for Advanced English I / 9051031. What differentiates these two courses offered in 2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008, and 2008 – 2009 is the course plan and topics studied in each semester. Closely connected to the topics chosen for 9051031, reading passages from Global Outlook are analysed to make predictions on the topic and then to write about students’ reflections on the text they read. This helps students develop the ability to read chunks of information for general understanding. In this way, students have opportunities to write about newly learned topics recycling vocabulary in each unit.

### **3.3.2.2.3 Departmental Outputs (Outcomes) for 9051032 Advanced English II Course**

Modern Languages Department defines departmental outputs for each course that it offers at Yıldız Technical University. Those outputs (outcomes) state what a student needs to be able to do with the essential knowledge and skills, acquired in a specific course offered by the department. Also the outcomes communicate expectations to students, as well as other academic institutions and maybe potential employers. The identification and assessment of departmental outputs (outcomes) support Modern Languages Department’s efforts in documenting student learning and provide a context for the academic planning.

In table 4, the Departmental Outputs (Outcomes) for 9051031 and 9051032 courses which have been designed by the Modern Languages Department are outlined. There are nine articles indicating the knowledge and the skills acquired by the students and the numbers above displays the contribution of the course to them. As indicated in the Table 4, a student taking these courses is expected to acquire all the knowledge and skills determined by the Department with full contribution of the courses. It can be deduced from these findings demonstrated in the table that these courses are designed to meet basic demands of the students concerning reading, expressing themselves and participating in class discussions, writing on the topics they read, and developing critical reading. Regarding the departmental outputs, the contribution of the courses, and analyses of the courses, the nature of 9051031 and 9051032 have been planned to provide a basis for the students after they are accepted as qualified to take these courses. Here, for these courses it can be said that the course outcomes are complementary to the departmental outputs (outcomes). That is to say, this is crucial as the consistency between the course objectives, contents and departmental outcomes (outputs) need to be understood in its context, which means that much can be accomplished thanks to a well-developed curriculum.

**Table 4:** The Course Contribution (9051031 – 9051032) to Departmental Outputs

	<b>Knowledge and Skills Acquired by the Students</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	a) To understand the text students read using background knowledge			*
	b) To have new ideas about the world issues, new movements and topical subjects.			*
	c) To become acquainted with different reading strategies and to apply them also to develop new viewpoints, and to write about newly learned subjects.			*
	d) To express their ideas and knowledge about the topics chosen from the texts that students read without spoiling and obstructing the communication			*
	e) To have efficient reading strategies to read.			*
	f) To reinforce expressing oneself using words efficiently			*
	g) To find out the main idea of a text and summarize it.			*
	h) To develop critical thinking skills			*
	i) To understand and follow teacher and student talk in academic situations and student oral presentations; to acquire the skills enough to participate in classroom debate and discussions			*

**The course has:** **1:** No contribution at all **2:** Partial contribution **3:** Full contribution

Source: Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2008 – 2009 Spring Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the 9051032 Advanced English II Course. Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

The approach to analysing the curricula of 9051031 and 9051032 courses, visible consequences of new implementations and the success rate can be analysed through annual activity reports for academic years prepared in different years.

#### **3.3.2.2.4 *Annual Activity Reports for Academic Years (9051031 – 9051032)***

Based on the information included in the academic year activity reports which have been submitted by the Modern Languages Department, the impact of the new implementations in the course curricula over the years becomes quite easy to explain and the results show the success of the students in parallel with the contents of the courses. These reports can also be called ‘student progress report’ and are designed for the same purposes such as helping both students and instructors assess the students’ academic progress within a year. That is why these reports can be good sources to compare improvements and changes in courses and their results concretely. In general, some information related to the course material production has been presented as well as statistical data about how many students have taken the proficiency test, how many of them have passed it, how many students have taken the courses during the semester and how many of them have passed and failed for all courses offered by Modern Languages Department.

#### **3.3.2.2.5 *2005 – 2006 Annual Activity Report for 9051031 – 9051032***

According to the report prepared for 2005 -2006 academic year for Advanced English I (9051031) and Advanced English II (9051032) which are also the equivalent of 9101021 and 9101022 courses, 284 students took the proficiency test.

Modern Languages Department’s annual activity report for 2005 – 2006 reflects differences in the success rate of the students in table 5. The basic difference is seen between the students taking 9101021/ 1022 and 9051031/ 1032. The number of successful students taking 9101021 – 9101022 is lower. However, with its 55 groups

and 1779 students, 9051031 had 1015 successful students. This number has increased in the second semester for 9051032. According to this 2005 – 06 annual activity report, 1128 of the total students with a plus 268 students receiving a conditional pass became successful. To make a precise comparison to see if there is a sharp variation among numbers, 2006 – 2007 annual activity report must be examined.

**Table 5:** Statistical Information about the Advanced English I – II Courses in 2005 – 2006 Academic Years.

<b>Courses</b>	<b>The number of the groups</b>	<b>Total number of the students</b>	<b>The number of successful students</b>	<b>The number of failed students</b>	<b>The number of students who have received a conditional pass</b>
<b>9101021 Advanced English I (Fall Semester)</b>	5	123	6	103	14
<b>9051031 Advanced English I (Fall Semester)</b>	54	1779	1015	428	336
<b>9101022 Advanced English II (Spring Semester)</b>	3	120	13	99	8
<b>9051032 Advanced English II (Spring Semester)</b>	56	1771	1128	375	268

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2005 – 2006 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports.”

### **3.3.2.2.6 2006 – 2007 Annual Activity Report for 9051031 – 9051032**

The situation regarding changes over the years can be analysed better when the data related to the following year have been obtained. In 2006 - 2007 academic year, the

information taken from the 2006 -2007 academic year annual activity report about the Advanced English I – II courses as follows;

With the increase in the total number of the students, both the successful and failed students' numbers have increased as shown in table 6. Although there is not a continual increase in the number of successful students, each semester, especially for 9051032, students can be viewed more successful compared to the previous year findings. Based on these results, it can be suggested that new implementations and changes work better to fulfil the objectives of the course

**Table 6:** Statistical Information about the Advanced English I – II Courses in 2006 – 2007 Academic Years.

<b>Courses</b>	<b>The number of the groups</b>	<b>Total number of the students</b>	<b>The number of successful students</b>	<b>The number of failed students</b>	<b>The number of students who have received a conditional pass</b>
<b>9101021 Advanced English I (Fall Semester)</b>	28	108	30	69	9
<b>9051031 Advanced English I (Fall Semester)</b>	67	2142	1188	572	382
<b>9101022 Advanced English II (Spring Semester)</b>	31	87	12	69	6
<b>9051032 Advanced English II (Spring Semester)</b>	68	2019	1355	410	254

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2006 – 2007 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports

When the current situations of Advanced English I and II courses (9051031 and 9051032) are evaluated, with some new changes or new implementations in the course

contents, objectives and outcomes except for some arrangements for homework/projects, all (2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008, and 2008 – 2009) spring semester course training programme forms reveal that the course curriculum has been designed and been working in accordance with the course objectives and outcomes. Table 2 on page 89 highlights these new implementations and also the parts remaining the same in three different spring terms. First, there is a considerable change resulting from the replacement of the textbook in 2006 so the objectives have been reviewed and the curricula have been adjusted according to the expected outcomes of the course which is compatible with the programme outcomes. While Advanced English I (9051031) and Advanced English II (9051032) courses are not prerequisite of one another, both courses are offered in the first academic year, in fall and spring semesters. That having said; Advanced English I (9051031) and Advanced English II (9051032) courses have been designed to improve the students' understanding and use of English in reading and writing. What has to be taken into account in this respect is that the content of these courses has been designed for all students who have successfully completed the Preparatory Phase or pass the proficiency test. As the courses are compulsory for all students, the first objective is to develop students' language skills and knowledge mostly in reading and writing without distinction of department. For the upcoming compulsory courses Advanced English III and IV, Advanced English I and II courses provide a thorough basis on which to build. As for restructured parts related to improving writing skills of the students after 2006 spring semester in which academic writing had been focused on. Firstly, it was aimed to reinforce the students' writing skills in a guided way especially based on learning paraphrasing, summarising and academic writing techniques. Besides, different essay types were taught consecutively during the semesters. Even though these courses were also designed to teach and practise integrated skills of reading and writing, for the upcoming year, 2006, the book was replaced with the Global Outlook series comprising two levels of books. With this new implementation, students have become much more focused on response writing other than academic writing. With the help of input for response writing and class activities, the students get equipped with the necessary skills to prepare a project at the end of the term. Therefore, the course objectives have been formed to provide students with the opportunity to write reflecting their own opinions. When compared, response

writing may offer students a more simplified study than academic writing. Also, it makes learning much more student- centred as students are expected to write their own reactions about a reading passage which may be more practical and required for the students before they start writing an academic paper.

### 3.3.2.3 9052031 (9102021) Advanced English III/ Reading and Speaking in English

9052031 Reading and Speaking in English which is the equivalent of 9101022 Advanced English III are compulsory for all the students after they have taken 9051031 (Advanced English I) and 9051032 (Advanced English II) as prerequisite courses. Following table presents curriculum change demonstrated in course training programme forms of the 9052031 Reading and Speaking in English/ Advanced English III course which were submitted in different years ranging between 2004 – 2005 and 2008 – 2009. It summarizes the changes occurring within the years by examining some elements of the course such as regular semester, ECTS, course materials, prerequisite courses, course contents, course objectives, course outcomes, course plan, and assignments.

