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Evaluation of the curriculum of English preparatory classes at Yildiz Technical University using CIPP model

Uğur Akpur[1], Bülent Alcı[2] and Hakan Karataş[2]

[1]School of Foreign Languages, Yıldız Technical University, Turkey.
[2]Faculty of Education, Yıldız Technical University, Turkey.

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The purpose of this study is to evaluate the instruction program of preparatory classes at Yıldız Technical University using CIPP model. A total of 54 teachers and 753 university students attending preparatory classes in the Academic Year of 2014-2015 formed the study group. The research is based on a questionnaire applied to teachers and students. For the analysis of the data, the means and the standard deviation scores were determined separately. Furthermore, in order to figure out the differences between teachers' and students' responses, independent samples t-test technique was applied. The findings have indicated that although the teachers and students have some apprehensions on a few items such as balancing of skills, lacking of audio-visual materials, not acquiring the habit of studying in groups and the knowledge of English for different areas, they generally hold positive ideas towards the curriculum. It has also been revealed from the responses that, except for the context factor of the instruction program, the difference between the teachers' and students' opinions about the other factors of the instruction program are not significant.

Key words: Curriculum evaluation based on CIPP model, English language teaching, curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

The fact that the number of bilinguals outnumber the amount of monolinguals (Gardner, 2010) and the demand for English to find a convenient career and to catch up with the latest innovations as well as new technologies (Kocaman and Balcıoğlu, 2013) have made English language learning almost a mandatory matter. Thus, ranging from elementary schools to universities, all educational institutions have been endeavoring to teach or improve foreign language skills (Gomez and Vicente, 2011). In Turkey, universities' ultimate end to promote language skills paved the way for the emergence of preparatory schools which offer students intensive programs to improve the language ability and to be able to follow their courses in their department (Coşkun, 2013). Nevertheless, as stated in some studies (Karataş and Fer, 2011; Tunç, 2010; Gökdemir, 2005; Vural, 2004; Alıcı, 2004), despite the cost (time, efforts, money, etc.) spent on preparatory classes, the results gained from those programs are not noteworthy. Even after completing the preparatory classes or graduating from the universities, students are still in pursuit of improving their language skills (Karataş and Fer, 2011). Ranking

*Corresponding author. E-mail: uakpur@yahoo.com 0532 401 57 73

Turkey 43rd place among 63 countries with level of the lowest proficiency in English, the data, which the English Proficiency Index (EPI) reveal, support the same thesis (EPI, 2015). Therefore, it is of great importance to analyze the reasons behind this inadequacy and to scrutinize the factors which lead to the failure.

To this end, analyzing and evaluation of the curriculums applied in these institutions can contribute to reaching a precise judgement over the matter. In this way, not only the weaknesses and insufficiencies of the curriculum can be determined, but the way to react to these matters can be ascertained and regular evaluation criteria can be set, as well. After all, evaluation is an evolving facility from planning to implementation (Marsh and Willis, 2007); a means whereby the value and efficiency of a certain educational facility is measured (Kelly, 1999, 138); 'a process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are being realized' (Tyler, 1950, 69); a course to examine the value of an object systemically (Sanders, 1994, 3). More recent and modern theories of evaluation hold the idea of 'the systematic investigation of the worth which refers to importance of a work or merit which refers to quality of some object (program, project or materials)' (Pinar et al., 2008, 732; Marsh and Willis, 2007, 251). Briefly, in its extensive definition, evaluation activity can be described as a process by means of which 'the worth of or to fix a value on some object' can be determined (Rossi et al., 2004, 2).

Consequently, evaluation is a complicated process and it aims to determine the strengths and weaknesses of a curriculum. The results gained through this process enable the decision-makers to revise, to improve or to continue the curriculum (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009). At this stage, since the practitioners have to search for a model that would serve as a guidebook (Chyung, 2015), the suitability of the evaluation model with the curriculum planning comes to be important (Kelly, 1999). Otherwise, a defect in matching may lead to a misinterpretation and inconsistency.

It is asserted that recent evaluation concept focuses on pluralistic and consensus models. In this aspect, pluralistic view of evaluation is based on the principles of humanistic and social reconstructionists and evaluators should be sensitive to the different values of program participants (McNeil, 2009, 226). On the other hand, consensus models, which can be named as traditional and technical evaluations refer to systematists who consider the practice of evaluation as a technical process. Royse et al. (2014, 2) hold the idea that the most rational way to follow in evaluation process is the 'conservative methods' since they enhance the effectivity of the practice.

