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DEVELOPING THE READING SKILL OBJECTIVES IN ACCORDANCE
WITH COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK

THESIS BY

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We **certify** that this thesis under the title of **"DEVELOPING THE READING SKILL OBJECTIVES IN ACORDANCE WITH COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK"** is satisfactory for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts** in the Department of **English Language Teaching.**

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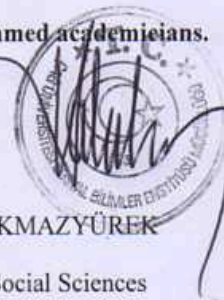
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ÖZET

OKUMA BECERİSİ HEDEFLERİNİN AVRUPA ORTAK DİL REFERANSLARI'NA UYUMLU OLARAK GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

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Bu çalışma, Avrupa Konseyi'nin dil eğitiminin standart bir düzeyde sürdürülebilmesi için yayımlamış olduğu *Avrupa Ortak Dil Referansları: öğrenme, öğretme, ölçme* (AODR) kapsamında yapılmıştır. AODR, Avrupa Birliği'ne üye ülkeler tarafından dil öğrenimi açısından ortak bir çerçeve olarak benimsenmiş ve bu doğrultuda dil okullarına ders müfredatları, ders hedefleri, ölçme ve değerlendirme kriterlerini belirlemede öncü kaynak olarak benimsenmiştir.

Çalışmada, Zirve Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nun İngilizce Hazırlık Programı'ndaki Okuma dersinin mevcut Ders hedeflerinin AODR çerçevesinde yer alan açıklayıcı ve tanımlayıcı ölçekler kapsamında ders okutmanları tarafından iki aşamalı değerlendirilmesi ve elde edilen verileri odak grup görüşmesi ile yeniden analiz edip geliştirilecek noktaların rapor edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Ders hedefleri; dersin planlaması, nasıl ve hangi yöntemle işleneceği ve öğrenim ihtiyaçlarının belirlenmesi açısından eğitim programlarında önemli bir rol oynamaktadır.

Zirve Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Programı öğrencileri, başlangıç seviyesinden orta seviyenin bir üstü olan Upper-intermediate seviyesine kadar A, B, C, ve D olmak üzere toplamda dört yeterlik seviyesini tamamlamaları gerekmektedir. İlk aşamada, Okuma dersi veren okutmanlara önceden hazırlanmış sorular eşliğinde röportaj yapılmıştır. İkinci aşamada ise, aynı okutman grubu tarafından dört farklı kontrol listesi, ders hedeflerini AODR'nin açıklayıcı ve tanımlayıcı ölçekleri ile karşılaştırılabilmesi için kullanılmıştır. Bu aşamada okutmanlar, iki listedeki uyumluluk oranını gösteren kontrol listesindeki sütunları işaretlemişlerdir. Birinci ve ikinci uygulamadan elde

edilen veriler kalitatif araştırma yöntemleri gözetilerek değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular ise, ders okutmanları tarafından çoğunlukla değinilen kısımların kategorize edilmesini sağlayan içerik analizi yöntemi kapsamında açıklanmıştır. Çalışmanın son aşamasında da ilk iki uygulamadan elde edilen kategorize edilmiş veriler odak grup tarafından tartışılmış ve grubun hedeflerin geliştirilmesine yönelik önerileri liste halinde sunulmuştur. Önerielre gelince, ders hedeflerinin listesi pratik kullanımlar konusunda detaylı ve daha açık tanımlamaları da içerecek şekilde yenilenmelidir. Buna istinaden, ders hedefleri günlük yaşamın otantik koşullarına da yönelik olamalıdır. Son olarak da, hedefler listesi, hem akademik hem de sosyal durumları karşılayacak iletişimsel eylem fiillerini içermelidir.

ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING THE READING SKILL OBJECTIVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK

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This study was conducted considering *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) which was published by Council of Europe in order to enable the language education to run in the standardized conditions. CEFR was adopted by the member countries of the European Union as a leading source through which the language programs set their curriculum studies, course objectives, and criteria for testing and evaluation.

In the study, it was aimed that the course instructors could evaluate the current objectives of Reading course at English Preparatory Program in The School of Foreign Languages at Zirve University in accordance with the illustrative descriptor scales of CEFR in two different steps, the data obtained from two implementations could be reanalyzed within the focus group discussions and the recommendations of the focus group could be reported in the end. The course objectives play a significant role for education programs in planning the course, how it is run, which methods are used and determining the needs of learning.

The students at Zirve University English Preparatory Program are supposed to complete four levels of proficiency which are listed from elementary level to upper-intermediate level: A, B, C, and D. In the first stage, the Reading course instructors were interviewed about the course objectives through the questions prepared before. In the second stage, four different checklists were used by the same group of instructors so that

they could compare the course objectives with the illustrative descriptor scales of CEFR. In this stage, the instructors marked four different columns of the checklist showing the according rate of the two lists. The data obtained from the first and second implementations were examined in consideration of qualitative research principles. Those findings were explained by applying the method of content analysis, which provides categorizing mostly stressed parts by the course instructors. In the last stage of the study, the categorized data obtained from the two implementations were discussed by the focus group. The group's recommendations over developing the course objectives were presented in the end. As to the recommendations, the list of the objectives should be updated with clearer descriptions, which give details on practical uses. Also, they should address the usages of every-day-life with authentic variations. Finally, the list needs to contain more communicative action verbs, which define both academic and social confrontations.

ABBREVIATIONS

ALTE	:	Association of Language Testing in Europe
AODR	:	*Avrupa Ortak Dil Referansları*
CEF	:	Common European Framework
CEFR	:	*The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*
CoE	:	Council of Europe
CPE	:	Cambridge Proficiency Exam
DIALANG	:	Diagnostic Language Testing
EFL	:	English as a Foreign Language
ELP	:	English Language Portfolio
EU	:	European Union
RQ1	:	Research Question 1
RQ2	:	Research Question 2
RQ3	:	Research Question 3
ZUEPP	:	Zirve University English Preparatory Program

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study. Firstly, the background of the study takes part in the beginning. Then the statement of the problem and purpose of the study follow the first part. After that, the research questions determined to conduct this study follow them. Finally, operational definitions are listed respectively.

1.1. Background of the Study

Language learning and teaching have become a turning point for providing common identity in the European countries in recent years. The studies in this field have been considered as the steps that are taken to make the different communities interact easily and communicate with each other more than before. Standardization and a guideline have been called for a new framework in order to increase attention for these studies. The Council of Europe (CoE) released significant sources for the users in that they could be associated with the expected competences, proficiency levels and other requirements for language programs. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (Council of Europe, 2001), and The European Language Portfolio have brought some standards for the description of language skills at certain common language levels, also called proficiency levels. Actually the former one has been published as a reference to the latter one by the Council of Europe.

It was stressed, during a meeting of the council (CoE, 2008), that the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment (*CEFR) presents a descriptive scheme of language use and competence in addition to the scales for the parameters. Moreover, the document contains some certain standards on curriculum design, methodological implementations for language learning and teaching and criteria for testing and assessment, too. The learner is knowingly and intentionally involved in the process of learning and teaching what is going on. Syllabus, curriculum, guidelines, textbooks and training programs are proposed to be organized considering the framework provided by the CEFR.

Six ascending levels of proficiency which are the main components of the document, are supposed to help the users characterize their progress in the learning

process. These inform the practitioners on global proficiency and the specific communicative competences expected by the stakeholders. The bank of the scales can be rearranged and updated according to the needs of the learners. The document is aimed to promote coherence and transparency all around the European education foundations.

In the document, action-oriented approach was adopted in order to determine the limitations on what the learners have to do. This approach enables the user of the document to realize the requirements of being a proficient one who is able to achieve essential communication. The role of action-oriented approach in curriculum design is also to provide a rationale for the different uses of language by leading up to plurilingual education which stands for a lifelong expansion of the individual's linguistic competences together with overall communicative ones.

As a main point of the study, there should be contact with curriculum development through which a skill from Zirve University English Preparatory Program (ZUEPP) is worked out in terms of whether its used objectives correspond the illustrative descriptors of the CEFR or not. As to the methodological stage, a qualitative analysis is aimed to be conducted. Worthen (1990) draws attention to the need for qualitative methods applied by the professionals (p. 43). In this study, the analysis by the practitioners is aimed to be carried out considering the framework the CEFR provided for the users.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Zirve University principally adopted a foreign language-based education system for all the departments it contains. Therefore, the importance of internationally accepted proficiency has triggered a language preparatory program whose graduates will be able to have required competences at some certain standards. The skill coordinators, the academic coordinators and the administration staff from the ZUEPP have been working on the curriculum which is both special to Zirve University's requirements on language proficiency and in correspondence with the international standards and needs. The curriculum design collectively needs integration among the applied skills at the program since the system, which is run at ZUEPP, is skill-based. The program is divided into four terms each of which takes eight weeks. As the generalized purpose by the program designers, providing an international proficiency moves to the forefront.

Bologna Process addresses the academic implementations at certain standards for the Institutions of Higher Education around Europe. Considering the expected unity in language proficiency and competences, the CEFR can be an inevitable tool to employ as a route for the language program. It is necessary to evaluate the current system's components within the base of a certain standards especially in the field of the established objectives set in the syllabuses.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to develop the Reading skill's objectives in accordance with the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR. As the sub-aims, it is intended to ascertain the course instructors' assumptions on the present objectives and provide making the items evaluated by the course instructors. During the process of dealing with the sub-aims, the identification of the parts from the objective lists, which need to be developed, must be quite required. The teaching and learning process start with establishing certain aims and objectives and finishes with a validated and reliable system of assessment. In fact, what the sub-aims result in is expected be directly effectual in achieving the ultimate one. Namely, the present objectives of the reading course are aimed to be developed considering the CEFR standards and the course instructors' personal experiences and opinions.

The first sub-aim is attained through a survey in which the course instructors are interviewed on the present objectives. The data is going to be used in order to categorize the characteristics of the present ones. As to the second one, the course instructors are supposed to match the present objectives with the illustrative descriptive scales from the CEFR. The obtained data will be used to categorize the differences between the two lists.

The data received from the discussions and evaluations help the researcher categorize the certain parts of the objective lists in terms of analyzing their contents. After that, recommendations on the additional parts to the lists are reported.

1.4. Research Questions

The researcher tries to answer the following questions in this study.

1. What do the Reading course instructors at ZUEPP think about the present objectives?

2. Are the Reading course objectives at ZUEEP in accord with the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR?

3. How can the Reading Objectives at ZUEPP be developed in accord with the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR?

1.5. Operational Definitions

action-oriented approach: general view of language pedagogy with a focal point around various tasks that represent real-life situations one is likely to encounter in his/her daily life

Basic User: a blanket term used to describe lower level language learners including those at the A1 and A2 levels at which students have limited proficiency

can-do statements: the expressions which tell their users what one can do in terms of a specific skill or sub-division of it at a given level like A1,A2,B2 etc.

***Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR):** a 260-page document of descriptive nature that serves as a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at various stages of learning and for assessing outcomes in an internationally comparable manner

Common Reference Levels: the levels of proficiency required by existing standars, tests and examinations and appropriate to the organization of language learning and the public recognition of achievement in order to facilitate comparisons between different systems of qualifications. The Council of Europe has decided upon six common reference levels : A1,A2,B1,B2,C1 and C2

DIALANG (Diagnostic Language Testing): the first major language assessment project based on the CEF, which is widely recognized throughout Europe in language pedagogy

European Language Portfolio (ELP) : a language teaching and learning project proposed by Common European Framework for the citizens of the European

Council. It has three obligatory components: language passport, language biography and the dossier.

global scale: those assessment statements solely focusing on overall proficiency for a given level

independent user: a language learner with moderate proficiency at B1 and B2 levels of the CEF.

interaction: communication that entails participation by both sides taking turns to express themselves

plurilingualism: an individual's ability to use several languages without considering any of them as a lingua franca for the EU.

proficient user: a blanket term used to describe language learners at the highest levels including C1 and C2.

syllabus: a detailed document which lists all the areas covered in a particular program of study, and the order in which content is presented.

1.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher dealt with the main topic of the study. Respectively, an introduction part was given and the background of the study was mentioned. Also, statement of the problem and the purpose of the study followed them.

CHAPTER II

2. LITARATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In the chapter two of the study, the researcher gives information on the Council of Europe (CoE) and Emerging of Common European Framework as a standardization in language education. After the steps of the foundation, CoE, the contents of it are introduced including plurilingualism and the common levels determined by the CoE's committee. Then the researcher focuses on the global scale included in the document by relating Zirve University Preparatory Program's proficiency levels to those of the scale. Finally, the curriculum, syllabus and objectives are briefly mentioned.

2.2. Council of Europe and Emerging of Common European Framework

The Council of Europe, founded on 5 May 1949, aims to address entire European continent in the development of human rights, democratic principles and protection of individuals. It is interested in such vital topics as democracy, legalization, respect for basic values and human rights. It deals with civilizing the societies associated with European unity and contributing to them in economic growth and social cohesion. Additionally, the council struggles with the problems including terrorism, organized crimes, corruption, violence against children and women. The main frames of the organization are encouraging pluralist democracy and the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity and bringing common solutions to the certain confrontations. In education, it focuses on building a knowledge-based society, so it supports educational attempts for access to education for all young people across Europe and increase its quality and unity. The educational framework of the CoE underlines the recognition of diplomas and qualifications all around Europe as one of the standards raising co-operation. Intercultural structure in education drew the council's attention to find ways to provide a unity so that all the students equally have chance to make use of exchanging programs in different countries and educators can enhance their programs and shape their systems by providing fair opportunities for all the students. To intensify

the effectiveness of the declarations, it is required to establish a well-organized coordination among educational foundations in the member states (http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=nosObjectifs&l=en).

Stabilizing the educational programs of language has been achieved by means of the publication of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), which is seen as the core source for language education in terms of structuring unity in learners' proficiency. CoE accredited CEFR as the special guideline for this proficiency, which may trigger intercultural adaptations and terminate the sense of otherness thanks to the same reference document.

The Committee outlined the principles to be underlined by the user of the document, CEFR (CoE, 2008, p. 1):

> 1. The CEFR is purely descriptive – not prescriptive, nor normative;
>
> 2. The CEFR is language neutral – it needs to be applied and interpreted appropriately with regard to each specific language;
>
> 3. The CEFR is context neutral – it needs to be applied and interpreted with regard to each specific educational context in accordance with the needs and priorities specific to that context;
>
> 4. The CEFR attempts to be comprehensive, in that no aspects of language knowledge, skills and use are deliberately left out of consideration. It cannot, of course, claim to be exhaustive leaving no room for further elaboration and development, which are to be welcomed;
>
> 5. The CEFR offers a common language and point of reference as a basis for stakeholders to reflect upon and critically analyze their existing practice and to allow them to better "situate their efforts" in relation to one another;
>
> 6. The use of the CEFR should contribute to increased transparency of processes and procedures, improved quality of provision and comparability of outcomes;

7. The use of the CEFR should contribute to the promotion of the basic educational values for which the Council of Europe stands, such as social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, active democratic citizenship, language diversity, plurilingualism, learner autonomy and lifelong learning.

2.3. The Contents of Common European Framework

A preface, notes for the user, and a synopsis exist in the first part of the CEFR (CoE, 2001). Aims and objectives are defined in the first chapter as well as the function of Council of Europe's language principles. Why we need the CEFR is explained in the context of plurilingualism, which draws attention to the governmental responsibilities for unity in language standardization and pluriculturalism which refers to common cultural values. In the same chapter it is highlighted that comprehensiveness, transparency and coherence are the main criteria in the main structure of the CEFR. Also 'action oriented' approach is outlined together with general competences, language activities, domains, language learning and assessment. In the third chapter, common reference levels are introduced. As to the fourth chapter, learner's 'can do' statements in each level and using language in a communicative way are discussed for all the skills and listed in detail. Chapter five is related to the competences of the learners and communicative abilities. In the sixth chapter, some methodological choices with suggested and acquired improvements for the learners are evaluated. Chapter seven underlines the tasks in language learning. In chapter eight, the main focus is linguistic diversification and the curriculum. The last chapter is about assessment clarifying validity, reliability and feasibility to determine the proficiency of the language user (CoE, 2001).

The elaboration of some documental tools such as European Language Portfolio has had great influence on the CEFR's assessment principles. Self-assessment is especially intended in European Language Portfolio to help learners follow their owns steps in the process of language learning. Additionally, international mobility is another goal of this document. Apart from this common portfolio model, there are some manuals formed by CoE to guide the users of the CEFR to understand and follow it up.

2.4. Importance of Common European Framework

Boldizsar (2007) signifies that the document, *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, and assessment*, is a keystone in applied linguistic and pedagogical implementations, all of which contributed to the structure and scope of it. The specialists from different states including CoE members approached to its formation as a generalized and scientifically constructed policy in language education. This document has flourished the field by means of some revised drafts.

The importance of mobility, effective international communication together with respect for identity and cultural diversity and more focused personal engagement in relations calls for a new trend in teaching and learning language around Europe. This need also results from the tendency to promote and facilitate the language learning process as a life-long task from the beginning of education to the adult ages. In this respect, Common European Framework of reference for language could be a milestone in promoting co-operation and unity among educational foundations in different countries in addition to building a common sense of realization in practicing language teaching strategies (CoE, 2001, p. 5-6).

John Trim (2011) points out that CEFR underlines communication, coordination and mutual focus on the work among those who involved in a language program. To check its reliability about certification, program designers or teachers should focus on the way the document approaches the points of curricular guidelines that contain directive questions on learners' communicative competences to avoid dogmatic rules.

Program makers employ CEFR as a key source in planning a syllabus's content, and different assumptions related to each category from the early stages of education to higher one and general objectives in order to provide the standardization in the European countries. This standardization is also aimed to organize in assessment criteria through which learners can be associated with the current systems of examination. In other words, a mutual certification focuses on learners' needs and improvement by encouraging them to obtain self-directed learning, which leads up to self-awareness and self-assessment. All CEFR aims and focuses include:

(1) Providing transparency

(2) Increasing international co-operation in language learning

(3) Common awareness of objective criteria

(4) European mobility via standardization

(5) Interculturality as a requirement

(6) Promoting individual sense on the way to communication among different social groups

(7) Importance of personal identity for intercultural relations and terminating the sense of otherness

(8) Arising plurilingualism

To sum sup, CEFR deals with standardization in the designation of syllabuses, course books, examination, and curriculum principles around Europe so that learners can adapt to use certain language skills as completely as they comprehend it for communication. Additionally, cultural context is aimed to enhance the acquisition among learners. This context refers to the structure of the language, which is focused. Variety in educational systems triggers some kinds of communication problems. Therefore, CEFR could be a way of bringing standardization for course designers, teachers or administrators whose main aim is to coordinate the learning and teaching system by meeting learners' needs (CoE, 2001, p.1).

When it comes to the general principles of CEFR, some issues such as employing the rich heritage of diversity in languages and cultures as advantage for a mutual communication, interaction via common principles and exchanging cultural values as a step to provide European mobility and terminate discrimination as well as promoting European convergence are basic ones drawing attention to the concept of umbrella which stands over European values and culture (CoE, 2001, p.2).

According to North (2007, p.3), one of the main purposes of the CEFR is to push the practitioners in language education environment to employ what they acquire with realization from their own learning needs and activating related objectives. The constitution of a common metalanguage covers language programs, linguistic structures, which can be used for the categorization of objectives and language levels. It is aimed to provide this process by means of the CEFR. On the other hand, it is like a common route of the reference points related to the objectives formed by Council of Europe's language projects for almost 40 years.

When it comes to functional characteristics of the CEFR, it brings to the language learning and determining objectives or definitions of them with comprehensive, transparent and coherent perspectives. Its comprehensive characteristic

enables learners to describe the objectives as easily as they can since it tries to cite all the possible different versions of language knowledge. On the other hand, it specifies the leaner proficiency from the basic user of language to the proficient by emphasizing on the reference points in a detailed calibration. Its comprehensive contribution to the learning process also brings about a piece of communicative competence, which differs from linguistic dimensions. Its coherent side can be considered as usefulness in describing all the components of learning process from the beginning to the end. Providing coherence means many positive outcomes in this process. For example, learners, teachers, and institutions are aimed to identify the needs, determine the objectives, define the content, select or create the material, set up the new programs, constitute the teaching and learning methods, clarify the criteria for evaluation, testing and assessment. Besides these characteristics, CEFR cannot be limited to a single uniformed system, but it is placed in a flexible system in which united adaptations exist. Furthermore, it is supposed to be multi-purpose by pointing almost all the aims in different positions, dynamic in the constant development of actions, user-friendly in terms of understandability and non-dogmatic by covering all practical or theoretical approaches (CoE, 2001, p.7-8).

North (2007) also draws attention to the document, CEFR, as a mixture of different studies in the field. As the main aim, a mental framework was adopted to determine the main criteria people should follow in language education. Actually, it should not be seen as a limitation but a set of all the answers for the questions in the field. Due to the fact that even local organizations need to facilitate required learning atmosphere or system, it comes to the forefront as a guidance that draws a route for communication, networking and reflection in addition to its usability and usefulness in terms of meeting contextual needs. That it has flexibility leads to well-organized categories, levels and descriptors. Thanks to this system, program organizers can divide, summarize, shorten, adapt, adopt, evaluate, reorganize and form their own schemes considering the needs (p.3).

2.5. Plurilingualism

Council of Europe identified the Pluringualism as a key educational goal and one of the declarations in 1998, the Committee stressed pluringualism with the words below:

Promote widespread plurilingualism . . ……….. by encouraging all Europeans to achieve a degree of communicative ability in a number of languages;...by diversifying the languages on offer and setting objectives suitable to each language; [... and] by encouraging teaching programmes at all levels that use a flexible approach (as cited in Little,2006, p.176).

The Council also considered this approach as learning and teaching instrument that enables the learners to communicate in different languages without mastering these languages but with an understanding of cooperation among the European Countries. The main point is that the member countries should first follow the individual needs, and then promote the diversified approaches by employing the former ones. Plurilingualism as a movement gives rise to three important results. Firstly, the regional and minority languages have gained a more immense field of implementation, which fastened their volume of effect in different fields. Therefore, it has brought an understanding for an awareness of the dimensional heritage by which the whole of Europe can be represented (Little, 2006, 176). The second development is that plurilingulaism has lead to the mobility among the population formed by different groups. Many different divisions resulting from migrations and homogenous societies have adopted plurilingual independence to maintain their education. Thirdly, increasing English dominance has come up with plurilingual discussions as a subsequent solution for international communication. That is why, English has been accepted as *de facto* lingua franca in this area in which social, political and cultural interactivity are also included. The sense of common European identity has been tried to be released through Plurilingualism putting the similar instructions, ingredients and principles of the spoken languages from different regions together.