**Table 7:** The Curriculum of Advanced English III – Reading and Speaking in English Course (9052031)

9052031 <i>Reading and Speaking in English / Advanced English III</i>	2004 – 2005 Fall Semester	2005 – 2006 Fall Semester	2006 – 2007 Fall Semester	2008 – 2009 Fall Semester
<b>Regular Semester</b>	3 (Fall)			
<b>ECTS</b>	3			
<b>Prerequisite Courses</b>	9051031 Advanced English I – 9051032 Advanced English II			
<b>Course Materials</b>	Course Material is prepared by Modern Languages Department			
<b>Contents</b>	Students will be able to learn the basic knowledge concerning both discussion and presentation skills through the discussion texts they have been given (i.e. Globalization) in the context of both written and oral skills. In the first 11 weeks students will be working on the texts that their instructors will present them; at the end of the semester, they will deliver oral presentations by which they			

	develop their own discussions related to one aspect of the subject they have already worked on. They will be graded both on their presentations and the outlines of their presentations which they will have prepared and turned into their instructors on the day of the presentations.		
<b>Course Objectives</b>	This course has been designed to improve the reading, comprehension and oral expression skills of the students over texts related to current issues and to provide them with a wider academic vision.		
<b>Course Outcome</b>  (The knowledge and the skills that the students will gain at the end of the course)	<p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to read, comprehend, interpret and discuss texts in newspaper/ magazine/ research/ scientific research</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- writing paragraphs by which they can inform and convince the reader while expressing their own opinions on a specific subject and start a discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar and Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to identify, and use appropriately, widely used expressions and to distinguish between the mostly confused and wrongly used word pairs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Listening and Speaking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to express ideas and opinions in a presentation format, to respond and to give feedback to other students during group discussions and the class discussions following presentations, to orally conduct the messages without any obstructions except some minor mistakes, to be able to follow fluent teacher talk and the other students.</li> </ul>		
<b>Course Plan – Contents</b>	Thematic Units on <i>Fantasy World, Globalization, Gender, Education Opportunities Abroad, and Different Cultures</i>	Thematic Units on <i>Fantasy World, Globalization, Human Rights, Education Opportunities Abroad, and Different Cultures</i>	Thematic Units on <i>Gender Part I – II, Fantasy Role Playing Games, Movie “The Truman Show”, Human rights, Globalisation Part I – II, Cultural Issues as an Extension of Globalisation.</i>
<b>Assignments</b>	1 Oral Presentation & Outline + Presentation Paper		

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2004 – 2005, 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2008– 2009 Fall (3) Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the Advanced English III – Reading and Speaking in English Course (9052031). Provided by the Course Coordination Office.



### **3.3.2.3.1 2004 – 2005/ 2005 – 2006/ 2006 – 2007/ 2008 – 2009 (fall semester) Course Training Programme Forms**

After the students have got acquainted with the basic languages skills such as mostly reading and writing (critical thinking skills are emphasized for writing activities integrated with reading texts), listening and speaking. They have also developed language knowledge like pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, function and topics with the compulsory English courses 9051031 and 9051032. (Most of these targets have already been included in the previous course training programme forms.) Beginning in the fall (3) 2004 Semester, Modern Languages Department offers third compulsory English course called Reading and Speaking in English/ Advanced English III. The curriculum of this course has remained the same except for the course plan/ contents since its formation. In this course, the aim is to seek to make students learn presentation skills through the texts they are given to read as stated in the course content part above. Therefore, the course objective is designed to “improve the reading, comprehension and oral expression skills of the students over texts related to current issues and to provide them with a wider academic vision” (Programme Form for 9052031). To attain these objectives, the instructors of Modern Languages Department prepare materials including reading texts together with mostly speaking, writing, grammar and vocabulary activities. It is clear that reading is integrated into speaking skills for 9052031 as it is integrated into writing skills for 9051031 and 9051032. Based on these objectives, course outcomes which point out the skills that students will acquire at the end of this course are formed. It has to be kept in mind that all four skills are developed together although some of them are specifically emphasised more, rightly so for this fits the nature of language learning as it cannot be imagined separately from language skills and knowledge. When the course outcomes are considered, it is realised that writing skills are built upon already studied techniques in courses 9051031 – 1032 by practising writing paragraphs. In these paragraphs, the students explain their own ideas and try to convince the reader. As for listening and speaking, again emphasising the importance of developing expressing ideas in a presentation format, it must be emphasised that students are expected to actively take part in group discussions and making their presentations following fluent teacher and other students’ talk.

New implementations in the course training programme forms seem to occur in course plan/ content part. It may be caused because of the need for preparing students to live and work in a globalising society by making them acquainted with topical issues. That is why the topics that students read in the classroom and related speaking and writing activities are designed accordingly. Overall, the change in the course curriculum is limited. Apart from some changes mentioned in the course outline, not many hesitations about the success of the curriculum of the course can be identified with regard to changes or new implementations in the course curriculum. Hence, it can be concluded that the consequences of the course are satisfactory and meet the demands of the students and lecturers. Otherwise, course outcomes and objectives could be questioned and they should have been changed but they remained the same regarding studies on developing reading and speaking skills as well as other language skills.

**3.3.2.3.2 Departmental Outputs (Outcomes) for the Advanced English III Reading and Speaking in English Course (9052031).**

For 9052031, there is a chart indicating the course contribution to departmental outputs (outcomes). The knowledge and skills expected for the students to acquire are as follow;

As shown in Table 8, there seem ten articles explaining the knowledge and skills acquired by the students at the end of this course and also the contribution of the course to them is marked. While the course makes its full contribution to the seven of total knowledge/ skills demonstrated, it makes partial contribution to make students express their ideas and knowledge without spoiling and obstructing the communication. This is because this skill was aimed to be acquired at the end of 9051031 and 9051032. As the skill defined in article ‘h’ is not included in the content of the course, there is no contribution of the course to this skill.

**Table 8:** The Course Contribution (9052031) to Departmental Outputs

	<b>Knowledge and Skills Acquired by the Students</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	a) To work and study with peers as a team in harmony			*
	b) To communicate verbally and written			*
	c) To access and analyze contemporary foreign texts			*

	d) To understand the significance of life-long training, education and research			*
	e) To become acquainted with different reading strategies and to apply them			*
	f) To express their ideas and knowledge without spoiling and obstructing the communication		*	
	g) To reinforce basic language rules and structures through a holistic study			*
	h) To define and use common idioms, phrases and frequently confused and/or misused words within the correct contexts.	*		
	i) To write and orally deliver presentations that provide and evaluate various topics to attain verbal and written communication skills related with social situations			*
	j) To understand and follow teacher and student talk in business situations and student oral presentations; to acquire the skills enough to participate in classroom debate and discussions			*

**The course has:** 1: No contribution at all 2: Partial contribution 3: Full contribution

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2004 – 2005, 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2008– 2009 Fall (3) Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the Advanced English III – Reading and Speaking in English Course (9052031). Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

To take a brief look at the concrete results of the course (9052031) concerning success of the students within the years can be explored through annual activity reports for academic years submitted by the Modern Languages Department.

### **3.3.2.3.3 Annual Activity Reports for Academic Years (9052031)**

As it is stated on page 94, activity reports are used for reflecting the results of students' success in a specific course at the end of a semester. The reports pertaining to 2005 – 2006/ 2006 – 2007 academic years' results are as follow to compare the students' success to see if there is an apparent increase or decrease.

### **3.3.2.3.4 2005 – 2006 Annual Activity Report for 9102021(Advanced English III), 9052031 (Reading and Speaking in English)**

In that semester, 274 students took the proficiency test to pass Advanced English III/Reading and Speaking in English course.

**Table 9:** Statistical Information about the Advanced English III/ 9102021(Advanced English III), 9052031 (Reading and Speaking in English) 2005 – 2006 Academic Years.

<b>Courses</b>	<b>The number of the groups</b>	<b>Total number of the students</b>	<b>The number of successful students</b>	<b>The number of failed students</b>	<b>The number of students who have received a conditional pass</b>
<b>9102021 Advanced English III (3<sup>rd</sup> Fall Semester)</b>	9	400	134	174	92
<b>9052031 Reading and Speaking in English (3<sup>rd</sup> Fall Semester)</b>	54	1679	1271	179	209

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2005 – 2006 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports.”

**3.3.2.3.5** *2006 – 2007 Annual Activity Report for 9102021(Advanced English III), 9052031 (Reading and Speaking in English)*

**Table 10:** Statistical Information about 9102021 (Advanced English III), 9052031 (Reading and Speaking in English) 2006 – 2007 Academic Years.

<b>Courses</b>	<b>The number of the groups</b>	<b>Total number of the students</b>	<b>The number of successful students</b>	<b>The number of failed students</b>	<b>The number of students who have received a conditional pass</b>
<b>9102021 Advanced English III (3. -Fall Semester)</b>	49	253	118	101	34
<b>9052031 Reading and Speaking in English (3. - Fall Semester)</b>	72	1718	1429	155	134

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2006 – 2007 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports.”

It is realised on the basis of the information indicated in Table 9 and 10 that the total number of the students taking this course decreased since only the students from old automation system can take this course called 9102021 when the numbers pertaining to 9102021 Advanced English III course is analysed. Therefore, the number of students falling under this category lessened in 2006 - 2007. On the other hand, the numbers of successful students including both students passing the course directly and receiving a conditional pass have increased. According to these reports released by the Modern Languages Department, the numbers of successful students taking Advanced English III/ Reading and Speaking in English course (9052031) in 2006 – 2007 education years have increased with the growth of participation of all students compared to the numbers in 2005 – 2006 education years. In addition, the semester (2006) was spent focused on studying some new topics for reading passages. The accumulated data on evaluation of students’ success which has been obtained at the end of each semester and concluded since 2005 – 2006 education years, might well lead one to reach such assumption as stated above.