An example of consensus models is the CIPP model which was first introduced by Stufflebeam in 1966. The name CIPP includes the evaluation of context, input, process and product (Stufflebeam, 2005). Context evaluation contains focuses on needs, problems, and opportunities as a ground for determining the objectives. In other words, it is essentially related to the program's environment and setting goals. Input evaluation is about sources usage and concentrates on suitability. Assessment of the strategies to obtain the objectives is specified in this step. Evaluators may also assess the alternative designs. When the strategy has been certain, there comes process evaluation. Process evaluation observes the convenience and parallelism between the planned and actual activities. It also monitors the program performance, that is, it provides feedback about the weaknesses or shortcomings of the implementation. Finally, product evaluation provides data to determine whether the ultimate curriculum product is meeting what was hoped in the beginning (Stufflebeam, 2005; Stufflebeam, 2003; Stufflebeam, 1980; Stufflebeam, 1971; Stufflebeam, 1967; McNeil, 2009; Worthen and Sanders, 1987; Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009; Nevo, 1983; Nicholson, 1989).

According to the principle of the CIPP model, the evaluation should provide appropriate and valid information of the curriculum for decision-makers, administrators, teachers, policy boards and other stakeholders of an organization (Stufflebeam, 2005). It is oriented to improvement rather than proving and it has a functional aim to analyze the factors which affect success or failure (Stufflebeam, 2003). The model itself claims that 'the society and its agents cannot make their programs unless they learn where they are weak or strong' (Stufflebeam, 2005, 62). Thus, the CIPP Model serves as a guide for a comprehensive as well as for a practical evaluation and it gives way to improve the curriculum. As an overall conclusion, given that evaluation is an indispensable part of designing and implementation of the curriculum, following methodical steps in this process is a requisite matter. In this study, it is the aimed to evaluate the instruction program of preparatory classes at Yıldız Technical University through the CIPP Model. The reason for utilizing this model lies in its feasibility in foreign languages programs and its variety of evaluation forms such as context, input, process and product evaluation (Karataş and Fer, 2009). What is more, the CIPP Model enables practitioners to comprehend the curriculum better by focusing on simplification of ascertaining program constituents (Ruhe and Boudreau, 2012). Since preparatory classes are facing major difficulties in achieving their objectives, it is thought that, evaluating the preparatory school curriculum through CIPP model will provide decision-makers as well as practitioners with adequate data in order to determine the merit and the worth of the program which is being carried out.

METHOD

Within the framework mentioned above, the purpose of this study emerged as to evaluate the instruction program of preparatory

classes at Yıldız Technical University through CIPP Model. In this sense, the following research question formed the starting point of the present study:

What are the opinions of teachers and students about the instruction program implemented in preparatory classes at Yıldız Technical University?

Research model

The quantitative research model is utilized. The descriptive model was put into practice which simply supplies reviews about the study group and describes the situation which the data show (Trochim, 2002). According to Karasar (2003) in this kind of model, the existing situation is depicted in its original condition without any intervention to the state. Furthermore, together with the situation, an event, an individual or an object can be defined under their unique circumstances.

Participants

A total of 54 lecturers and 753 university students attending preparatory classes at Yıldız Technical University in the Academic Year of 2014-2015 during the Spring Term formed the study group. The data received from 54 lecturers, 47 (87 %) being females and 7 being males (13 %) and 753 students, 322 being females (42.8 %) and 431 being males (57.2 %) were analyzed through the SPSS 21.00 program. Since the data gained from the subjects are meant to be unbiased and each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, all the participants in this research were determined through simple random sampling (Arık, 1998).

Instrument

The scale which was used in the study was developed by Karataş and Fer (2007) in order to evaluate the syllabus of English II instruction program which was implemented in Yıldız Technical University, School of Foreign Languages, Modern Languages Department. The scale itself consists of 46 items in total. There are ten questions about the context, six questions about the input, eight questions about the process and twenty-two questions about the product evaluation of the instruction program. The questions in the scale were in the form of five-point Likert scale: (1) I definitely disagree, (2) I disagree, (3) I partly agree, (4) I agree, (5) I completely agree. The reliability coefficients of four components of the scale ranged from 0.81 to 0.94 Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficient of the whole questionnaire was found to be 0.95. After varimax rotation, the covariance of the items was found to be between 0.24 and 0.68 and their factor loadings ranged from 0.46 to 0.82. The total variance explained by four factors was %52.44 (%19.54 by the first factor, %12.08 by the second factor, %10.62 by the third factor and %10.19 by the fourth factor) (Karataş and Fer, 2011).