Beacco and Byram (2003) claims the practical use of language depends on the field for which it is aimed. Educational differences refer to the distinctions in linguistic ideologies. For example, reflection of modernity, transmission of science, marketing values and its internal characteristics, and other innumerable areas of utilization are effective to set the different linguistic ideologies. The linguistic variety accompanies the external factors relating the functions to the identified practices to be performed. Nevertheless, the problem in standardization made the collective identity complex in terms of the educational systems around Europe. The need of a pluralistic perspective has been released as a result of the debates on this standardization among the Council

members. An educational philosophy should keep up with the gap in communication and the concept of 'otherness' that is a barrier in providing international communication. ''*All languages for all*'' (2003,p.29) is a great slogan to take the first step to eliminate the barriers and communication gaps. The focused way here is to run plurilingual awareness in education domains in different nations so that they can adapt linguistic tolerance (p. 24-28).

What Plurulingualism is aimed to contribute to educational systems is (CoE, 2001, p. 34-35):

a) development of an awareness of the cultural complexity

b) cultural competence and identification over linguistic distinctions

c) intercultural competence to interpret mutual understanding of different groups

d) build a multilingual environment

e) increase interaction among the people different regions

f) respect to diversity and even minimal groups that have distinct formations for communication

g) providing enhancement of the value of the linguistic domains and language factors

h) promoting flexibility leaving the main gate open to different interpretations including linguistic diversity, multilingualism and bilingualism

All in all, the advantages of the Pluringual understanding in foreign language syllabuses, the placement of better communication among the Europeans are becoming the prominent factor to apply it. Its core allows the language practitioners to relate the functional requirements to language teaching.

2.6. The Common Levels of CEFR

The framework aimed to help the users describe the proficiency levels within the context of present standards and examinations so that there can be a unity between systems of acceptable qualifications. Therefore, Description Scheme and Reference Levels have been formed to meet the users' needs by means of a grid, which enables

them to implement their own system and run it effectively. There are some description and measurement points to highlight.

North (2007) underlines the outcomes of the differently specified contexts can call for an independent model in framework scale. Namely, a common scale may not be supposed to address just one school structure or the needs of one learner group. According to him, rather than relating the framework scale to a specific group or program, considering it as context relevant can provide a substantial guidance to constitute the descriptors and function them in the appropriate situation. That categories address each other can make easy to employ different groups of learners (p.3).

The description of the framework scale is also significant in terms of theoretical usage and categorization. Choosing highly–terminological descriptions for the scales may prevent understandability. However, employing user-friendly terms promotes advantage for the practitioners.

When it comes to the points on measurement, the common framework scale needs to be objectively determined. That's to say that it should address a theory in its structure in order not to adopt unfounded conventions or rules from different agents or sources. The learners also need to see their progress step by step. That is why; the framework scale should be applicable in terms of dimensional levels of proficiency.

The principal requirements bring about a combination of intuitive, qualitative and quantitative approaches. Intuitive formation may not meet the needs by itself, but it will be more practical and advantageous if used together with other methods. Putting three of them together could be a barrier against the limitations to the development of language proficiency scales. A quantitative analysis activates validity bringing an endless and ongoing process to forefront. The illustrative descriptors of Common Reference Levels are strictly constituted in their methodological usages. In other words, three different methods above are employed in a systematic combination in forming the content of the scales. The edition is made in intuitive phase and then formulation of the new descriptors is provided respectively. After that a qualitative study is carried out to select and categorize the descriptors by the teachers. Finally, the quantitative methods are placed to scale the descriptors (CoE, 2001, p.21-22).

Brian North (2007) states that the identification of the levels of proficiency is a requirement for the curriculum organizations. The descriptive framework presented by the CEFR illustrative descriptors can be a user manual to specify the profiles of the

learners. It includes three main scales and 54 sub-scales in its content to help the practitioners design their programs or examinations (p.4).

It can be inferred from North (2007) that learner's proficiency is determined through horizontal and vertical dimensions, which consist of series of common reference levels and refer to performing the learning outcomes in communicative activities. These levels are: A1 (Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage), B1 (Threshold), B2 (Vantage), C1 (Operational Proficiency), C2 (Proficiency). They are determined as a result of collaborative studies of important testing organizations in order to develop a united standardization in language education in the European countries. As to the background of the CEFR levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2), they did not emerge suddenly or at random. A gradual collective process has been followed since 1910s. The spark was ignited with Cambridge Proficiency Exam (CPE), which placed practical mastery level of a language user as a non-native speaker. This proficiency level was named C2. Afterwards as the first level of proficiency, in particular interest related to office works was introduced by Cambridge but now it is accepted as B2. Council of Europe called for a lower level for a visitor or immigrant in order to express himself in the society and associated it with B1 which is also known as The Thresold Level. Waystage, which is also called A2 now followed Thresold as a staging point for the learner (p.4).

The determined levels enable course designers, teachers, teacher trainers, examiners, education organizers and students to work in a methodological and curricular harmony to constitute common language programs. This common tendency is supposed to contribute to learners' autonomy and standardization in carrying out the testing, evaluation and assessment processes in addition to its characteristic of providing validity and reliability for the common examinations around Europa.

In different cultural contexts, a set of common reference items can be preferably applied as long as program makers can locate their systems into the levels or modules. The common reference points change from one situation to another, so implementations or the description issues differentiate in each system. In this respect, a 'global scale' has been fulfilled to provide a communicative atmosphere in educational programs in which practitioners can easily adapt themselves. This global scale was presented in six levels for the users. The types of language skills and requirements for each level are also shown in a general frame.

The chapter 9 of the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p.178) is introduced with the outlined three main ways in which the Framework can be used for:

1) specification of the content of tests and   *what is assessed*

   examinations

2) stating criteria to determine the attainment   *how performance is interpreted*

   of a learning objective

3) describing the levels of proficiency in existing   *how comparison can be made*

   texts and examinations thus enabling comparisons

  to be made across different systems of qualifications.

In CoE (2001), it is mentioned that the concept of assessment is aimed to be standardized in different functions since the CEFR deals with the issue bringing common standards and relating them to other forms of assessment (p.178). Weir (2005) stresses that the CEFR holds six proficiency levels and describes the levels on the basis of the perceptions of the stakeholders because the perceptions of them are associated with the functions of language and focusing on the standardization provided by the 'Can Do' lists.

2.7. The Self-assessment Grid

The self-assessment grid and the Global Scale were formed with the appropriate descriptors, which were developed and validated for the CEFR. These descriptors are named as 'illustrative descriptors' (Schneider and Lenz 2006). They enable the learners to be aware of their potential skills and progress, motivate them to recognize their weakness and come up with some solutions in the process. As to 'Can Do' statements, they are like a set of performance scales, which show requirements for the learners in their planned program. Jones (2002) implies that the studies on 'Can Do' project are the results of a challenging period that has taken much time and considered as the most significant steps in this area.

North (2007, p.7) mentions a fundamental criticism, which is directed to the illustrative descriptors in terms of some characteristics they have. For example, they:

        (1) include a communicative descriptive scheme in which language activities and strategies are given with reception, interaction and production as well as language competences are set in linguistic, pragmatic and socio-linguistic ones,

        (2) are defined with positive statements from the lower level to the upper one and

(3) seem independent from each other and have their own criteria

(as cited   in Skehan, 2007).

That the descriptors are unique and valid can be explained with some scientific approaches and implementations carried out during the formation process. Firstly, the scheme was developed from a comprehensive documentation of present professional practitioners and experts in the area with also the resulted studies on previous scales related the learners' descriptive references. Secondly, the illustrative descriptors address communicative activities and strategies in order to highlight what learners do, and aspects of communicative competence, to show how well the learners do it. Thirdly, the scales employ qualitative methodology for the teachers so that they can relate the categories to the used descriptors. Fourthly, they are inspired from a sophisticated statistical methodology, which can lead to scale all the descriptors easily. Another significant validity is that the illustrative descriptors are acquired as a result of assessment-based studies practiced by teachers. Finally, the descriptors are determined in a multi-lingual atmosphere to which many educationalists from different parts of Europe contribute (North, 2007, p.7).

Little (2006) arrays his implications by asserting that the central part of the CEFR is correlated with its levels and scales. The scales are multidimensional: the global scale, the self-assessment grid and the illustrative scales for the activities of different skills such as listening, speaking interaction and production, writing and reading. All of them promote communicative and general competences, which are based on action-oriented approach. This approach provides an appropriate and effective use of linguistic formations. Common levels and scales are the main principles to clarify learning outcomes. The CEFR makes teaching familiar to the practitioners in terms of implementing and activating syllabuses. Additionally, use of textbooks can be easier thanks to the route provided with illustrative scales. Although levels and scales are not considered as an alternative grading system, they are employed to describe the progression steps. On the condition that the learners pursue the learning and progressing map drawn by the CEFR, they can succeed in their professional uses of language. A horizontal and vertical process moves to forefront here since the learners spend much time in A1 and A2 to improve the learners. That is to say that the main focus should be on the Basic Level (p. 169).

2.8. Curriculum and Syllabus

McKay (1978) says that ''a syllabus provides a focus for what should be studied, along with a rationale for how that content should be selected and ordered. Currently, the literature reflects three major types of syllabuses: structural, situational, and national'' (p. 11).

Brown (1995) sums up the systematic approach to designing and maintaining language curriculum as it is seen below (p.20):