#### **3.3.2.4 9053032 (9102021) Advanced English IV/ Business English**

9053032 *Business English*, equivalent course of 9102022 - Advanced English IV for the students entering university in 1998 – 99 and 1999 – 2000 education years, is the last compulsory English course for all students at Yıldız Technical University after they have taken 9051031 (Advanced English I), 9051032 (Advanced English II), and 9052031 Advanced English III / Reading and Speaking in English as prerequisite courses. The table below includes information taken from course training programme forms pertaining for Business English/ Advanced English IV course 9053032. It summarizes the curriculum design of the course prepared in four different semesters. The course structure can give information how the learning process is organised including the schedule, some elements of the course such as regular semester and ECTS

of the course, course materials, prerequisite courses, course contents, course objectives, course outcomes, course plan, and homework/ projects in these forms.

**Table 11:** The Curriculum of Advanced English IV – Business English Course (9053032)

<b>9053032 Business English/ Advanced English IV</b>	<b>2005 – 2006 Spring Semester</b>	<b>2006 – 2007 Spring Semester</b>	<b>2007 – 2008 Spring Semester</b>	<b>2008 – 2009 Fall Semester</b>
<b>Regular Semester</b>	6 (Spring)			
<b>ECTS</b>	2			
<b>Prerequisite Courses</b>	9051031 Advanced English I – 9051032 Advanced English II 9052031 Advanced English III / Reading and Speaking in English			
<b>Course Materials</b>	Course Material is compiled by Modern Languages Department			
<b>Contents</b>	Socializing; CV writing, cover letter writing; interviewing skills; telephoning; holding meetings; informative and assessment report writing; oral presentation skills.			
<b>Course Objectives</b>	The aim of this course is to equip the students with the verbal and written communication skills they will need in their relationships with foreign people or institutions throughout their professional lives.			
<b>Course Outcomes</b>  (The knowledge and the skills that the students will gain at the end of the course)	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reading and / or interpreting news, articles, essays, informative and assessment reports</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- writing CVs, cover letters, informative and assessment reports</li> </ul> <p><b>Speaking and Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expressing their knowledge and ideas in English, participating in social situations, using the telephone in business calls, holding meetings, presenting informative or assessment reports</li> <li>- understanding and following teacher and student talk in academic situations and student oral presentations</li> </ul>			

	<b>Grammar and Vocabulary</b> - recognizing and using language structures and vocabulary related with business English			
<b>Course Plan – Contents</b>	<b>The Units for each week:</b> Report Writing, Socializing, CV and Cover Letter Writing, Interviewing Skills, Telephoning, Holding Meetings	<b>The Units for each week:</b> Socializing, CV and Cover Letter Writing, Interviewing, Holding Meetings, General Correspondence in Business, Report Writing.	<b>The Units for each week:</b> Socializing, CV and Cover Letter Writing, OP Input, Short Presentations, Report Writing	<b>The Units for each week:</b> Socializing, CV and Cover Letter Writing, OP Input, Short Presentations, Report Writing
<b>Homework/ Projects</b>	1 Report and 1 Oral Presentation of the Report			

Source: Yildiz Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008, 2008 – 2009 Spring (6) Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the Advanced English IV – Business English Course (9053032). Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

This compulsory course (9053032) is offered to the students provided that they have taken 9051031 Advanced English I, 9051032 Advanced English II, 9052031 Advanced English III / Reading and Speaking in English courses and completed them successfully in the third year of Bachelor’s Degree. It is different from the other compulsory courses offered by the Modern Languages Department in terms of its ECTS allocation which has been determined as 2 credits. The aim of this class is “to equip the students with the verbal and written communication skills they will need in their relationships with foreign people or institutions throughout their professional lives” as stated in all course training programmes. As Business English/ Advanced English IV course is a different course in terms of its content and objectives, it can answer different needs of the students. This is why the course itself needs different implementations. With the other compulsory courses, which not only cover basic skills of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) but also some specific knowledge about the language, the students have learnt how to write response paragraphs, and participating

in class discussions. Furthermore, Advanced English IV course offers students an opportunity to get acquainted with business English comprising and requiring some specific language skills. The expected goal at the outcome of the course is to be able to exchange professional information when necessary, to be able to answer the needs arising from business, and also to communicate effectively with other students and teachers using English. As seen in the course training forms of 9052031 Advanced English III/ Reading and Speaking in English course, the only changing part of the course curriculum is seen in the course plan/ content section. All the topics prepared and revised each education year by the instructors are compiled for the students. However, these revised parts do not contain lots of changes. Together with these, more business related aims, the course also aims at developing academic skills, such as reading, informative and assessments reports, speaking and listening designed to focus on participating in social situations, using the telephone in business calls, holding meetings, and presenting informative or assessment reports. In terms of integrating the Business English/ Advanced English IV course into general language policy of the Modern Languages Department at Yıldız Technical University, building up some competences and skills becomes an important component of the programme. These competences can be related to interpersonal communication, team work, using language structures and vocabulary related to business, and preparing presentations.

#### **3.3.2.4.1 *Departmental Outputs (Outcomes) for the Advanced English IV – Business English Course (9053032)***

When departmental outputs (outcomes) determined by the Modern Languages Department are examined, eleven skills the students taking Advanced English IV/ Business English course (9053032) are expected to have acquired by the end of the semester can be discovered. The course makes full contribution to other ten skills listed above except for the skill which should be acquired to reinforce basic language rules and structures through a holistic study as shown in the Table 12. This one skill that the course makes partial contribution can be regarded as a skill which has been much developed through other basic courses. More importantly, the skills outlined here are



more comprehensive than the other outputs explored for other compulsory courses and they refer to much more specific skills require specialisation in business English.

**Table 12:** The Course Contribution (9053032) to Departmental Outputs

<b>Knowledge and Skills Acquired by the Students</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
a) To work and study with peers as a team in harmony			*
b) To communicate verbally and written			*
c) To access and analyze contemporary foreign texts			*
d) To understand the significance of life-long training, education and research			*
e) To become acquainted with different reading strategies and to apply them			*
f) To express their ideas and knowledge without spoiling and obstructing the communication			*
g) To reinforce basic language rules and structures through a holistic study		*	
h) To define and use common idioms, phrases and frequently confused and/or misused words within the correct contexts.			*
i) To write and orally deliver presentations that provide and evaluate topics related with business English; to attain verbal and written communication skills related with social situations			*
j) To understand and follow teacher and student talk in academic situations and student oral presentations; to acquire the skills enough to participate in classroom debate and discussions			*
k) To gain the skills to cite from sources and prepare bibliographies when preparing verbal or written output			*

**The course has:** 1: No contribution at all 2: Partial contribution 3: Full contribution

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. 2005 – 2006, 2006 – 2007, 2007 – 2008, 2008 – 2009 Spring (6) Semester Course Training Programme Forms for the Advanced English IV – Business English Course (9053032). Provided by the Course Coordination Office.

### 3.3.2.4.2 *Annual Activity Reports for Academic Years (9053032)*

Annual activity reports submitted by the Modern Languages Department have been analysed in this thesis for compulsory courses. Bearing in mind the increase in the numbers of successful students, as time passes in a broad sense, the interpretation of activity reports for Advanced English IV/ Business English course (9053032) will be presented in the following part.

**3.3.2.4.3 2005 – 2006 Annual Activity Report for 9102022 (Advanced English IV)  
9053032 (Business English)**

473 students took the proficiency test for this course (exemption test?)

**Table 13:** Statistical Information about the Advanced English IV (9102022) and (9053032) Business English Courses in 2005 – 2006 Academic Years.

Courses	The number of the groups	Total number of the students	The number of successful students	The number of failed students	The number of students who have received a conditional pass
<b>9102022 Advanced English IV (4. - Spring Semester)</b>	14	394	221	128	45
<b>9052031 Reading and Speaking in English (6. – Spring Semester)</b>	30	642	581	32	29

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2005 – 2006 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports.”

**3.3.2.4.4 2006 – 2007 Annual Activity Report for 9102022 (Advanced English IV)  
9053032 (Business English)**

**Table 14:** Statistical Information about the Advanced English IV (9102022) and (9053032) Business English Courses in 2006 – 2007 Academic Years.

Courses	The number of the groups	Total number of the students	The number of successful students	The number of failed students	The number of students who have received a conditional pass
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<b>9102022 Advanced English IV (4. - Spring Semester)</b>	5	110	31	69	10
<b>9052031 Reading and Speaking in English (6. – Spring Semester)</b>	32	815	691	60	64

Source: Yıldız Technical University. School of Foreign Languages. “2006 – 2007 Academic Year Annual Activity Reports.”

During two semesters in which these courses (Advanced English IV (9102022) and (9053032) Business English) offered, the number of successful students especially taking 9053032 (Business English) have risen up. According to the lecturers, the efficiency of Business English course is increasing thanks to the revised extra materials prepared by the Modern Languages Department.

### **3.3.3 General Description of Sakarya University and Its English Language Teaching Policy**

This part of this thesis addresses the impact of implementation of the Bologna Process regarding curriculum design of the compulsory English courses in Bachelor’s Degree at Sakarya University as a consequence of Turkey’s signing the Bologna Declaration in 2001. The philosophy of the adaptation to the Bologna Process can be regarded as modernization of Turkish universities. Sakarya University has been chosen as the second case university for this study. In that sense, the curriculum design of compulsory English courses offered in different departments for Bachelor Degree students of Sakarya University will be examined in the subsequent section.