Data analysis

The total point of the scale is 230 (context 50; input 30; process 40 and product 110). For the analysis of the data also, the means and the standard deviation scores were determined. In the scale, the intervals were found out as: 1-1.79 'I definitely disagree'; 1.80-2.59 'I disagree'; 2.60-3.39 'I partly agree'; 3.40-4.19 'I agree' and 4.20-5 'I completely agree'. These figures were calculated through the formula of 5-1=4 and 4/5=0.80 (Karataş and Fer, 2009, 53). Furthermore, the findings were displayed in tables and analyzed. In order to find out the differences between teachers' and students' responses, independent samples t-test technique was applied.

RESULTS

In Table 1, the students' opinions in terms of context factor of the instruction program are mentioned.

As it is displayed in Table 1, students' and teachers' opinions regarding context factor of the instruction program range from 'I disagree' to 'I agree'. It is observed that the students, together with the teachers, are not contented with the improvement of their language skills. The students also have apprehensions about balancing of skills in the curriculum. As opposed to the students' responses, the teachers are discontented the level of difficulty in terms of duration. The content of the Coursebook make both the teachers and the students gratified.

Table 2 shows that the students' and the teachers' responses in terms of input factor range from 'I disagree' to 'I agree'. It can be noted that both the students and the teachers are dissatisfied with the lack and inconvenience of audio-visual materials of the curriculum. On the other hand, responses to the items about the effects of classwork and the classwork itself are positive.

As it is seen in Table 3, the students' and teachers' responses in terms of process factor range from 'I disagree' to 'I agree'. It is observed that the students feel the lack of activities which can be applied to all skills concern the students. However, the teachers are not pleased with the number of exercises, the amount of homework and sufficiency of participation. The number of formative tests is considered to be adequate by both the students and teachers.

As it is presented in Table 4, the students' and the teachers' responses regarding product factor range from 'I disagree' to 'I agree'. It can be noted that the students are contented with the improvement of their vocabulary knowledge. Nevertheless, they, together with the teachers, think that the curriculum does not meet their individual interests and it does not help them acquire the knowledge of English for their fields and for their future needs. In contrast with the students, the teachers do argue that the curriculum makes the students have the habit of studying in groups. In addition, the teachers do not support the idea that the curriculum improves students' speaking skills meets students' characteristics needs.

In order to determine whether there were significant differences between the teachers' and the students' opinions regarding the instruction program, the data were analyzed using the technique of independent samples t-test. Table 5 presents the analysis of the teachers' and

Table 1. The means and the standard deviation results of students' and teachers' opinions concerning context.

Context evaluation	Student		Teacher	
Item	**X**	**sd**	**X**	**sd**
The curriculum is appropriate for the improvement of the students' language skills.	2.43	1.03	2.11	0.92
The reading, writing, listening and speaking skills are balanced well in the curriculum.	2.41	1.03	3.44	0.74
The objectives of the curriculum meet the needs of the students regarding English.	3.04	0.84	3.24	0.77
The objectives of the curriculum are appropriate for the students' preliminary knowledge of English.	3.40	0.88	3.50	0.82
The level of the difficulty of the topics in the curriculum complies with their duration.	3.01	0.96	2.12	0.75
The total duration of the curriculum is adequate.	3.32	0.99	3.12	1.09
The Coursebook of the curriculum is appropriate for the students' level.	3.52	0.85	3.61	0.68
The Coursebook attracts the students' attention.	2.80	0.99	3.38	0.76
The content of the Coursebook is consistent with the objectives of the curriculum.	3.13	0.83	3.51	0.88
The content of the Coursebook is comprehensible.	3.51	0.75	4.00	0.55

Table 2. The Means and the Standard Deviation Results of Students' and Teachers' Opinions Concerning Input.

Context evaluation	Student		Teacher	
Item	**X**	**sd**	**X**	**sd**
The audio visual materials of the curriculum help the students learn easily.	2.78	0.94	1.96	0.89
The audio visual materials of the curriculum attract the students' attention.	2.56	0.91	2.01	0.92
The audio visual materials of the curriculum have positive effects on the students' language skills.	3.20	0.90	3.72	0.87
The classwork of the curriculum helps the students learn easily.	3.58	0.95	3.51	1.16
The classwork of the curriculum attracts the students' attention.	3.02	0.95	3.37	0.92
The classwork of the curriculum has positive effects on the students' language skills.	3.46	0.89	3.56	0.96

Table 3. The means and the standard deviation results of students' and teachers' opinions concerning process.