Figure 1: Brown's Systematic Approach to Designing and Maintaining   Language   Curriculum   (adapted from Brown: 1995, 20)
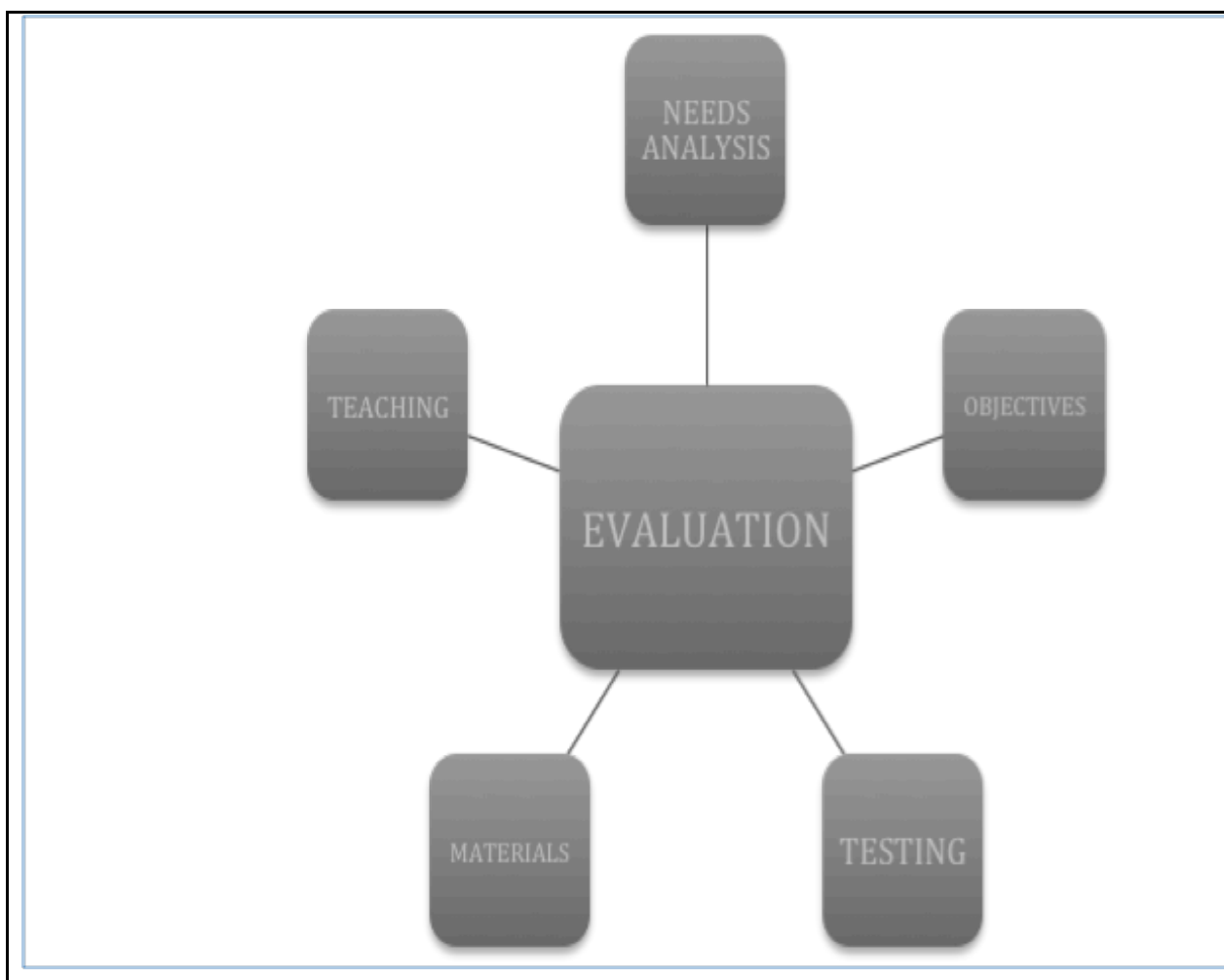
A completed language program calls for the some variations carried out under an umbrella of the evaluation. Curriculum and syllabus are the core elements of this combination.

Mclaren and Madrid's definition (2004, p.146) of curriculum includes:

a) The objectives of the program, its educational purpose.
b) The means used to achieve these ends, that is, the content, teaching procedures and learning experiences, which are necessary to achieve this purpose.
c) The means used to assess whether or not the educational ends have been achieved.

On the other hand, syllabus is defined as '' a more restricted concept and usually refers to a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught'' (Mclaren and Madrid, 2004, p.146). When it comes to the FL curriculum, it '' is thus concerned with the planning, implementation, management, administration and evaluation of the foreign language program, whereas the FL syllabus has a narrower scope and focuses on the selection and grading (if any) of contents''(p.146).

Bringing the language teaching and learning elements together by putting them into the same pot can lead to the possibility of designing an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum. The classroom factors affecting the setting are knowledge, needs, interests, and personal experiences. Apart from these, educational policy of a nation takes role in this formation.

2.9. Objectives

It can be inferred from Bodges (2007) that objectives address the aims and split them into detailed parts of learning units by promoting in-class behavior and performance. This situation increases the attention toward the learning outcomes and the expectations on what students can do. There are other advantages of structuring objectives. For example, they are employed in order to implement a well-organized planning of the course as well as to evaluate the success or failure of a program. On the other hand, a direct criticism against the use of objectives exists because of some implications on curricular issues. Specifically, some authorities think that the use of objectives may limit teaching and make the learning process mechanical, both of which affect the learning outcomes negatively. Another disadvantage in their opinions is that

the whole program may lack flexibility on account of the objectives. However, these criticisms must address the previous approaches related to the general education rather than language education (p. 281).

Course objectives are to cover program objectives directly. The definition of learning objectives including students' learning reactions related to knowledge and skills. Some characteristics of effective objectives are also arrayed below:

1. *Describe what you want your students to learn in your course.*
2. *Are aligned with program goals and objectives and the rest of the students' curriculum.*
3. *Tell how you will know a teaching goal has been achieved.*
4. *Use action words that specify definite, observable behaviors.*
5. *Are assessable through one or more indicators (papers, quizzes, projects, presentations, journals, portfolios, etc.)*
6. *Are realistic and achievable.*
7. *Use simple language.* (http://www.csub.edu/english/, n.d)

Brown (1995) highlights the importance of objectives with these lines:

> The specification of the objectives and process of thinking through what is involved in achieving the program goals will lead to analyzing, synthesizing, clarifying the knowledge, and skills necessary to meet the students' language needs. Since the difference between goals and objectives clearly hinges on level of specificity, the dividing line between the two is not always clear. Nonetheless, the distinction will prove useful in planning and maintaining language programs. In fact, any discussion in a program about how to meet and satisfy students' language needs can only be as clear and precise as the objectives that result. Objectives come in many forms and may differ in degree of specificity even within a given program primarily because they can serve different student needs that they vary in level of specificity (p. 21).

Brown (1995) draws attention to the distinction, implying that while the goals are considered as the attainable and expected aims set in the curriculum and also based on the situational needs of language practitioners, on the other hand, the objectives are defined more specifically and linked to the particular knowledge, behaviors and the skills the students are expected to perform in the end of the program. Whether the goals achieved or not can be clarified through an overall assessment.

Robatjazi points out that (n.d, p. 256) objectives are the main keystones if the professionals in language education want to form a precise curriculum and design it by developing the materials used in a program. The steps of analysis on curriculum are firstly taken from the objectives' appropriateness to the generalized aims of the program. The used objectives in foreign language curriculum should be developed in that they inter-culturally meet students' communicative needs and contain learning standards. When this development is provided, communicative and cultural competences can gradually emerge. Also, it should not be ignored that language competences are directly related to life in terms of authenticity and social relations.

2.10. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher introduced the first and important steps of CoE in language education. Why the CEFR document was released was explained together with its role in language education in Europe. As the main contents of the study CEFR's descriptor scales and Zirve University Prep Program's proficiency levels were related to each other. In the end of the chapter, curriculum, syllabus and objectives were explained with brief definitions.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLGY

3.1. Introduction

The collection of the data is one of the most crucial steps of a scientific research. Therefore, as one of the main parts of the study, this chapter embodies the ways to be able to come to conclusions. Namely, this stage informs about the administration of the study and in what ways the researcher collected the data during the course of interpreting instructors' self-evaluations on Reading course objectives. It also gives an explanation on the participants and instruments that are used during the study. In the end of the chapter, the type and process of the analysis on the data are mentioned.

3.2. Research Design

The research is carried out analyzing the evaluations of the course instructors over the current reading objectives. In this point, qualitative research design is applied to collect the data. Experience-based evaluation and comments taken from the instructors are forming the first stage of the data. As to the second stage, the same instructors are made mark a checklist in which the course instructors match the course objectives with the descriptor scales of CoE's document, CEFR. That is to say, while the first instrument is the interview with the course instructors, the second one is the checklist they will mark. The last one is focus group discussions in which there will be one Reading course instructor, the reading course coordinator and the researcher.

3.3. Participants

Participants are the English instructors teaching at Zirve University Preparatory Program in four different levels of proficiency as well as the coordinator of the course. The total number of the participants is 13 except the researcher. Three ones were selected from each levels of proficiency in order to take their viewpoints over the current Reading course objectives. There is a table, which shows some details about the participants.

Table 1: Details about the participants of the study

Participants	Teaching Level at ZUEPP	Years of Experience
Instructor 1	A	3
Instructor 2	A	2
Instructor 3	A	5
Instructor 4	B	3
Instructor 5	B	7
Instructor 6	B	2
Instructor 7	C	2
Instructor 8	C	8
Instructor 9	C	12
Instructor 10	D	4
Instructor 11	D	4
Instructor 12	D	4
The Skill Coordinator	C-D	5
The Researcher	B-D	4

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

The study itself took place in Zirve University. It was conducted throughout the second term beginning from November 2012 to January 2013. In total, the study lasted eight weeks. The eight-week-time was designed and organized as it follows:

Firstly, the Reading course instructors were interviewed on their perceptions related to the current course objectives as the first objective of the study. The interview lasted nearly seven days. It was not a hard task since they were informed and booked beforehand. The researcher visited them separately in their own rooms. The four questions, which were prepared before were directed to the course instructors. During the interview, the participants were allowed to present their opinions within a written document, too. The first stage of collecting data was completed in nearly two weeks.

As the second step, the course instructors were wanted to mark the checklist during an organized meeting. It lasted just 45 minutes for them to mark the checklist. The participants seemed not to have difficulty matching the two different lists since they have already been familiar to the current objectives. The only thing they were supposed to do was to match the two lists and mark the accordance level.

During the next three weeks, the researcher studied on the two obtained data to analyze them. The results of the interview were coded in terms of the principals of the content analysis (Content Analysis is highly mentioned in the end of this chapter and in the Chapter 5). The mostly stressed words, phrases and some sentences were taken into consideration.

Over the coded data and the results from the checklist, a focus group discussion was run by three participants for each level during the week 7. They were the course instructors from each level, the skill coordinator and the researcher. The researcher prepared the list of the results obtained from the two instruments. The group reported the recommendations over the current Reading course objectives. The researcher also made a list of the parts which need to be revised in accordance with the CoE's document, CEFR.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

The study was carried out by means of three instruments. A qualitative research design was aimed for all the data. In the end of the first week of the term, the participants were informed on the study process at length. The beginning step was the interview with the course instructors. The interview consisted of four questions. The content of the questions was to take instructors' opinions, reveal the problematic sides of the objectives and stimulating recommendations over the needs.

The second instrument was a checklist in written format in which there were marking columns. The three instructors from each level marked the columns to match the current Reading objectives wit the descriptor scales of Reading skill in the document, CEFR in order to discover the rate of accordance between them. There are four categories to be marked: completely according, nearly according, completely disaccording and nearly disaccording categories. They compared and contrasted the two lists and expressed their opinions by marking the rate of accordance.

The third stage of the study was to conduct a focus group discussion carried out by the skill coordinator, the researcher and a course instructor selected from the first ones. To obtain the third data, focus-group discussion was applied. The categorization of the two different data was also presented in a table. The categorization was made by coding the stressed words and phrases as well as the marked accordance between the two lists. The group interpreted the results of the previous data and gave recommendations over the current objectives.

3.6. Matching The Global Scale and ZUEP's Proficiency Levels

As a receptive skill, reading descriptors in CEFR are divided into sub-titles as these descriptors are listed in detail in CoE (2001, p. 69-71) and Appendix I. The global scale can be considered as a key for the learners to define their language levels and their further expected steps or actions to make progress in learning. Program designers or teachers can make use of it, too in that they organize their studies in standardization. Schneider and Lenz (2006:41) expressed that the reference levels of the CoE presents a common frame which compromises the assessment criteria for educational programs from linguistic to methodological activations.

It is necessary to determine which lists of the descriptors of CEFR can cover the ZUEPP's proficiency levels. The prep program formally contains four different levels from A to D except the optional E. A level can stand for Elementary level in EFL (English as a foreign Language) teaching standards while B can be used for Pre-intermediate level. On the other hand, level C can be seen as intermediate proficiency and D as the Post-intermediate or Pre-advanced. To sum up the matching the two lists and compare the variations of a proficient learner, a table is presented below.