Sakarya University, which is a state university, was founded by Law number 3837 on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1992 (Sakarya “General”). The mission of the university is stated in its web page as to make individuals keen on producing technology, eager to share and equipped with aesthetic values. Establishing a contemporary teaching/ learning environment giving students opportunities to be competent professionals is another mission of the university. As for the vision of Sakarya University, in the first place the

University seeks to be the first rank in an international context concerning the quality of education and research. “The administrative board of the University tries its best to be cooperative and encourages team work in the process of solving the existing problems of its environment” (Sakarya “Mission”). With its seven faculties, two institutes, School of Health, School of Physical Education and Sports, The State Conservatory, and 12 vocational schools, Sakarya University continues its education. Sakarya University seeks to assure the qualification of its students, therefore it has embraced the implementation of Bologna for in all fields of studies as well as English language teaching at university to improve the quality of qualifications as expressed its vision. It is possible to see several studies continuing under the scope of the Bologna Process at Sakarya University. It has a unique position in terms of the attempts to implement the Bologna Process principles which can be observed concretely among other Turkish universities. ECTS allocation has been set within the Bologna Process context.

How Department of Foreign Languages has shaped English language teaching policy, should be examined with respect to the courses it offers. Department of Foreign Languages of Sakarya University offers courses for obligatory and non-obligatory preparatory classes as well as compulsory English courses for the students in the first year of their Bachelor’s Degree in education. Students have to take two common compulsory English courses, English I and English II unless they become exempted from these courses either passing the exemption test of finishing the preparatory class successfully. Based on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> articles of the regulation of foreign language prepared for Sakarya University, there is a definition for these common compulsory English courses. As amended by the Law 2547, Article V, section 1, (i) clause, the students enrolling at Sakarya University have to take compulsory English courses in the first and second semesters. The students, who are able to pass the exemption test at the beginning of the semester taking 50 or over grades out of 100, become exempted from English I and II courses (Sakarya Dep. of Foreign Languages “Regulation”). In this regard, the objectives, outcomes, contents of the courses will be overviewed and it will be examined whether Sakarya University has sufficient incentives to implement Bologna objectives related to English language qualifications in terms of realising language skills and knowledge acquired from compulsory English courses. This

analysis of the curriculum design will further include information about learning outcomes defined for the courses introduced in qualifications frameworks section explored in Chapter 2 of the thesis.

### **3.3.3.1 Curriculum Design Analysis of Compulsory English Courses Offered by the Department of Foreign Languages**

The Bologna Process is a reference for the restructuring of curricular activities for all higher education institutions of participating countries arising from the establishment of the qualifications frameworks. As a consequence, Bologna encourages all of these HE institutions to assess competences of their educational programmes and promote a quality perception. Since Turkey joined the Bologna Process in 2001, the related policy formation in all areas has been underway. Therefore, emerging changes or new implementations in curricular design can be examined within the context of the Process. Considering the Process, Sakarya University has developed an “Educational Information System (EIS)” aiming at “describing its curricular activities within a constantly evolving and transparent framework”. Sakarya University asserts that the integrity and compatibility of this system with other information systems of the University which is currently operating makes EIS remarkable software (Sakarya Edu. Info. System). Moreover, it is also important to mention the scope of EIS system. As stated in the site prepared for this system, the scope is defined as below;

EIS includes documents regarding university’s academic programme competencies, objectives, lesson plans, relations of the university EIS includes documents regarding university's academic program competencies and objectives, lesson plans, relations between courses and program competencies, course outcome, evaluation criteria, documents for teaching staff to share, questionnaires evaluating educational processes, in-service training documents for the initiative of updating educational programs that commenced in December 27, 2007 (Sakarya Edu. Info. System).

In the light of these documents, the curricula of the compulsory English courses (English I and English II) will be analysed concerning the Bologna – related policy implementation on English language teaching/ learning at Sakarya University.

### **3.3.3.2 English I/ English II**

The analysis will be conducted using course plans applied in different departments of Sakarya University, which includes knowledge and skills required for the students to be successful in their careers. Since the course information indicated in the course plans regarding two obligatory English courses (English I and English II) are alike, they will be investigated in terms of course semesters, ECTS, content and learning outcomes in the course plans that appear in the EIS system embedded in the other course contents offered in each department. The emphasis will be placed upon new implementations in the course plan after the Bologna Process using information pertaining to previous years. Although these courses are compulsory for almost all Bachelor Degree students, some divergences in the course codes, semesters and sometimes course titles can be seen. There are some departments in which compulsory English courses I and II are offered in different semesters, with different ECTS, course titles and codes despite of the fact that the course content remains the same. These departments are Philosophy and Biology in Faculty of Science and Letters, Turkish Teaching Education, Mathematics Education and Mentally Handicapped Education in Faculty of Education, all departments in the State Conservatory and Faculty of Theology at Sakarya University. On the other hand, unless the students take and pass the exemption test, the courses are compulsory for all of them in all departments of Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Technical Education, Faculty of Fine Arts, School of Health and School of Physical Education and Sports. In these faculties and schools, the titles of the courses are English I and English II with their course codes Dil 101 and Dil 102 and lastly their regular semesters are 1 and 2.

All these courses have been developed on the same basis and compulsory for the students continuing Bachelor's Degree in above mentioned departments. In some departments mostly in Faculty of Education (except for the departments of Mathematics Education and Mentally Handicapped Education) and also German Language and Literature and German Translation in Faculty of Science and Letters, these English I and English II courses are not offered. Indeed, the following table of course plans

developed for English I and English II courses could outline the elements that underlay curriculum design of these courses.

**Table 15:** The Course Information of English I (Dil 101) and English II (Dil 102)

Course Title	Code	Semester	Credits	ECTS
English I	Dil 101	1	2	2
English II	Dil 102	2	2	2

<b>Prerequisites</b>	None
<b>Language of Instruction</b>	Turkish
<b>Course Type</b>	Compulsory
<b>Course Coordinator</b>	Department of Foreign Languages
<b>Course Objectives</b>	This course aims to equip undergraduate students, “European Language Portfolio Global Scale” B1, in English with; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic grammar,</li> <li>- Understanding oral production,</li> <li>- Speaking interactively,</li> <li>- Reading,</li> <li>- Expressing themselves in written form.</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	English grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, oral production and writing skills in order to help students follow occupational English courses in next years and prepare them for learning English further after university and in professional life.
<b>Course Materials</b>	Materials prepared by the instructors/ Essential Grammar in Use Oxford Dictionary
<b>Total Student Workload Hour</b>	71
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Having attended this course, undergraduate students will have a sufficient level of English (“European Language Portfolio Global Scale”, Level B1) for following their field of study and communicating with their colleagues; in other words, they can;</li> <li>2) Understand clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc,</li> <li>3) Understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language,</li> <li>4) Travel in an area where the language is spoken, enter unprepared</li> </ol>

	<p>into conversation on everyday life,</p> <p>5) Connect phrases in a simple way to describe ideas, plans and ambitions, narrate a past event,</p> <p>6) Write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest, and personal letters.</p>
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<b>Contribution of the Course to the Programme Outcomes</b>	The level of contribution changes depending on the programme outcomes defined for each department in EIS system. While English course full contribution to more than two or three skills/ knowledge acquired by the students, sometime it may just contributes to one skill/ knowledge. The amount of contribution is displayed using numbers in the charts.
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Source: Sakarya University. Educational Information System. "Course Information. Course Plan for the English I and English II, (Dil 101/ Dil 102 Courses)."

No matter what the titles of the courses are, the content and basic elements constituting curriculum remain the same as mentioned. That is why; the course will be examined taking this into account. According to the information obtained from the Department of Foreign Languages, the course materials (Essential Grammar in Use and extra materials prepared by the instructors) and the objectives of these courses have not been changed for years. However, after the Bologna Process, the aim of equipping students with the sufficient level of English taking the European Language Portfolio Global Scale, Level B1 as the basis was included in the objectives of the course. Following years, the course plans which include the knowledge and skills required for the students to be successful in their careers was developed in the context of goals of the Bologna Process. The course plans of English I and English II courses comprise of 2 credits for each course which are distributed through 2 semesters. The ECTS allocation based on student workload which refers to the estimated time to finish the activities envisaged for each course unit has been carried out by Sakarya University. 71 hours of student workload including course duration (including the exam week: 16x Total course hours), hours for off-the-classroom study (Pre-study, practice), assignments, mid-terms, and final examination has been calculated (see Table 15). It can be said that the full implementation of ECTS allocation based on student workload makes teaching/ learning more student centred and helps students achieve expected learning



achievements along with learning outcomes and competences. (See page 38 the concept of workload)

As for the stated course objectives in the course syllabi (the explicit curriculum), it is understood that teaching/ learning activities and strategies match the course objectives that basically focus on developing abilities in four basic skills of English. As it is evident from the content description in Table 15, students are expected to follow occupational English courses offered in the subsequent years and to get acquainted with English learning further after graduation and then in their professional lives. As understood from the book, *English Grammar in Use*, used in two courses, a grammar based approach fostered with language functions teaching has been adopted by the Department of Foreign Languages. Moreover, some job-related vocabulary and expressions which may help students develop their specific knowledge and skills needed in professional working life to fulfil the objectives stated in the course content. This attempt can be seen as a factor which also reinforces the general mission of the university to provide students with opportunities to be competent professionals in the future.