Context evaluation	Student		Teacher	
Item	**X**	**sd**	**X**	**sd**
Sufficient exercises are done about each new topic in the curriculum.	2.87	0.90	2.03	0.93
When necessary, revision is included in the curriculum.	3.13	0.95	3.18	0.95
The consolidating homework is given to the students about the newly learned topics.	3.05	0.93	2.05	0.86
The curriculum enables the students to participate in the course actively.	2.66	0.97	2.09	0.83
The number of the formative tests applied during the curriculum is enough.	3.76	1.01	4.17	0.75
The program has activities suitable for pair and group work.	3.62	0.91	3.70	0.77
The curriculum has activities in which all language skills can be applied.	2.35	0.96	3.40	0.71
During the curriculum, the time spent on solving the students' problems about English is enough.	2.76	0.90	3.00	0.85

the students' opinions in terms of context factor of the instruction program.

As it can be observed in Table 5, the arithmetic mean scores of the teachers' opinions about the context factor of the instruction program is X=32.07 and the arithmetic mean scores of the students' opinions about the program is X=30.58. According to the data, it can be observed that, there is a significant difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions in terms of context factor of the instruction program ($t=-2.35$, $p< 0.05$).

In Table 6, the analysis of the teachers' and the students' opinions in terms of input factor of the instruction program are displayed.

As it is displayed in Table 6, the arithmetic mean scores of the teachers' opinions about the input factor of the instruction program is X=18.14 and the arithmetic mean scores of the students' opinions about the program is X=18.64. The data show that the difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions in terms of input factor of the instruction program is not significant

Table 4. The means and the standard deviation results of students' and teachers' opinions concerning product.

Context evaluation	Student		Teacher	
Item	X	sd	X	sd
The curriculum meets the students' individual needs.	2.78	0.75	2.88	0.77
The curriculum meets the students' individual interests.	2.45	0.87	2.20	0.85
The curriculum meets the students' characteristics needs.	2.72	0.77	2.05	0.87
The curriculum meets the students' existing needs related with English.	2.97	0.71	3.31	0.77
The curriculum forms a basis for the students' future needs related with English.	3.25	0.87	3.64	0.80
The curriculum contributes to the students' work related with their fields.	2.74	0.97	3.00	0.85
The curriculum motivates the students to learn English.	3.09	0.92	3.01	0.90
The projects assigned according to the curriculum affect the students' language skills positively.	3.08	0.93	3.39	0.92
The curriculum increases the students' vocabulary knowledge in English.	3.83	0.86	3.91	0.52
The curriculum helps the students to acquire the habit of studying English.	2.78	1.05	2.00	0.97
The curriculum helps the students to acquire the habit of studying in groups.	2.35	0.99	3.35	1.01
The curriculum gives the students the opportunity to use their knowledge.	2.90	0.80	3.07	0.72
The students' improvement of English reading skills is satisfactory.	3.12	0.86	3.00	0.89
The students' improvement of English writing skills is satisfactory.	3.29	0.91	3.31	0.86
The students' improvement of English listening skills is satisfactory.	2.92	0.94	2.74	0.81
The students' improvement of English speaking skills is satisfactory.	2.78	0.95	2.31	0.82
The students' improvement of English grammar is satisfactory.	3.19	0.82	3.20	0.92
The knowledge of English the students acquire at the end of the curriculum is satisfactory.	3.11	0.70	2.81	0.87
The English skills the students acquire at the end of the curriculum are satisfactory.	3.00	0.62	2.80	0.81
The curriculum complies with the students' courses in their fields of study.	2.52	0.87	2.48	0.88
The curriculum helps the students to acquire the knowledge of English they need for their fields of study.	2.06	0.96	2.64	0.83
The curriculum helps the students to acquire the knowledge of English they need for various business areas.	2.41	0.97	1.98	0.88

Table 5. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning context factor.

Group	N	X	sd	t	df	p
Teacher	54	32.07	3.54	-2.35	805	0.01
Student	753	30.58	4.53			

p< .05.

Table 6. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning input factor.

Group	N	X	sd	t	df	p
Teacher	54	18.14	2.94	1.09	805	.27
Student	753	18.64	3.21			

p< .05.

(t=1.09, p< .05).

Table 7 displays the analysis of the teachers' and the students' opinions concerning process factor of the instruction program.