Table 2: Matching the ZUEPP proficiency levels with those of the CEFR

ZUEPP PROFICIENCY LEVELS		COMMON REFERENCE LEVELS IN CEFR
D (Upper-Intermediate)	→	B2 (Vantage), C1 (Effective Operational Proficiency)
C (Intermediate)	→	B1(Threshold), B2 (Vantage)
B (Pre-Intermediate)	→	A2 (Waystage), B1 (Threshold)
A (Elementary)	→	A1(Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage)

As well as the global scale, CEFR also contains many different kinds of scales with different functions, illustrative descriptors for general, linguistic and sociolinguistic competences, and user-friendly objectives. All of these can address many different areas from phonological, lexical, semantic and grammatical competences in linguistic ones to expressions and conventions in sociolinguistic ones. Also, functional and discursive competences are related to the pragmatic side of the general frame. CoE's most striking scale is the common reference levels' self-assessment grid. Namely, can-do list by ALTE (Association of Language Testing in Europe) is listed on the top of the scales. Self-assessment grid is given in five different skills: Listening, Reading, Spoken Interaction, Spoken Production and Writing. All the skills are put under three main titles: Understanding which covers Listening and Reading, Speaking which covers Spoken Interaction and Spoken Production and Writing.

The self-assessment grid mainly consists of three categories (understanding, speaking, writing), other sub-categories (listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing) and six language levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 in CEFR).

3.7. Data Collection and Evaluation

This study principally aims to analyze the current Reading objectives within the consideration of CEFR descriptors. The first step is to uncover the positive and negative experiences about employing the Reading Objectives at Zirve University Preparatory Program. Related to the discovery of the results, an interview was conducted to the instructors teaching Reading course. The academic needs and occupational descriptions about Reading skill in Zirve University's English Preparatory Program and those of CEFR were aimed to be analyzed by means of a checklist that was applied in order to match the ones used in Zirve University English Preparatory Program with CEFR's descriptor lists. The analysis was carried out through the data obtained from the instructors' individual evaluations. The study directly focused on reporting contextual evaluation and simplifying the parts of the objective lists, which need to be developed. Frank (n.d, p.16) explains the relationship between the content analysis and qualitative research:

> Content analysis is employed as part of a qualitative exploration of a field, with no explicit aim of generalising conclusions beyond the instance studied, it is in the nature of categorising content to implicitly involve sampling and hence implicitly to assume generalisability of the terms of the analysis.

In Elo & Kyngas (2008), the analyzing part of the study covers 'content analysis' over the descriptive statistics obtained from the applied survey to the instructors.

Krippendorf implies that content analysis as a research method is a systematic and objective means of describing ….. phenomena'(as cited in Elo & Kyngas, 2008, p.108). It is also likened to analyzing the documents.

According to Cavanagh's viewpoints over the content analysis are below:

> Content analysis allows the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data. Through content analysis, it is possible to distil words into fewer content related categories. It is assumed that when classified into the same categories, words, phrases and the like share the same meaning (as cited in Elo & Kyngas, 2008, p.108).

In terms of what are the aims and outcomes, Kyngas & Vanhanen (2008) claim that analysis is supposed to conduct on describing concepts or categories. This description should lead to a model, conceptual system or categories (p. 108).

When it comes to the ''advantage of the method'' Elo and Kyangas (2007, p.114) concludes that :

> Large volumes of textual data and different textual sources can be dealt with and used in corroborating evidence. ……content analysis has been an important way of providing evidence for phenomenon where the qualitative approach used to be the only way to do this, particularly for sensitive topics.

After gathering information from instructors' evaluation, checklist evaluation was aimed to be described through focus group discussion after the categorized results were coded through content analysis. The results were presented to the skill coordinator in language program in order to take steps for the development of the current objectives. In this third stage of the study, the present detailed syllabus of the Reading skill was also used to evaluate the two data and come to a conclusion.

For RQ1, what the Reading course instructors at ZUEPP think about the present objectives are aimed to be obtained through four questions. For RQ1, an interview was conducted to the course instructors to gather their opinions simplified from their experiences. The questions determined before were directed to them respectively.

For RQ2, whether the Reading course objectives at ZUEEP are in accord with the illustrative descriptor scales or not is the main focus point. For RQ2, a checklist was prepared by the researcher. The objectives used in Zirve University English Preparatory Program were listed in the first column. The illustrative scales of the document, CEFR, were also listed under five different titles that provide these scales. Reading competence is called *visual reception* in the CEFR document (2001, p.68) and also divided into five different banks: *Overall reading comprehension, Reading correspondence, Reading for orientation, Reading for information and argument* and *Reading for instruction.* The focused objective lists in language department correspond with the limitations and the sub-divisions of the illustrative descriptors. Each user's can do lists in CEFR were also put as the basic evaluation tools. The CEFR classifies the areas for reading; for example,

a language user may read for gist, specific information, detailed understanding and implications (CoE, 2001, p. 68).

As to RQ3, how the Reading Objectives at ZUEPP can be developed in accord with the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR is matter of discussion among the focus group. For RQ3, a focus group discussion among the skill coordinator, a course instructor and the researcher was conducted to evaluate the course instructors' reflections about correspondence between the two lists. Also, it was aimed to present the opinions for a developed list of objectives for the Reading syllabuses.

3.8. Conclusion

The research design, participants, data collection procedure and the data collection instruments were mentioned in this chapter. The process was given in detail, too. Additionally, the method in data collection was presented with its core points considering the research questions' framework.

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this study chapter is to simplify the three procedures and explain the findings of them in detail. The first findings will cover the perceptions of the Reading course instructors at ZUEPP on the objective lists while the second one will address the evaluation of the objective lists by matching them with the CEFR's descriptor scales through a checklist. On the other hand, the last findings will be the recommendations about the parts of the objective lists to be developed through focus group discussion. The researcher tries to reflect the findings from the three different data directly either employing table or analyzing them in context.

4.2. Viewpoints of the Course Instructors for RQ1

What the Reading course instructors think about the present objectives made the focus point clear in terms of the characteristics of all the objective lists (A, B, C, D) which need to be developed. The first data was received through the assumptions of the course instructors selected as focus group including three ones from each level. In terms of what they focused on the topic given within the questions asked by the researcher, the points to be covered were categorized together with their explanations.

Weber informs us that ''content analysis is a method of codifying the text (or content) of a piece of writing into various groups (or categories) depending upon selected criteria (cited in Milne and Adler, n.d., p.1). The answers of the course instructors from each level were analyzed in terms of the content. Milne and Adler (n.d.) also deduced that the forerunners of content analysis noticed ''the use of multiple coders and the manner in which they constructed their interrogation instruments, their checklists and their decision''(p.1). Codifying the answers of the course instructors is limited to the partial thematic responses. In this point, 'the repeated words', 'similarly approached topics' and 'intensively underlined characteristics' by the focus group played a great role as Bryman and Burgess (2002) pointed out that ''the researcher has to move backwards and forwards between different sequences in the research process''

(p.3) and ''the analysis of qualitative data is only briefly covered […] through *coding* and the generation of theory from data (p.3)''.

The questions and the answers from which *coded* words and phrases are presented in detail as well as the present objective lists of Reading course. Also, each level's objective lists were evaluated separately employing mostly direct and rarely indirect answers from the course instructors.

Table 3: ZUEPP Level A Reading Objectives

ZUEPP Level A Reading Objectives
1- To practice reading in English 2- To initiate using the following reading skills: a) Topic / Main Idea b) Finding details c) Scanning d) Summarizing

Question 1: What do you think about Reading Objectives you are employing / employed? Have you ever experienced a problem in using the Reading Objectives during the classes?

Instructor 1: The list of objectives should include some kinds of action verbs which are more different in use so that we can make use of them in every situation. During my experiences, I had some difficulty in matching the target competence and the result of the teaching process. I must say that the objectives may be turned into user-friendlier.

Instructor 2: The objectives I employed seem to have a slight role in my teaching. However, they are certainly important in planning the lessons and achieving course's aims. For example, we may classify the objectives into the detailed parts of actions. Thus, the students may have more chance to show diverse outcomes of learning.

Instructor 3: Firstly, we cannot say that the objectives have not been used so much as expected because we generally rely on the *New Password*'s contents

and termly given syllabus by the skill coordinator in order to draw our way. After all, I think the objectives are required to address the needs of the students. As to the problematic side, it appears to me that the list lacks of specific uses for the teachers.

Question2: Have you used the Reading Syllabus and implemented Reading course's objectives into the process of teaching? Are they applicable as a complete route for the teachers in terms of meeting students' needs?

Instructor 1: Yes, I've tried to employ the objectives. Although the list components are very easy to understand and use, I sometimes had difficulty in finding specific and detailed versions of them.

Instructor 2: Yes I have. Nearly no. The objectives related to the reading skill could have been classified much more specifically in order to set and meet students' further goals.

Instructor 3: Yes, I have used them, but they are not so practically applicable since they have no detailed descriptive explanations in different actions of competence.

Question 3: Have you discovered any difference between the objectives and learning outcome throughout the Reading Course? Have you experienced a piece of gap between them? If yes, could you specify them please?

Instructor 1 and 3 replied the first and second parts of the question 3 as 'yes'. As to the following part of the question, the comments varied. For example, Instructor 1 highlighted the narrowly described objectives while *instructor 2* drew attention to the problem resulted from the lack of relating knowledge to the daily life. On the other hand, *instructor 2* mentioned the difficulty in meeting the needs of the students again.

Question 4: Are the points in the list of Objectives in Reading Syllabus clear enough to understand and use it as a route for teachers? Why?

Instructor 1 and 3 drew attention to the classification problem in defining the objectives while the *instructor 2* uttered that the list required a clear description.

Table 4: ZUEPP Level B Reading Objectives

ZUEPP Level B Reading Objectives

1-To practice intensive reading
2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills:
 	
    c) Topic / Main Idea
    d) Finding details
    e) Scanning
    f) Summarizing
    g) Vocabulary in context and understanding references

Question 1: What do you think about Reading Objectives you are employing / employed? Have you ever experienced a problem in using the Reading Objectives during the classes?

Instructors 4 and 5 mentioned the problems in describing needs for comprehension and vocabulary. On the other hand, Instructor 6 implies that the objectives can be made more applicable when they are added the details about what kind of references the students are supposed to understand.

Question 2: Have you used the Reading Syllabus and implemented Reading course's objectives into the process of teaching? Are they applicable as a complete route for the teachers in terms of meeting students' needs?

All three instructors have been using the objectives but they seemed not to rely on just them since they said that some specific conditions about the content, motivation and students could have effect on the process.

Question 3: Have you discovered any difference between the objectives and learning

outcome throughout the Reading Course? Have you experienced a piece of gap between them? If yes, could you specify them please?

Instructor 4: My opinion is that the gap between them is slightly since I mostly use the content of the syllabus provided for us.

Instructor 5: I agree that there is a contextual difference between the two considering the students cannot comprehend the target vocabulary as permanently as we assume.

Instructor 6: No, I have not discovered an apparent gap between the learning outcomes and the objectives. Absolutely, there were unsuccessful students who did not understand anything from the texts but it happens in all classrooms. Anyway, the objectives should be described clearly

Question 4: Are the points in the list of Objectives in Reading Syllabus clear enough to understand and use it as a route for teachers? Why?

The group underlined the more specific additions to the list in general.