When it is considered that the curriculum development is considerably related to definition of learning outcomes "... a written statement of what the successful student/ learner is expected to be able to do at the end of the module/course unit, or qualification" (Adam Introduction 2). The biggest change in the curriculum of English language courses offered by Sakarya University is seen with the definition of learning outcomes. As the idea of learning outcomes gives importance to 'learning' rather than 'teaching', Department of Foreign Languages at Sakarya University seeks to shape its curriculum change aligned with the Bologna Process principles. The students' learning progress with regard to knowledge and skills have been defined and included in the course plan/ content indicated in Table 15. It can be assumed that positioning of language qualifications becomes much more possible thanks to the learning outcomes. When examined closely, it is understood that they have mainly connection with knowledge, understanding and its application. The statements of learning outcomes point out essential and significant learning which the students can credibly demonstrate

after they have taken the courses. Therefore, it would not be wrong to claim that the presence of learning outcomes in the course plan/ content is a sign of perceived importance of these concepts in curriculum change with reference to defining language qualifications. The impact of the Bologna Process principles on curriculum design has gradually increased and reflected in the curricula prepared by the Department of Foreign Languages of Sakarya University after the Process launched for Turkish Universities. That means that in its context, the department has preferred establishing a student-centred education in which students actively participate in the learning process. The learning outcomes embrace the desired outcomes including having sufficient level of English based on the European Language Portfolio Global Scale, Level B1, gaining the ability to understand and use spoken English encountered in workplace, school, etc, understanding passages consisting everyday or job related language, being able to speak unprepared and so on (See Table 15). This may lead one to examine the source of these learning outcomes shaped according to the information prepared and submitted in “Common reference levels: self-assessment grid” including learning, teaching, assessment sections defined for each language skill in Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: (26). In concrete terms, this application of the Department of Foreign Languages favours the implementation and adaptation of basic qualifications envisaged to be acquired by the European Language Portfolio. It can be asserted that at Sakarya University, ELP is used as a tool to design curricula of compulsory English courses and to report learning outcomes reflecting them as they are originally included in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Further evaluation based on the course content analyses conducted both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University will appear in the following part regarding the implementation of the Bologna Process principles in compulsory English courses offered for Bachelor Degree students acquiring necessary language qualifications.

### **3.4 A Critical Evaluation of the Data Obtained from the Analyses of the Curricula of Compulsory English Courses in Relation to the Bologna Process**

As a result of the analysis of the courses offered both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University, the implementation of the Bologna Process reforms in the curriculum design of compulsory English courses can be overviewed and evaluated respectively in this section. As already clarified above, the development of necessary language skills and knowledge of oral and written communication in English for bachelor graduates can be perceived as crucial in today's world within the Bologna Process perspective. Despite the professional and formal training students receive at Bachelor's Degree at universities, there is much talk of a skill gap in the workplace. It must be kept in mind that to remove obstacles to student/ academic mobility and graduate employability, curriculum design plays an important role in the process of establishing European Higher Education Area. Therefore, English language teaching/ learning which prepares students for their professional life is an important component in higher education. It is realised that the students must first take compulsory English courses so as to develop their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills regarding the courses examined earlier. The process which is going on by taking compulsory English courses ends up with a Business English course. The curriculum of Business English/ Advanced English IV course prepared by the Modern Languages Department of Yıldız Technical University may be an important step to meet the demands of industries by enhancing the probability of high employability and mobility of the graduates for the future. An English language teaching/ learning curriculum which mainly includes job related vocabulary and expressions can stimulate the mobility and employability of Turkish students in the European Higher Education Area. Employability and mobility of the university graduates and the staff, as the most significant objectives of the Bologna Process underlined in Chapter 1 of the thesis.

In terms of enhancing quality of English language teaching/ learning for the Bachelor's Degree, as well as its basic language courses, Business English offered by the Modern Languages Department of Yıldız Technical University might promote

English teaching/ learning activities through a well – developed curriculum. Such a curriculum for Business English course can ensure the relevance of the curriculum to the employment market thus; it can meet the demands of the labour market. At the same time, this also underpins the labour market objectives of the Bologna Process and helps the university keep up with the changes arising from fulfilling objectives of mobility and employability. Along with the topics which are chosen to meet the demands concerning globalising world, the content of Business English/ Advanced English IV can be enriched by a competence – based curriculum. This competence – based learning approach arises from the learning outcomes concept within the framework of qualifications, centres around the demands and needs of the knowledge – driven market, and makes students be acquainted with specific tasks for their professional lives. Therefore, a university or a higher education institution which offers English language courses as a part of their curriculum must answer above mentioned demands of the market by discovering the best way to teach English. Thus, Business English course offered by the Modern Languages Department of Yıldız Technical University can serve this purpose as a Bologna objective as well.

The Bologna Process prioritises to the definition of learning outcomes, which supports the idea of competence – based learning as one of the elements of curricular reform promoted through the Bologna Process. Considering this, the curricula must be redesigned through its newly implemented or revised parts and most importantly learning outcomes/ competences defined for compulsory English courses must be focused on. The implementation of the Bologna Process started officially in 2005 for Yıldız Technical University. Regarding curricular design of compulsory English courses offered in Bachelor’s Degree, awareness about the Bologna Process should be facilitated. As a result of the changes or new implementations of the curricula of compulsory English courses in Yıldız Technical University, it cannot be said that there is noticeable awareness about the possible contribution of compulsory English courses to the realisation of the most important objectives (mobility and employability) of the Bologna Process. At this point, the need for definition of learning outcomes should be specifically underlined to give support to the abovementioned goals of the Process. Regarding the results obtained from Yıldız Technical University, it can be put forward

that the only part of the courses deliberately designed in rapport with the Bologna Process is the ECTS at Yıldız Technical University. It cannot be asserted that the entire course contents, objectives, and outcomes analysed so far at Yıldız Technical University have been intentionally designed to initiate and sustain the Bologna reforms. That is to say, the curriculum does not directly adhere to the curricular reforms of the Bologna Process. However, course outcomes which explain what a student is expected to learn at the end of a course should overlap the Bologna curriculum design reform. As the Bologna Process aims to help the higher education institutions and universities move away from “input – oriented” curriculum towards “output – oriented” curriculum design (Agten 8). It is apparent that the European educational paradigm is moving away from teaching to learning, and so from input – oriented (defined by what the teacher teaches) to output – oriented (defined by the skills and competences with which students will graduate). Such an output – oriented curriculum can be achieved with the definition of learning outcomes which is an important step in curriculum restructuring for a university on the way to implement principles of the Bologna Process. The definition and use of learning outcomes along with student competences as reference points in curriculum development have been the primary instruments in moving the EHEA forward in this direction. In the light of the student – centred and output – oriented guiding principles, an acceptable course plan description can be shaped with the inclusion of course content, level, prerequisites, objectives, teaching techniques – mentioning the source books used in the course - assessment and learning outcomes in a detailed way.

Another crucial point in terms of the analysis of the curriculum design is related to the shift from subject - based teaching to competence – based learning. This type of learning has emerged from the definition of learning outcomes and shortly mentioned. When the effects of the Bologna Process on the curriculum of compulsory English courses developed by Yıldız Technical University have been carefully examined by means of course training plans, it is evident that there is not a conscious attempt to apply a competence – based approach instead of subject based one. However, the department has made some changes in the course content to make the students active participants in the teaching/ learning process. Especially the “response writing”

activities supplied in the course plan applied after 2005 – 2006 academic years, include students' active participation in the class discussions. Although it is so early to judge all visible impacts of the Bologna Process on English language teaching/ learning especially which are related to the mobility of the students and employability of the bachelor graduates, it could be said that a lot have been achieved in the area of curriculum design by establishing a flexible basis to comply with the Bologna principles at Yıldız Technical University. As the issue of competence – based learning has been dealt with, competences which are recognized as descriptions of learning outcomes with respect to “the students' acquired knowledge and skills and/or attitudes” should also be touched upon (qtd in Adam Introduction 7). In terms of competence – based learning, there may be some challenges that instructors face as they are not used to designing lessons using this approach. In other words, the focal point of students' learning is not competence – based learning approach in the curriculum design of the courses offered by the School of Foreign Languages at Yıldız Technical University for the time being. Regarding the formation of course contents at Yıldız Technical University, the course objectives can call attention to the “valuable skills, tools, or content (nuts and bolts)” that enable a student to engage particular subject focusing on “content and skills important within the classroom or program; what the staff and faculty will do often termed the input in the course” (“How” 2) These course objectives can be seen in all course training plans both before and after the Bologna Process at Yıldız Technical University. However, there is no reference yet to learning outcomes which “represent overarching products of the course” explaining “higher level thinking skills that integrate the content and activities and can be observed as a behaviour, skill, or discrete useable knowledge upon completing the class” (“How” 3) As the intention is to define qualifications in terms of key concepts (workload, level, competencies, profile and most importantly learning outcomes) expressed in Chapter 2, the competences are expected to be applied properly to contribute to the understanding of what is expected by the students and instructors in the long run.

As for the evaluation of the curriculum design of compulsory English courses offered at Sakarya University, it is clear that Sakarya University is much more concerned with implementing the principles of the Bologna Process consciously. From

the findings obtained it can be concluded that there are now signs of its aspiration to become a university which helps its students become competent graduates in English use by implementing curricular restructuring emerging from the Process. A significant indicator for that is the European Language Prize that the Foreign Languages Department won in 2009. This prize is given to those application including “innovative and creative approaches in the education of Foreign Languages” (Sakarya Dep. of Foreign Languages). Together with this prize, the new implementations in the English language teaching/ learning have been noteworthy. In terms of the curriculum change, it should be comprehensive with a long term perspective to enhance English language teaching/ learning success appreciated by Europe. Therefore, Sakarya University launched a system, which is called EIS, to deal with curricular reform, as mentioned earlier. The attempts to develop a programme have built a focus on the development of competences defining learning outcomes. This is one of the most striking attempts of the Department of Foreign Languages to implement Bologna principles. The sources that examine the curricular reform have drawn attention to the fact that the Bologna Process gives importance to the definition of learning outcomes explicated in the evaluation part of Yıldız Technical University. In terms of compulsory English language courses, these learning outcomes correspond to knowledge and skills pointed out in European Language Portfolio. When the tools used in the formation of compulsory courses curriculum prepared and submitted by Sakarya University are viewed, it is understood that a version of European Language Portfolio (ELP) is in use at the University. On the other hand, European Language Portfolio is only referred in preparatory class at Yıldız Technical University. Parallel to its compulsory course content and objectives, Department of Foreign Languages at Sakarya University has predominantly preferred to teach Basic English with respect to B1 level of ELP after Preparatory Class instead of offering courses focusing on professional or business English courses like Yıldız Technical University does.

As stated, the ongoing Bologna Process built upon globalisation and integration of Europe aims to reshape the higher educational policy in various ways one of which is emphasized here with curriculum development. The lack of Business English courses can create several questions about facilitating mobility and employability, the most

important Bologna objectives and notions fostering globalisation and integration of Europe. Hence, significantly, the contribution of job-related language to realisation of above mentioned objectives of the Bologna Process is crucially significant as the Bologna Process is giving priority to a market – based perception of higher education. In this regard, the curriculum of compulsory English courses offered by Sakarya University to teach English language to its Bachelor Degree students do not consist solely of business - based - English course. Although it includes some activities in all language skills integrated into business related vocabulary, it is not possible to see a specifically designed course to develop professional English just to give background to the students as seen at Yıldız Technical University. However, there is another point which must be clarified that there have been some non-compulsory Professional English courses offered by the related departments' instructors, instead of the Department of Foreign Languages. This makes the analysis of Professional English course content plan difficult and not transparent because they are differently designed without taking any common elements or approaches into consideration. While these courses can cause better communication in business area, it may hinder transparency in the course contents in all departments considering the definition of learning outcomes. To enhance the quality of education and ensure course contents, teaching methods must be examined critically. Also in evaluating and restructuring the curriculum, the basic subject content of the established curriculum should be appropriate to apply it to all departments and can be designed as a compulsory English course. However, under these circumstances it is almost impossible to have control over all professional English courses offered throughout Sakarya University in terms of curriculum design.

To increase the focus on the overall curriculum design of compulsory English courses, it can be suggested to update course contents by restructuring curriculum and coordinating appropriate teaching methods for each compulsory course. Thus, the awareness about the implementation of the Bologna Process principles with reference to the curricular reform on compulsory English courses in Bachelor's Degree arising from qualifications frameworks can be increased. In general terms, it can be thought that considering all these, both Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University aspire to become more efficient in enhancing the quality of education. As a part of the Bologna



Process, the universities must look into the restructuring of curriculum design of compulsory English courses. Also, this subject should be a focus of attention in the Departments offering these courses to enhance transparency and cohesion among all departments. Otherwise, the students who are not linguistically able will have difficulty in their professional lives even though they are equipped with necessary qualifications of their own field of studies. In this respect, English language teaching/ learning can be thought as complementary in the Bologna Process. Therefore, the development of competent curriculum for compulsory English courses should be built on the long - term objectives of the Bologna Process which provide the industry with skilled graduates to contribute to the future challenges. Regarding this, it must be borne in mind that working in an international environment requires more than specialising in a technical area. From the employers' perspective, using English competently both in daily use and professional vocabulary are evident skills. For this reason, the objectives of curriculum development should be formulated to produce competent employees for the international working environment considering the ultimate goal of the Bologna Process to establish a higher education area serving for this purpose.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis has basically attempted to demonstrate how the implementation of the Bologna Process principles on the curricula of compulsory English courses offered for four – year Bachelor Degree students in Turkey has been continuing since the participation of Turkey in the Process. This has been carried out on the basis of two case studies in two Turkish universities, Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University. Along with the description and overall explanation of the Bologna Process and most importantly the components of qualifications concept and qualifications frameworks, firstly the background for the study has been set up. Thus, the claims put forward in the thesis about the impacts of the Bologna Process principles on the curricula design of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students in two Turkish Universities have been explored through the main focuses of the thesis.

Until Turkey joined the Process officially in Prague Summit in 2001, Bologna reforms had been initiated with the Bologna Declaration in 1999. Although Turkey's participation in the Bologna Process was formally declared in 2001, together with the studies in various areas envisaged being completed by the Process, the main focus of the thesis is confined to the issue of English language teaching/ learning in the context of the Bologna Process. At the moment, implementation of the Bologna Process reforms and principles is still a work in progress. However, it has been suggested in this research that English language teaching/ learning and changes in the curricula of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students are undeniably complementary parts of the whole attempts to establish a common higher education area which is the ultimate objective of the Process. To form the knowledge basis for the analyses of the compulsory English courses in two universities selected as case studies, each topic and aspect has been dealt with separately in relation to the Bologna Process in each chapter.

In the course of this thesis, the literature on the Bologna Process' main documents and its objectives have been examined in the first chapter. Then, in the same chapter, purposes and action lines emerging from the Process with specific reference to English language teaching have been outlined. This idea explained here has been

strengthened with the explanations which reveal the relations between languages and mobility /employability which are the most important aims of the Process. In addition, at the end of the first chapter, teaching English in Higher Education in Europe in the light of aims and objectives of the Bologna Process underlying the increase in use of English language throughout the years has been touched upon.

As one of the main focuses of the thesis is on the definition of qualifications, in the second chapter, qualifications, qualifications frameworks and the key concepts of qualifications have been overviewed. Particularly, the issue of English language qualifications definition has become a crucial point for the upcoming analysis of the curriculum design of English language courses in higher education. Together with three types of qualifications frameworks, which are European Overarching Qualifications Frameworks, the Overarching Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF – EHEA Framework), European Qualifications for Lifelong Learning Framework (EQF - LLL), National Qualifications Framework the significance of creating these frameworks have also been explicated. Finally, in the second chapter, language qualifications in Higher Education in Europe and language competences defined in Europe have been investigated for their potential definitions shedding light on the use of European Language Portfolio (ELP) and its implementation in English Language teaching programmes in three participant countries of the Bologna Process.

As for the third chapter of this thesis, an exceptional case on the implementation of Bologna principles on English language teaching in the Turkish Higher Education system has been dealt with. As a result of what has been explained, it is desired to attempt evaluate the changes in the curricula of English courses offered by two Turkish universities in conjunction with the analyses of these compulsory English courses. Starting with the overview of the Bologna Process implementation in the Turkish Higher Education System, the impact of the Process has been examined together with the issue of teaching English as a Foreign Language in the Turkish Higher Education. The process on the way to the creation of Turkish National Qualifications Framework regarding English courses offered in Turkish Universities has been investigated under the heading of Qualifications Frameworks and Recognition in the Bologna Process in

Turkey in Chapter 2. After the basic parameters explained, the section devoted for the analysis of changes and new implementations in the curricula of English courses at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University have been presented. Since these analyses form a basis to put forward the main claims of the study, case studies have been mentioned particularly and then evaluated taking the data obtained from the analyses into consideration.

Different phases of the construction of the Bologna Process which ultimately aims to establish a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) with its defined objectives have been introduced in the first chapter. The Bologna Process is a quite important education reform initiative of Europe which originates from rising importance of higher education in a globalised world where knowledge has become the core element of education. On the basis of emerging concepts such as ‘knowledge - driven economy’ and ‘knowledge – society’, the importance of higher education increased as a key factor to help students acquire necessary qualifications in their professional lives. In abstract terms, this ‘knowledge – driven economy’ resulted in the need of highly skilled labour workforce nurturing competitive business world and labour market changes. Hence, all steps taken at the European level to meet the demands of the labour market taking globalisation and institutionalisation into consideration and ultimately to create a higher education area were transformed into the Bologna Process with the contribution of all participating countries.

At the beginning, the progress about higher education was not explicitly stated on education as a policy domain in the founding treaties of the European Union. However, the importance of above mentioned need for highly skilled workforce to support effective operation of the common market was underscored in the interpretations of the treaties in the subsequent years. In that sense, the Bologna Process objectives were defined to serve for the main needs and demands of the labour market as well as social and political reasons. With the contextual background set in Chapter 1 concerning the Bologna Process, the most important action lines and purposes of the Process are also explained. Among these action lines, two overarching objectives of the Bologna Process, mobility and employability, have become touchstones for the progress

of this thesis. Therefore, among a number of key areas emphasized in the Process, these two objectives are claimed as the main reasons for need for English language teaching/ learning in the higher education especially for Bachelor Degree students.