Table 5: ZUEPP Level C Reading Objectives

ZUEPP Level C Reading Objectives
1- To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: a) Topic Main Idea b) Finding details c) Scanning d) Summarizing e) Vocabulary in context f) Understanding references g) Inference h) Fact and opinion

Question 1: What do you think about Reading Objectives you are employing / employed? Have you ever experienced a problem in using the Reading Objectives during the classes?

Instructor 7: I did not experience so many problems in using objectives. But they did not also seem to cover all receptive skills of the students. For example, students do not have much chance to be involved in an authentic procedure.

Instructor 8: I think the objectives should be user-friendlier for the points in the list.

Instructor 9: The objectives are clear enough to understand for me but not enough to apply them. I want to express that students are hardly aware of their potential to improve and expand their vocabulary knowledge. They should be exposed to many more practical examples of target words that exist in the texts.

Question 2: Have you used the Reading Syllabus and implemented Reading course's objectives into the process of teaching? Are they applicable as a complete route for the teachers in terms of meeting students' needs?

Instructor 7: Yes I have. I cannot say the objectives are the complete route for me since learning outcomes depend on some circumstances such as confidence, motivation and mental reactions for the students. That is why, I am trying to select the best way for them.

Instructor 8: Yes I have been applying the objectives. I think they should be restated with clearer details for us to follow.

Instructor 9: In the beginning of the term, I check the list of objectives and adapt my teaching procedure into the process considering what syllabus highlights. The problematic side of them is that they seem not to explain the target skills of the students in the learning process as completely as expected.

Question 3: Have you discovered any difference between the objectives and learning outcome throughout the Reading Course? Have you experienced a piece of gap between them? If yes, could you specify them please?

Instructor 7: My experience about the gap between them is that students cannot improve their summarizing skill. This objective can be rearranged to cover the students' practical engagement.

Instructor 8: Yes, I have discovered some problems between two routes. For example, students' main difficulty is about finding references. Therefore, I also have difficulty associating specific learning outcomes with the objectives.

Instructor 9: I have a few moments about the gap in the question. Mostly I rely on syllabus rather than keep checking the objectives. However, there were the moments in which the gap was highly experienced. To specify them, the students lacked authentic references in order to apply what they learnt from the course in an authentic atmosphere.

Question 4: Are the points in the list of Objectives in Reading Syllabus clear enough to understand and use it as a route for teachers? Why?

Instructor 7: As I stressed before, the referenced aims should be taken into consideration again. They may need to be updated.

Instructor 8: Both yes and no. In appearance, they seem clear but I am skeptical to apply and obtain a sound result. I mean that they can be revised according to our viewpoints.

Instructor 9: I think they are so simple in understanding but not in use. Because of this, they should be added practical aims and references.

Table 6: ZUEPP Level D Reading Objectives

ZUEPP Level D Reading Objectives

1- To practice intensive reading

2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills:

a) Topic and Main Idea

b) Finding details

c) Scanning

d) Summarizing

e) Vocabulary in context

f) Understanding references

g) Inference

h) Fact/Opinion

i) Faster reading

j) Relationships (Patterns of organization)

k) Quoting/paraphrasing

Question 1: What do you think about Reading Objectives you are employing / employed? Have you ever experienced a problem in using the Reading Objectives during the classes?

> **Instructor 10:** My opinion is that the objectives do not reflect the target skills the teachers want the students improve. They are especially short of clear details on the expected learning outcomes.

> **Instructor 11:** Some practical ways of using and adapting them into the lesson content can make us easier to apply them.
> **Instructor 12:** I did not see so many problems in using them. Specifically students were not good at identifying patterns of organization.

Question 2: Have you used the Reading Syllabus and implemented Reading course's objectives into the process of teaching? Are they applicable as a complete route for the teachers in terms of meeting students' needs?

Instructor 10: I have implemented them into my plans but they can be described again in terms of detailed definitions of students' authentic improvements.

Instructor 11: Yes. We can consider them as a route although I sometimes needed to focus on clarifications over them. Students seem to need to study every-day-life implications.

Instructor 12: Yes I have been using them. I think that it is required to restate the objectives terminological uses and implementations. For example, as the teachers, we should easily comprehend all the references of the objectives and realize whether the students are directed to practice instructions they obtained from the course.

Question 3: Have you discovered any difference between the objectives and learning outcome throughout the Reading Course? Have you experienced a piece of gap between them? If yes, could you specify them please?

Instructor 10: I have had some specific differences between the target objectives and the learning outcomes. For instance, almost all the students could not employ their knowledge in another lesson. The most common problem was the sustainability of the learning outcomes.

Instructor 11: The learning outcomes and the course objectives did not complete each other all the time. Time to time, my students did not achieve expected objectives.

Instructor 12: I did not experience a gap. Some different outcomes happened. I think the gap is not a barrier for the teachers.

Question 4: Are the points in the list of Objectives in Reading Syllabus clear enough to understand and use it as a route for teachers? Why?

Instructor 10: Yes, but they can be defined clearer.

Instructor 11: In my opinion, the objectives should be reorganized considering the course book's *(New Password)* contents.

Instructor 12: All the objectives need to be innovated under the European Portfolio System. We need a general standardization.

4.3. Categorized Checklist Evaluation for RQ2

RQ2 addresses a detailed evaluation of the each level's Reading skill's present objectives by the course instructors. Their reflections are of great importance of matching the two lists and making matching categories clear as Taylor & Renner (2003) suggest that the data can be firstly identified through the themes or patterns in a qualitative study and secondly organized in coherent categories using descriptive labels for all ones (p.2). The second data was categorized in terms of the course instructors' viewpoints.

Table 7: Checklist Evaluation by the Reading Course Instructors

	CHECKLIST EVALUATION BY THE READING COURSE INSTRUCTORS			
	CEFR ILLUSTRATIVE SCALAS FOR READING			
ZUEPP LEVELS	**COMPLETELY DISACCORDING CATEGORIES**	**NEARLY DISACCORDING CATEGORIES**	**NEARLY ACCORDING CATEGORIES**	**COMPLETELY ACCORDING CATEGORIES**
D	- Reading for Correspondence	- Reading Instructions	- Reading for Correspondence - Reading for Information and Argument	- Overall Reading Comprehension
C	- Reading for Correspondence	- Reading Instructions	- Reading for Orientation	- Overall Reading Comprehension - Reading for Information and Argument
B	- Reading for Orientation	- Reading for Correspondence	X	- Overall Reading Comprehension - Reading for Information and Argument - Reading Instructions
A	- Reading for Correspondence - Reading for Orientation	X	- Reading for Information and Argument	- Overall Reading Comprehension - Reading Instructions

*X is used for the unmarked categories.

4.3.1. Validation of Thematic Data for RQ1 and RQ2

RQ1 is aimed to cover the course's instructors' opinions about the present objective list of the Reading skill while the RQ2 addresses the result of matching the present objective lists of Reading skill and the CEFR illustrative descriptor scales. In this part, an interrelation between the research stages has been reflected through the categorized themes, which were inferred from both the previous focus group discussion and the checklist implementation. Namely, data 1 and 2 were pictured in the tables for each level in terms of their stressed components. Tesch (1990) suggests that qualitative researchers prefer using categorization while they are analyzing their data (136). Coding the themes is a way of categorization as Johnson (n.d.) stated that ''coding is defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words, or category names''. (http://www.southalabama.edu/coe/bset/johnson/lectures/lec17.pdf)

Table 8: Categorization of problematic points stressed in data 1 and marked in data 2

Levels	Categorization of the problematic points stressed in data 1	Categorization of completely or nearly disaccording points in data 2
Level D	- lacking authentic aims - problems about the descriptions of the every-day-life actions in the list - The list does not seem to cover all the aims in practice - requiring more clear definitions of the target objectives	- Reading for Correspondence - Reading Instructions
Level C	- some problems in use - problems in detailed descriptions of the objectives - Some specific points are problematic - requirement for an updated list of the objectives	- Reading for Correspondence - Reading Instructions
Level B	- a matter of discussion - difference between target vocabulary and learning outcome - lacking descriptive objectives - lacking clear points for some aims	- Reading for Orientation - Reading for Correspondence
Level A	- lacking specific descriptions for the user - lacking classification of the needs for the further goals and specific description of objectives - lacking relating the knowledge to the daily life - a requirement for a clear description	- Reading for Correspondence - Reading for Orientation

4.4. Recommendations of the Focus Group for RQ3

The recommendations for the development of the present Reading skill objectives at ZUEPP address the RQ3 of the study. The data are a result of focus discussion including the skill coordinator, academic coordinators and the researcher. The discussion group made certain interpretations over the obtained previous two data the first of which covers the general assumptions on the lists and the second of which contains the evaluation over the matching results. The focus group made a list of recommendations, which were divided into two groups: Experience-based regulations, which were implied from the data 1 and CEFR-based recommended regulations, which were taken from the data 2.

4.4.1. Recommendations for Level A Objectives

A. Experience-based (data 1) regulations:

    1) The action verbs used in the list should vary for different conditions.

    2) The objectives should be added more specific descriptions related to the daily-life activities considering the further needs of the students.

    3) The objectives need to be redesigned with clear definitions.

B. CEFR-based recommended regulations (data 2) include the objectives:

    1) for correspondence

    2) for orientation, especially the every-day-life materials and instructions

    3) for information on the written materials such as brochures and advertisements

4.4.2. Recommendations for Level B Objectives

A. Experience-based (data 1) regulations:

    1) The objectives should address the target vocabulary.

    2) The variation of the objectives needs to be shaped again by adding descriptive ones.

B. CEFR-based recommended regulations include the ones for A Level

4.4.3. Recommendations for Level C Objectives

A. Experience-based (data 1) regulations:

    1) The objectives should be user-friendly in terms of clear descriptions for the further steps.

B. CEFR-based recommended regulations include the objectives:

    1) as stated for level A and B

    2) for instruction-based explanations

4.4.4. Recommendations for Level D Objectives

A. Experience-based (data 1) regulations:

    1) The authentic definitions should be included, too.

    2) The list should cover every-day-life uses in practice.

    3) The objectives need to be explained more clearly.

B. CEFR-based recommended regulations include the objectives:

    1) as stated for level A, B and C in terms of correspondence

    2) as stated in Level C in terms of instructions

4.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, all the data was presented either directly or indirectly. Firstly, the answers of the course instructors were presented together with the course objectives and the directed questions. Secondly, the result of the checklist evaluation followed. The table obtained from the data 2 was including the categorized markings the instructors did. Thirdly, as a step of content analysis, a table of validating the two data was shown so detailed that the problematic sides of the objectives were clearly realized. That thematic data made the focus group interpret them easier, so the recommendations of the focus group ended the chapter.

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the evaluation of the process of the study beginning through the research questions and coming to the stage of findings. Firstly, what kind of analysis was conducted is introduced in detail. The explanation of the content analysis is followed by the ways of taking the instructors' opinions, matching stages and evaluating the two data. As the other step, focus group's inferences are reported indirectly. The findings obtained from the three data are discussed one by one. In the end of it, conclusion, implications and limitations of the study are presented.

5.2. Analysis of the Findings

Stemler (2005) expresses that an analyst can make use of the technique of content analysis to employ individual, group and institutional attention while discovering or describing the components. Providing certain interpretational data from the study can be acquired through content analysis. Coding of actions is a way of making inferences for the study (p.1). Also Holsti (as cited in 2005, p.1) presents a definition of content analysis '' as any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages''.