With the “promotion of mobility”, one of the action lines of the Bologna Process, employability will also be developed. Mobility fosters academic and cultural interaction, cooperation and institutionalisation. Thus, mobility is seen as a potential hallmark of the European Higher Education Area. Underpinning the increasing importance of labour market and its reliance on developed competences and skills, it becomes an indispensable result that higher education is supposed to equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences. At Bachelor’s Degree in higher education, students are required to acquire these skills and competences they need for their professional lives. Thanks to the qualifications which the students acquire, higher education institutions can have a chance to establish close cooperation to maintain skilled workforce. While examining the importance of two overarching objectives of the Bologna Process, mobility and employability, correlation between English language teaching and mobility/ employability is vitally important to understand the argument of this thesis. They are closely interrelated concepts as leading principles of the Bologna Process that require the full implementation of the progress.

In terms of mobility, it can be assumed that its promotion is necessary to eliminate the barriers to the recognition of degrees all over Europe. There are also some supplementary issues which should be considered within the context of the Bologna Process such as establishment of credit systems (ECTS) and recognition. Most importantly to analyse English language teaching, promoting mobility across Europe can be achieved with the help of curriculum development. That is why; the problems arising from curriculum design can be an inhibiting factor for student and academic mobility. That is to say, mobility entails language skills and English as a foreign language teaching/ learning needs more attention than any other languages due to the fact that it is a kind of common language for academic world. The students must have language qualifications in order to gain access to materials and take part in conferences, academic presentations, and etc.

Besides aforementioned reasons, ‘promotion of employability’ is regarded as the second key goal of the Bologna Process. Considering labour market dynamics and changes in the light of globalisation and institutionalisation, the attempts to increase employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications have gained importance in higher education. Therefore, linguistic abilities and qualifications are also included in these bachelor qualifications. Depending on this, what is more about language qualifications is related to the demand for a linguistically able workforce and its contribution to knowledge – based economy. As the major role of English language teaching/ learning both in higher education process and after graduation has been underpinned, the promotion of mobility and employability can be intensified by strengthening of English language teaching/ learning in higher education regarding compulsory English courses curricula designed for four-year Bachelor Degree students. This idea has been underlined by the information provided in the section related to the topic on teaching English in higher education in the first Chapter. To comprehend the reason why specifically English language became so much important compared to any other foreign languages taught in higher education, it is necessary to figure out unchallenged nature of English language in education with respect to its use in scientific publications, conferences, lectures and researches. In attempting to develop a complete understanding of dominance of English in academic life as a ‘lingua franca’, this thesis has covered a large number of topics about English language teaching in relation to the Bologna Process. The contribution of this thesis is scattered over these topics drawing attention to the importance of determination of English language qualifications in higher education because this need for language qualifications has become more evident in Europe with the inception of the Bologna Process. That is to say, this ongoing university reform has been shaped by language politics with regard to wide use of English. According to the consequences obtained from explanations and information in Chapter 1, the focus of the thesis has been built on the need for reorganising the curricula of English language courses offered at Bachelor’s Degree in higher education. Thus, widespread use of English has inched open the door to understanding of noticeable existence of English in higher education and contributed to the implementation of the fundamental goals of the Bologna Process.

As viewed in Chapter 2, the close examinations of the concepts of qualifications developed in the course of the Bologna Process have been expanded by the study of developments of qualifications frameworks. As qualifications are one of the basic instruments in developing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), recognition of qualifications must be achieved through definition of qualifications based on knowledge, skills and competences. The need for definition of qualifications has been understood and accepted by most of the participating countries so that they could attain the objectives of the Process. Language qualifications defined for higher education in Europe have also attracted great attention with specific reference to the English language qualifications in higher education. Thus, the necessity of developing a qualifications system which requires all countries' academic recognition of qualifications has resulted in formulation of frameworks both at European and national levels. This issue, which also sheds light on the curriculum development, has been mentioned taking the components of qualifications with the key concepts into consideration in Chapter 2 to set a background for the case studies of the thesis.

Definition of qualifications frameworks through related terms employed to explain this topic has been overviewed and the key concepts of qualifications have been outlined in Chapter 2. These concepts are listed as 'levels', 'workload', 'quality', 'profile', and 'learning outcomes'. Among these five elements, the concept of learning outcomes has been frequently referred in most of the Bologna documents as they represent one of the most prominent building blocks of qualifications system by combining other four elements listed above. Not only the meaning of 'learning outcomes' but also the contribution to the curriculum development does increase the importance of this concept throughout this thesis. Indeed, 'learning outcomes' help learners define their learning process in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. That is to say, this concept is the most indispensable element of curriculum design therefore, working on them and understanding their role is considerably important for the analysis section of the thesis. As for the Qualifications Framework, it is regarded as a steppingstone in the full implementation of the Bologna Process principles and goals. The Qualifications Frameworks have appeared under two categories. First one is the European Overarching Qualifications Frameworks facilitating movement between

systems which include two types of frameworks, the Overarching Framework for the European Higher (QF – EHEA Framework) and European Qualifications for Lifelong Learning Framework (EQF - LLL). Second framework category is comprised of National Qualifications Frameworks which describe the qualifications within an education system. In the light of the explanations made in Chapter 2 about the qualifications frameworks, it has been underscored that all frameworks are interrelated. The structure of qualifications frameworks and the relations between the frameworks have been explained in an onion model comprising all of them. According to this model, EQF encompasses all the frameworks. Since national qualifications frameworks, which all participant countries of the European Higher Education Area have committed to developing by 2010, are seen more operational than the overarching qualifications frameworks. Working on the development of National Qualifications Frameworks supposed to comply with the Overarching Framework for the European Higher (QF – EHEA Framework) has been still continuing in most countries. The process of developing national qualifications frameworks to get a general idea about the national frameworks regarding their purposes, levels, types of qualifications has been outlined in three countries in this thesis; Ireland, Scotland and Australia. After having overall information about the creation of national qualifications frameworks, attention has been turned to language qualifications in higher education in Europe.

In the last part of second chapter, language qualifications have been overviewed. As suggested, determination of language qualifications gains importance when the demands of labour market for linguistically able workforce are considered. Besides, The European Union asserts that to “become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge – based economy in the world” ambitious goal put forward in Lisbon Process, modernisation of education systems within the Bologna Process is the most important step. Now that, language skills are so important within this perspective, language teaching/ learning and its qualifications which help Europeans develop professional qualifications for their future careers has been underlined as a key tool in the Bologna Process. While the overall aim of foreign language teaching has been associated with language diversity and multilingualism, the need for a common language (English) in higher education should not be ignored to accomplish both overarching objectives of the



Bologna Process explored in the same chapter in a detailed way. Those objectives related to promotion of mobility and employability requires strengthening of English language teaching/ learning in higher education through curricula changes in university. Seeing that English contributes to Business life and is helpful in academic life, the description of English language qualifications seek to set standards for English language teaching/ learning. It has been emphasized that compulsory English courses offered at universities for Bachelor Degree students specialising in several academic disciplines have key missions to help implementation of the Bologna reforms. In that sense, these compulsory English language courses should be designed taking the principles of the Bologna Process into consideration. For the attainment of this purpose, the definition of language qualifications has been realised through European Language Portfolio (ELP) derived from Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in a general sense. Thanks to ELP, mutual recognition of language qualifications can be enhanced. Therefore, the definition of English language qualifications with specific reference to European Language Portfolio (ELP) and Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is primarily important. These two concepts have been clarified at the end of Chapter 2. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) functions as a tool setting the standards for learning English along with the learning outcomes. Thus, mutual recognition of language qualifications and student mobility and employability in the long run can be facilitated by the CEFR. As for the ELP emerging from CEFR, it is used as an instrument designed for the students and teachers to see the progress of the students. In other words, ELP functions as an official document indicating language competences of the students and in this way it contributes to students' mobility across Europe. According to the ELP, all the students pursuing a Bachelor's Degree at European universities are expected to achieve B2 language proficiency level. The main focus of the language levels defined in the ELP is to facilitate mobility of the students and thus graduates can find more opportunities to shape their future careers. In this thesis, the determination of English language qualifications is beneficial for curriculum development as CEFR and ELP have the potential to be a kind of framework to design curricula and to define learning outcomes. Different versions of the ELP, which firstly prepared by the Council of Europe, have been piloted in some countries and a variety of ELPs have been developed. Moreover,

in Chapter 2, the findings obtained about the implementations of the ELPs in some countries have been outlined to make the picture more evident. Regarding the general conclusions drawn from the consequences presented in the reports, it is asserted that little is known about the applicability of ELPs in higher education compared to the use of ELPs in primary and secondary education although some increases in the use of ELPS in higher education can be noticed.

After the examination of ELP implementations in different countries including Turkey at the end of the second chapter, taking the information obtained from the reports, the analysis of the Bologna Process reforms on English language teaching/learning in the Turkish Higher Education takes place in the third chapter. While Europe has made a number of reforms to realise the aim of structuring of higher education establishing a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Turkey has not remained unresponsive to the changes occurring in the area of higher education. The Turkish Higher Education has undergone great changes before and after Turkey became a participant country of the Bologna Process in 2001. In the first part of Chapter 3, the history of the Turkish Higher Education regarding its turning points before the Bologna Process has been expressed. The changes and new implementations in various areas of higher education in Turkey after the Bologna Process have been evaluated and submitted in the stocktaking reports. As alleged in some documents, Turkey has made significant progress concerning some topics such as Quality Assurance as suggested in the scorecards of Turkey in the stocktaking reports. Regarding the development of Turkish National Qualifications Framework, there have also been evaluations in the last reports. In this thesis, it is stated based on the reports' results that the creation of Turkish National Qualifications Framework has attracted more attention compared to the previous years.

Along with the issue of creating a national qualifications framework, teaching English as a foreign language in higher education in Turkey is touched upon in the same chapter. The emphasis on the foreign language skills and competences has attached importance in Turkey as well. English language education in Turkey has been examined concerning driving reasons behind the determination of English language teaching

policy. In accordance with the relevant regulation for language education, compulsory English courses designed for Bachelor Degree students are scheduled and offered in each university autonomously in Turkey. Therefore, as mentioned earlier, the curriculum development in each university in Turkey should be considered and assessed independently. For the purpose of this thesis, the creation of Turkish National Qualifications Framework and its progress must be taken into consideration to be able to analyse the curricula of compulsory English language courses regarding determined competences and skills for language qualifications.

The steps to create the Turkish National Qualifications Framework have been revealed through the medium of interim reports of NQF. As envisaged in the last interim report, final implementation of the NQF will be completed in 2010 and institutional implementation in 2012. If the current situation of the Turkish NQF is considered, the process can be examined with the help of the defined individual and professional competences. The NQF provides an infrastructure for the curriculum development together with learning outcomes defined for each course offered for Bachelor Degree students at universities, so in Turkish NQF, there have been several attempts to define learning outcomes for all the courses in different disciplines. In the meantime, the language qualifications integrated into the NQF attracted attention. Hence, European Language Portfolio (ELP) has been taken as fundamental for defining foreign language competences in the National Qualifications Framework addressing Bachelor's Degree in Turkish Higher Education. Taking B1 level language proficiency as a standard for a Bachelor Degree student, the graduates are expected to deal with the knowledge that their field of studies require in the future. Thus, the standard level for language competence has been accepted and revealed in the NQF. In consequence, European Language Portfolio has become a tool to denote learning outcomes and design curricula of English courses offered in Bachelor's Degree Level.

Today, in the light of Turkish National Qualifications Framework, the changes and new implementations seen in the curricula of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students at universities in Turkey after the Bologna Process have been overviewed in the last chapter. With regard to the use of ELP in

Turkish universities, it can be comfortably said that ELP has been mostly used in preparatory programmes of the universities. As summarised in Chapter 3, the role of the responsible department of a university in giving a shape to its English language teaching/ learning education through its compulsory English courses to better meet the demands of labour market is undeniable. That is why, the changes occurred in curriculum design of the compulsory English courses at Bachelor' s Degree Level in two Turkish universities (Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University) have been analysed as case studies. To illustrate the effects of the implementation of the Bologna principles, if exist, on the curricula of compulsory English courses, the components of the curricula such as course objectives, contents, credits, their relations with the programme outputs have been included in the analyses parts. On the way to realising the objectives of the Bologna Process, the role of English language teaching in higher education in Turkey has been examined taking the curricula of compulsory English courses into consideration.

The main findings of the case studies have also been summarised and their implications for English language teaching/ learning process in higher education within the Bologna Process in the third chapter. It is thereby aimed at enriching the understanding of the Bologna Process principles' implementation in compulsory English courses in the Turkish Higher Education. Firstly, fundamental changes in the curricula of compulsory English courses occurring since the implementation process of the Bologna started at Yıldız Technical University have been underlined evaluating the content and objectives of the courses. A brief explanation about Yıldız Technical University and its English language teaching policy concerning the compulsory English courses (9051031 Advanced English I, 9051032 Advanced English II, 9052031 Advanced English III/ Reading and Speaking in English, 9053032 Advanced English IV/ Business English) structured by the Modern Languages Department at the university has been made. In the following part, to obtain the data about the changes or remained parts of the curricula of above mentioned courses, the course training programme forms (syllabi) pertaining to different years have been used as source for the analysis part. After all forms have been examined regarding its elements included in the forms, the consequences have been evaluated considering to what extent Bologna Process

principles have been implemented on language teaching. Building upon compulsory English courses curricula changes or the parts remaining the same at Yıldız Technical University, in the third chapter, curriculum analysis of the compulsory courses have been highlighted using the data. As a result of the analysis of the curriculum development, the implementation of the Bologna reforms in curriculum design is overviewed in the last part of the case study carried out at Yıldız Technical University. The specific focus is put on Business English courses in terms of its objectives and its possible contribution to the students' professional life after graduation. Considering the importance of acquiring sufficient language qualifications for graduates, that course can be seen as an opportunity to meet the labour market needs nurturing mobility and employability. As it has been claimed in the thesis that by restructuring the curricula to teach job related language to the students, English language teaching can ensure the relevance of the curriculum to the employment market.

In the second curriculum analysis part in the third Chapter, the impact of the Bologna Process implementation on compulsory English courses offered at Sakarya University has been addressed. Before analysing to what extent Bologna reforms impacts on the curricula is revealed through the data, some information about Sakarya University and how Department of Foreign Languages has given shape to English language teaching policy has been presented. Further information is included in the analysis of the curriculum design of the compulsory English courses at Bachelor's Degree (English I and English II). Drawing upon the case study findings, this part outlines the most prominent changes and revisions in the curriculum development mostly based on the definition of learning outcomes and the use of ELP explicitly. These results have indicated that Department of Foreign Languages at Sakarya University aims to shape its curriculum change aligned with the principles of the Bologna Process. It has been suggested that the presence of learning outcomes in the course plan submitted by the Department of Foreign Languages is a sign of awareness about the concepts in curriculum change within the Bologna Process with reference to defining language qualifications.

After identifying the current situation of compulsory English courses curricula both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University, general evaluation of the data about the impact of implementation of the Bologna Process principles on Compulsory English courses offered at Turkish Universities. As already underscored in this thesis, the development of English language skills for Bachelor Degree students for their professional lives has been further explained within the Bologna Process perspective. With the English language course curriculum prepared to get the students acquired job-related language, this can stimulate the mobility and employability of Turkish students in the European Higher Education Area. Regarding the quality of English language teaching/ learning, along with its basic language courses, Yıldız Technical University offers Business English course to form a basis for the students to acquire job-related terminology. Through a well – developed and functional curriculum, this course may ensure the relevance of the curriculum to the labour market so that it can meet the demands of the market. Furthermore, in the thesis, the need for competence - based curriculum deriving from the definition of learning outcomes in the National Qualifications Framework has also been associated with demands and needs of the knowledge – driven market. English language competency is one of the most important qualifications which should be acquired by the university graduates so the curriculum design must include learning outcomes providing a basis for competence – based learning.

In the evaluation part, the tools used in the formation of English language courses both at Yıldız Technical University and Sakarya University have been mentioned in the light of language qualifications expected to be defined and normally the assessments of the cases both differ and show similarities depending on the issues dealt with. When this part in Chapter 3 is viewed closely, the idea of removing obstacles to mobility and employability has been focused on restructuring of the curriculum in the process of establishing European Higher Education Area. Even if it is so early to evaluate the visible results of the Bologna Process reform in compulsory English courses at all Turkish universities, the adaptation process can be aligned with the Bologna Process principles. In terms of curriculum development, it must be seen as a

long term perspective to enhance English language teaching/ learning within the Bologna Process serving for the main objectives of the Bologna Process.

### **Limitations of the Study and Suggestions**

As with any study, this study has been framed by some boundaries. First, given the multiplicity of the Bologna Process objectives, it is not possible to explore the implementation of all action lines in Turkey within the framework of this thesis. Therefore, the focus of the study has been built on the implementation of the most significant objectives of the Bologna Process associated with English language teaching at Bachelor's Degree level. These objectives cover student/ academic mobility and graduate employability. Curricular design in relation to the academic mobility and graduate employability has been used as a tool for evaluation of the current situation of compulsory English language teaching/ learning at Bachelor's Degree in higher education in Turkey.

Another possible limitation of this study is that the case studies carried out in two universities may not be enough to come to a definite conclusion about the implementation of the Bologna Process principles on compulsory English courses offered in higher education in Turkey. Bearing this in mind, it has been attempted to draw general conclusions from the consequences of analyses concerning English language teaching approaches at Turkish universities. Finally, Turkey has not fully completed the creation of its National Qualifications Framework although a lot have been achieved. This is why, language qualifications and learning outcomes, which are undeniably important for restructuring of the curricula, have not been defined in each university independently to design curricula of the compulsory English courses accordingly. For this reason, awareness about the Bologna Process and the relations between the objectives of the Process and English language teaching/learning at Bachelor's Degree education at Turkish universities. As the formation of Turkish National Qualifications Framework continues, still more studies will be required on

- the significance and impact of the definition of learning outcomes arising from the concept of qualifications for all courses as well as English language courses.
- the extent to which these language qualifications defined for the Bachelor graduates of Turkish universities help them meet the demand of the labour market and the possible implications of the shift from teacher - centred learning to student – centred learning.
- subsequent English language teaching policy changes in Turkish universities within the framework of the Bologna Process.

Depending on the argument that unfolds throughout this thesis and claims that the impacts of the Bologna Process principles on the curricula design of compulsory English courses offered for four-year Bachelor Degree students at two Turkish Universities are supposed to result in some changes and new implementations, it must be underlined that this represents the development of the author’s own understanding. Only after further researches have been completed will the impacts of implementation of the Bologna Process reforms on English language teaching/ learning at Bachelor’s Degree at Turkish Universities be understood clearly.

Regarding these changes and new implementations, it is not possible to assert that there is a fully - conscious process of curriculum development for compulsory English courses at Bachelor’s Degree Level in all Turkish universities within the context of the Bologna Process. However, it is also suggested in this thesis that if the curricula of compulsory English courses are designed according to the Bologna Process principles with respect to language qualifications, English language teaching in higher education will contribute to the aim of the European Union to become “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” as put forward in the Lisbon Strategy.



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