According to Stemler (2005), content analysis can be applied in examining trends and patterns in documents. For instance, statements of school mission were analyzed in order to measure the effectiveness of the program employing content analysis (p.2).

When it comes to this research, the CEFR was aimed to provide a direction to this study. The patterns of reference levels were used to match the present objective lists in ZUEPP. Stemler (2005) also signifies the role of the content analysis in that the schools are able to update their program elements and develop some points of them. In this study, the present objectives were aimed to develop by adopting the criteria provided within the CEFR.

Comparison can be necessarily employed in content analysis, which is also understood from the sentences by GAO:

> Content analysis can be used for making numerical comparisons among and within documents. For example, staff who want to describe or summarize the content of written material can use content analysis to compare documents derived from a single source, such as from one federal agency, by comparing issues or statements over time, in different situations, or across differing groups. The relationship of two or more statements or issues within single document or set of documents can also be analyzed. Alternatively, statements or issues from two or more different sources can be compared (1989, p.9).

The steps to conduct a content analysis can be ranked by answering the questions addressed by Krippendorf (as cited in Elos and Kyngash, 2008, p.2):

1) *Which data are analyzed?*

2) *How are they defined?*

3) *What is the population from which they are drawn?*

4) *What is the context relative to which the data are analyzed?*

5) *What are the boundaries of the analysis?*

6) *What is the target of the inferences?*

The points addressed in the outlined questions can be easily realized in the process of this case study. The points are also outlined respectively according to the order above:

1) The evaluations on matching the Reading objectives of ZUEPP and the   descriptor scales of CEFR made by the Reading course instructors

2) Checklist on matching the two lists, evaluations on the results

3) The Reading course instructors

4) Comparing the two lists and coding the main themes

5) Discovering only the defiant parts and categorizing them step by step

6) Reporting the results to develop the present Reading objective lists of ZUEPP

In GAO (1989, p.8), the steps are also listed respectively:

1. Decide to use content analysis.

2. Determine what material should be included in content analysis.

3. Select units of analysis.

4. Develop coding categories.

5. Code the material.

6. Analyze and interpret the results

Stemler (2005), on the other hand, underlined the way the researchers analyzed the data. In an analysis, 'word- frequency count' is generally implemented in order to obtain the data. The words that are frequently mentioned inevitably reflect the most important concerns, which can help the researcher make inferences. It is said that ''a good rule of thumb to follow in the analysis is to use word frequency counts to identify words of potential interest' (p.3).

In Bryman & Burgess (2002) it is asserted that content analysis can be considered as one of the main components of the qualitative study as it is highlighted in the scheme in which the main objectives of qualitative study on the left (p.196) and the adaptation of the steps to the case of ZUEPP for this study on the right side are outlined below:

Table 9: Bryman & Burgess's scheme for the adaptation of the steps to the case of ZUEPP for this study

Bryman & Burgess's process scheme	The scheme's adaptation into the study
Defining concepts	The definition of ZUEPP Reading Objectives and CEFR descriptor scales
Mapping range and nature of phenomena	Checklist on matching the two lists
Creating typologies	Thematic variations in matching
Finding associations	Categorizing the evaluation made by the instructors
Providing explanations	Focus group discussion
Developing strategies	Reporting the parts to be developed

5.2.1. A step to Innovation over the Objectives

What the Reading skill instructors think about the present objective lists addresses some clear points to be interpreted. Three instructors' answers from each level were evaluated as the last step of content analysis. The commonly stressed points by the skill instructors from each level are the categorized data, which were expected to be obtained through RQ1.

The level A and B instructors' opinions for the first part were mainly related to action verbs used for the objectives in the lists. Instructors 1 and 3 from level A addressed the limitation in employing action verbs. In the list, 'practice, initiate, find, scan and summarize' are the only ones that are included in order to determine the future acquisition through the objectives during one term at ZUEPP. According to the view pointed out by the instructors, lacking of different and varied action verbs results in a problem for the user in that he or she can set the process of teaching and further outcomes. Especially, this characteristic of the lists can make us think that whether it is user-friendly or not. As the second point highlighted by the Instructors 2 and 3 was about 'planning the course aims in the long process of teaching and learning'. In a long period of acquisition, planning a skill's objectives can be directly relevant to learning outcomes. Achieving goals may require starting from the first step by setting them in advance. Therefore, there is a need of a detailed classification of the list items since target outcomes need to be considered, too, as understood from their perceptions. The lastly mentioned point was the needs of the students. They think that the needs of the students at level A should refer to the basic and simple learning outcomes so that the students can be easily associated with the texts.

Question 2 was directly about the instructors' experiences in terms of using the present objectives and their reliability in use. It is understood the instructors have been implementing the objectives but experiencing some problems while adapting them into the process of teaching and learning. According to the categorized answers and the specific contents for Q2, the objectives lack classification in description of the needs for the further goals. They, in particular, underlined the narrowly described target objectives in the list.

Question 3 directed the instructors to focus on the difference between the objectives and learning outcomes throughout the course as well as the specified distinctions that were experienced by them. The parts were answered as 'yes (76-

100%)', 'almost yes (51-75%)', 'nearly no (26-50%)', and 'completely no (0-25%)' by the focus group. On the other hand, the second part of the answers covered the positive views that refer to 'yes'. The answers in the third part were also categorized in specific contents. The focus point was that the objectives should be updated considering the relationship between the knowledge and the daily life needs. Accordingly, they draw attention to the requirement for the every-day-life use and documentation of the practical needs.

Question 4 was aimed to categorize the instructors' experience-based perceptions. The answers (consisting of 'yes' and 'almost yes' for the first part) generally called for an urgent action about defining and classifying the objectives as clearly as the users employ them in setting the procedural requirements.

The commonly stressed points by the level C and D instructors from the focus group can be put into the same unit of the needs if we focus on the categorized themes in the previous chapter. For the first question, the instructors from both levels replied '(almost) yes' and raised their concerns about the problematic parts in descriptions of the present objectives. The ones from level D especially think that the objectives should be supported with authentic variations for the practical needs of the students.

Question 2 made the instructors focus on the discussion matter of whether the objectives were user-friendly or not. Both groups mentioned the necessity that the objectives might be able to contain more detailed every-day-life actions so that the students could make use of their knowledge in their daily life.

Question 3 was about discovering the possibility that whether there was a gap between the target domains of the program related to the Reading skill and the learning outcomes observed or experienced by the users. The instructors from both levels underlined the fact that the list of the objectives should refer to the practical uses covering the life-long aims.

Question 4 specifically included the roles of the present objectives in teaching. The points in the lists seem not to clear enough to understand, set the aim s and organize the course syllabus for level C and D levels. They highlighted the importance of more clear definitions.

5.2.2. Categorization of the Checklist Evaluation by the Course Instructors

Whether the Reading course objectives at ZUEEP are in accord with the illustrative descriptor scales in the CEFR or not was the main focus of the RQ2. As a tool, a checklist was maintained so that the skill instructors could mark the accordance rate as far as they experienced. The checklist marked by the instructors was categorized under four different titles as *completely disaccording categories, nearly disaccording categories nearly according categories and completely according categories.* The categorized results provided some clues for the points to be developed or updated. The four categorizations vary in different characteristics for the needs when the present objectives are compared to the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR.

5.1.2.1. Assumptions on Level A Objectives

The completely according categories for the level A objectives include two illustrative scales: the can do statements for *overall reading comprehension* and *reading instructions.* The document of the CoE (2001, p.69-71) clarifies the certain categories for the *visual reception* as *reading.* According to instructor's reactions specified in the second part of the checklist, it may be understood that a learner can comprehend the simple texts, discover the basic phrases even if he or she needs to reread the text in terms of reading for comprehension. This implication can address the components of the level A objectives such as '*initiate using the reading skills such as topic, main idea, finding details and scanning'* (CoE, 2001, p.69). The other completely according aspect of the materials is that the ZUEPP's level A list. It contains completely according descriptors from the CEFR in terms of instructions. That is to say, a student is expected to comprehend '*essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly'* (CoE, 2001, p.71).

When it comes to the nearly according categories between the two lists, the list of the ZUEPP almost covers a category from the scales of the CEFR, *reading for information and argument.* This scale makes the learner responsible for getting *an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is a visual support* (CoE, 2001, p.70.)

The completely according categories from the CEFR are *reading for correspondence* and *reading for orientation. Reading for correspondence is* related to the ability to understanding (2001, p.71)''short simple messages on the post cards, short and simple personal letters and basic types of standard routine letters and faxes'' while *reading for orientation* calls for recognizing *familiar names, words and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations* as well as finding *specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables* (CoE, 2001, p.70).

5.2.2.2. Assumptions on Level B Objectives

The completely according categories for the level B consist of three different descriptors. The evaluation shows that the objectives of Pre-intermediate level at ZUEPP seem to be completely accorded with the descriptors existing in *overall reading comprehension, reading for information and argument* and *reading instructions.* The similar points related to the target competences may push the students to understand the texts and vocabulary. Also, the list incorporates the instructional competences.

The nearly disaccording category between the level B objectives and the descriptor scales is *reading for orientation* part. It can be inferred that the objectives might be enriched with some daily topics such as corresponding the letters or simple messages.

As to the problematic side of the list, according to the checklist evaluation, the objectives do not reflect the points about *reading for orientation.* In this respect, the objectives seem to lack specific details on everyday material. They might be relevant to some official brochures or documents a person can see everywhere in daily life.

5.2.2.3. Assumptions on Level C Objectives

The completely according descriptors with objectives are *overall reading comprehension* and *reading for information and argument* as highlighted in the assumptions on level B objectives. Seemingly, the objectives cover the points such as understanding text and vocabulary or using appropriate references to comprehend the texts. As to the nearly according part, *reading for orientation* was marked by the instructors. This descriptor allows the students to scan the long texts, gather information

and understand a specific task. The nearly disaccording category is *reading instructions*. In this part, a student is supposed to understand the instructions, details and warnings. Therefore, the list of level C may need some points about instructional understanding. The category, which is completely disaccording with the objectives of level C is *reading for correspondence*. Some details on understanding the description of the events and feelings can be put in the list of objectives.

5.2.2.4. Assumptions on Level D Objectives

The course instructors have the opinion in favor that the framework of the *reading for comprehension* highly goes with the list of the objective points. To specify, the student have been directed to make inferences, think critically, understand detailed documented texts and relate what they read to another text by using it as a reference as easily seen in the list of objectives of level D. When it comes to the nearly according category, there are two different categories, which are marked by the instructors. These are *reading for orientation* and *reading for information and argument*. In the ways of argument and information students seem to be guided through the objectives. For orientation, it is expressed in both sources that students are expected to scan the texts and find the details. The nearly disaccording category is pointed as *reading instructions*. The completely disaccording category was considered as the details in *reading correspondence*. The point in corresponding may involve students to communicate through web sources or messages in these days rather than limiting the students' competences to the letters. To conclude, the objectives may need innovations within the consideration of technological and academic improvements of the time.

5.3. Conclusion

The objectives provide a sound route for the course instructors whose lesson plans and teaching strategies can be designed through them. Without employing the objectives a language program cannot make annual plans, draw the main route in general. On the other hand, the objectives do not only enable the entire program to run elementarily, but they are so useful for the skill-based courses that the program makers or the skill coordinators can employ them separately. The descriptor scales of CoE's

document, CEFR (CoE, 2001), became the keystone in order to standardize the objectives all over the Europe.

This study shows that experience-based evaluation of the course tools such as objectives bring about significant steps to develop them. Especially, as the guidance, the document, CEFR (CoE, 2001), allowed the participants who are the reading course instructors also consider their own teaching process in that they could employ the objectives and these objectives were affecting the learning outcomes. Marking the checklist, the instructors gained a sense of critical outlook over the current objectives by comparing them to the illustrative descriptor scales of the CEFR. They could be aware of what they needed to do so that they could turn the objectives into user-friendlier ones.

Along with the recommendations provided by the focus group, the current objectives can be developed under the European language learning standards since the document, CEFR (CoE, 2001) has been considered as a standardized item for the program makers to follow around Europe.

5.4. Limitations

The study has several limitations. The study was carried out without considering the needs of the faculties. The viewpoints of the course instructors may not be enough to determine the needs of the students for a longer period. The opinions of instructors who have been teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) may be applied and taken into consideration so that the characteristics of the objectives can be evaluated by the other practitioners. Shortly, a comprehensive and extensive needs analysis can be implemented to the process. Another limitation is that the expressed illustrative descriptors of the document, CEFR (CoE, 2001), may need to be redesigned in terms of the improvements and the conditions of the time. For example, the statement of 'correspondence' may not be employed by the program makers, so some description statements and subjects may need to be updated in the document.

5.5. Implications

The study has the potential to encourage different and expansive ones for the following researches. A more expansive study which aims to evaluate all the objectives of the language program can be conducted in the following times. In addition to this implication, in a longer process, the improvements of the students who are associated with the CEFR's target model of a proficient level may be observed by the practitioners. After the students obtain the target objectives which have been developed, they will present their skills in different locations of Europe and comprehend the authentic texts.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix1: Illustrative Descriptor Scales of CEFR

In CEFR (2001;p.69) in terms of *overall reading comprehension,*

- C2 user:

  can understand and interpret critically virtually all forms of the written language including abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings. Can understand a wide range of long and complex texts, appreciating subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning.

- C1 user:

  can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.

- B2 user:

  can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.

- B1 user:

  can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.

- A2 user:

  can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language
  and understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.

- A1 user:

  can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.

Secondly, in terms of *reading correspondence*;

- C2 and C1 users:

  can understand any correspondence given the occasional use of a dictionary.

- B2 user:

  can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.

- B1 user:

  can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.

- A2 user:

  can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation etc.) on familiar topics and understand short simple personal letters.

- A1 user:

  can understand short, simple messages on postcards.

Thirdly, the CEFR presents the descriptors including *reading for orientation* (p.70)*;*

- C2, C1 and B2 users*:*

  Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.

- B1 user:

  can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfill a specific task and can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.

- A2 user:

  can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables. Can locate specific information in lists and isolate the information required (e.g. use the 'Yellow Pages' to find a service or tradesman) and understand everyday signs and notices: in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.

- A1 user:

  can recognize familiar names, words and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations.

As the fourth classification, *reading for information and argument* requires (p.70);

- C2 and C1 users:

  can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes and implied as well as stated opinions.

- B2 user:

  can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized sources within his/her field. Can understand specialized articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology and can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.

- B1 user:

  can identify the main conclusions in clearly signaled argumentative texts. Can recognize the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail and can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.

- A2 user:

  can identify specific information in simpler written material he/she encounters such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events.

- A1 user:

  can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support.

As the last category in scales, for reading instructions (2001,p.71);

- C2 and C1 users:

  can understand in detail lengthy, complex instructions on a new machine or procedure, whether or not the instructions relate to his/her own area of specialty, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.

- B2 user:

  can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.

- B1 user:

  can understand clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.

- A2 user:

  can understand regulations, for example safety, when expressed in simple language and can understand simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life – such as a public telephone.

- A1 user:

  can follow short, simple written directions.

7.2. Appendix 2: Interview Questions

PERCEPTIONS OF THE READING COURSE'S INSTRUCTORS

1-What do you think about Reading Objectives you are employing / employed? Have you ever experienced a problem in using the Reading Objectives during the classes?

2- Have you used the Reading Syllabus and implemented Reading course's objectives into the process of teaching? Are they applicable as a complete route for the teachers in terms of meeting students' needs?

3- Have you discovered any difference between the objectives and learning outcome throughout the Reading Course? Have you experienced a piece of gap between them? If yes, could you specify them please?

4- Are the points in the list of Objectives in Reading Syllabus clear enough to understand and use it as a route for teachers? Why?

7.3. Appendix 3: Checklists for the Course Instructors

A CHECKLIST ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE READING OBJECTIVES AT ZIRVE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM (ZUEEP)

This study focuses on the development of the Reading Syllabuses' Objectives at Zirve University English Preparatory Program in accordance with the illustrative descriptor scales of *Common European Framework of References for Languages* (CEFR). As the Language Instructors who have taught Reading classes, please match the ones used at Zirve University with those of the CEFR and mark the rate of accordance between ZUEEP's Reading Objectives and the illustrative descriptor scales of CEFR. The categorization is employed under 5 different umbrellas as (A) Overall Reading Comprehension, (B) Reading Correspondence, (C) Reading for Orientation, (D) Reading for Information and Argument, and Reading Instructions, all of which are classified in terms of the variety of texts in the CEFR's descriptor scales.

    The data obtained from you is going to be used only for this research and kept secret.

    Thank you for your cooperation.

Years of experience: ………..   Alper Yasin EROL

ZUELP Reading Level A Objectives	CEFR A1-A2	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
1- To practice reading in English 2- To initiate using the following reading skills: a) Topic / Main Idea b) Finding details c) Scanning d) Summarizing	**A. OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION**					
	A1 Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.					
	A2 Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.					
	B.READING CORRESPONDENCE					
	A1 Can understand short, simple messages on postcards.					
	A2 Can understand short simple personal letters.					
	A2 Can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation etc.) on familiar topics.					
	A2 Can understand short simple personal letters					
	C.READING FOR ORIENTATION					
	A1 Can recognise familiar names, words and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations					
	A2 Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables.					

1- To practice reading in English 2- To initiate using the following reading skills: a) Topic / Main Idea b) Finding details c) Scanning d) Summarizing	A2 Can locate specific information in lists and isolate the information required (e.g. use the 'Yellow Pages' to find a service or tradesman).					
	A2 Can understand everyday signs and notices: in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.					
	D.READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT					
	A1 Can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support.					
	A2 Can identify specific information in simpler written material he/she encounters such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events					
	E.READING INSTRUCTIONS					
	A1-A2 Can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly.					

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Thank you for your cooperation.

Years of experience: ………..   Alper Yasin EROL

ZUELP Reading Level B Objectives	CEFR A2-B1	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: h) Topic / Main Idea i) Finding details j) Scanning k) Summarizing l) Vocabulary in context Understanding references	**A.OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION**					
	A2 Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language.					
	A2 Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.					
	B1 Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.					
	B.READING CORRESPONDENCE					
	A2 Can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation etc.) on familiar topics.					
	B1 Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.					
	C.READING FOR ORIENTATION					
	A2 Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables.					
	A2 Can locate specific information in lists and isolate the information required (e.g. use the 'Yellow Pages' to find a service or tradesman).					
	A2 Can understand everyday signs and notices: in public places, such as streets, restaurants, and railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.					

To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: - Topic / Main Idea - Finding details - Scanning - Summarizing - Vocabulary in context Understanding references	**B1** Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task.						
	B1 Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.						
	D.READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT						
	A2 Can identify specific information in simpler written material he/she encounters such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events.						
	B1 Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts. Can recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail.						
	B1 Can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.						
	E.READING INSTRUCTIONS						
	A2 Can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly.						
	B1 Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.						

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A CHECKLIST ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE READING OBJECTIVES AT ZIRVE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM (ZUEEP)

This study focuses on the development of the Reading Syllabuses' Objectives at Zirve University English Preparatory Program in accordance with the illustrative descriptor scales of *Common European Framework of References for Languages* (CEFR). As the Language Instructors who have taught Reading classes, please match the ones used at Zirve University with those of the CEFR and mark the rate of accordance between ZUEEP's Reading Objectives and the illustrative descriptor scales of CEFR. The categorization is employed under 5 different umbrellas as (A) Overall Reading Comprehension, (B) Reading Correspondence, (C) Reading for Orientation, (D) Reading for Information and Argument, and Reading Instructions, all of which are classified in terms of the variety of texts in the CEFR's descriptor scales.

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    Thank you for your cooperation.

Years of experience: ………..   Alper Yasin EROL

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ZUELP Reading Level C Objectives	CEFR B1-2B	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
1- To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: m) Topic / Main Idea n) Finding details o) Scanning p) Summarizing q) Vocabulary in context r) Understanding references s) Inference Fact/Opinion	**A. OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION**					
	B1 Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.					
	B2 Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.					
	B. READING CORRESPONDENCE					
	B1 Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.					
	B2 Can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.					
	C. READING FOR ORIENTATION					
	B1 Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task					
	B1 Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.					
	B2 Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details.					

	B2 Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile					
1- To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: - Topic / Main Idea - Finding details - Scanning - Summarizing - Vocabulary in context - Understanding references - Inference Fact/Opinion	**D.READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT**					
	B1 Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts and recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail.					
	B1 Can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.					
	B2 Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field. Can understand specialised articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.					
	B2 Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints					
	E.READING INSTRUCTIONS					
	B1 Can understand clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.					
	B2 Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections					

A CHECKLIST ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE READING OBJECTIVES AT ZIRVE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM (ZUEEP)

This study focuses on the development of the Reading Syllabuses' Objectives at Zirve University English Preparatory Program in accordance with the illustrative descriptor scales of *Common European Framework of References for Languages* (CEFR). As the Language Instructors who have taught Reading classes, please match the ones used at Zirve University with those of the CEFR and mark the rate of accordance between ZUEEP's Reading Objectives and the illustrative descriptor scales of CEFR. The categorization is employed under 5 different umbrellas as (A) Overall Reading Comprehension, (B) Reading Correspondence, (C) Reading for Orientation, (D) Reading for Information and Argument, and Reading Instructions, all of which are classified in terms of the variety of texts in the CEFR's descriptor scales.

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Thank you for your cooperation.

Years of experience: ………..   Alper Yasin EROL

ZUELP Reading Level D Objectives	CEFR B2-C1	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
1- To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: t) Topic / Main Idea u) Finding details v) Scanning w) Summarizing x) Vocabulary in context y) Understanding references z) Inference aa) Fact/Opinion bb) Faster reading cc) Relationships (Patterns of organization) Quoting/paraphrasing	**A. OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION**					
	B2 Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.					
	C1 Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.					
	B.READING CORRESPONDENCE					
	B2 Can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.					
	C1 Can understand any correspondence given the occasional use of a dictionary.					
	C.READING FOR ORIENTATION					
	B2-C1 Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.					
	D.READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT					
	B2 Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field. Can understand specialised articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.					

	B2 Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.					
	C1 Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes and implied as well as stated opinions.					
1- To practice intensive reading 2- To develop and initiate using the following reading skills: - Topic / Main Idea - Finding details - Scanning - Summarizing - Vocabulary in context - Understanding references - Inference - Fact/Opinion - Faster reading - Relationships (Patterns of organization) Quoting/paraphrasing	**E.READING INSTRUCTIONS**					
	B2 Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.					
	C1 Can understand in detail lengthy, complex instructions on a new machine or procedure, whether or not the instructions relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.					