From Table 7, it can be deduced that the arithmetic mean scores of the teachers' opinions about the process factor of the instruction program is X=23.64 and the arithmetic mean scores of the students' opinions about the program is X=24.74. According to the data, there is not a significant difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions in terms of process factor of the instruction program (t=1.07, p< 0.05).

Table 7. The Arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning process factor.

Group	N	X	sd	t	df	p
Teacher	54	23.64	2.93	1.07	805	0.28
Student	753	24.24	4.03			

p< .05.

Table 8. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning product factor.

Group	N	X	sd	t	df	p
Teacher	54	63.14	10.71	0.22	805	0.82
Student	753	63.43	9.08			

p< .05.

Table 9. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning context, input, process and product factors.

Group	N	X	sd	t	df	P
Teacher	54	137.01	15.63	-0.04	805	0.96
Student	753	136.91	16.33			

p< .05.

Table 8 shows the analysis of the teachers' and the students' opinions concerning product factor of the instruction program.

In Table 8, it can be seen that the arithmetic mean scores of the teachers' opinions about the product factor of the instruction program is X=63.14 and the arithmetic mean scores of the students' opinions about the program is X=63.43. The results show that, difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions in terms of product factor of the instruction program is not significant (t=0.22, p< 0.05).

As it is displayed in Table 9, the arithmetic mean scores of the teachers' opinions about all the factors of the instruction program is X=137.01 and the arithmetic mean scores of the students' opinions about the program is X=136.91. The data show that the difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions about all the factors of the instruction program is not significant (t=-0.04, p< 0.05).

DISCUSSION

The present research study focused on the teachers' and students' opinions about the instruction program implemented in preparatory classes at Yıldız Technical University. The data gained from the study indicated the fact that the students' responses ranged from 'I disagree' to 'I agree'. In context component of the instruction program, it is apparent that the curriculum does not meet the students' needs in terms of improving their language skills. Likewise, students do not have positive ideas about the balance of the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in the curriculum. On the other hand, although teachers stated the same opinion about the curriculum's performance of improving the students' language skills with the students, they expressed the idea that the four skills are well balanced in the curriculum. One of the most remarkable differences between the teachers' and students' opinions is about the duration allocated to the difficult topics. Even though students responded that the duration is adequate for the difficult topics, the teachers expressed the opposite idea. Another difference is about the attraction of the Coursebook. According to the data, the students are not attracted by the Coursebook while the teachers claim the opposite. The comprehensibility of the Coursebook was the item on which the both sides agreed.

As for the results of the input factor, the items about audio-visual materials of the curriculum were rated the lowest. Especially, the teachers drew attention that the lack of audio-visual materials is an important matter that

has to be dealt with. On the other hand, in-class activities that are performed in classes were considered beneficial by the two sides.

Analyzing the findings of process factor, it can be seen that, the teachers are not content with supplementary exercises done in the classes, homework about the newly learned topics and students' participation in the class. However, their responses about pair work activities and the number of formative tests are positive. Nevertheless, the students do not agree with the idea that curriculum's activities enable students to use their language skills. Sufficiency of the number of tests is expressed by the students, as well. Moreover, both sides agreed on revision done when necessary.

Taking the product factor of the instruction program into consideration, it is thought-provoking to see that mostly the teachers and the students responded to same items negatively. Both sides stated that the curriculum has problems to meet students' needs; it does not enable students to have studying habits in groups; it does not meet their needs to follow their courses in their fields of study and it does not provide knowledge for different business areas. Apart from this, it is clear that, the teachers are satisfied with the students' improvement of speaking English. On the other hand, according to the teachers, the curriculum constitutes a basic step for the students' future needs, on which the students also agree. What is more, both sides have positive ideas about the four skills' performance in the curriculum. As an overall conclusion, analyzing the arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the t-test results concerning all the factors, it is clearly seen that, although in some items they vary, except for the context factor, the difference between the teachers' and the students' opinions about the other factors of the instruction program is not significant in total.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the responses from the questionnaire, it can be concluded that, both the students and the teachers generally have positive ideas about the four components of the instruction program implemented in preparatory classes. However, it was noted that, the students have apprehensions such as not being able to improve their language skills, imbalance of the skills in the curriculum, inappropriateness of the audio-visual materials and not having enough knowledge of English for their fields of study and for their future needs. Most of these ideas are also shared by the teachers.

Taking the findings into account, the following suggestions were put forward in order to improve the quality of the curriculum: (1) It is suggested that a comprehensive needs analysis should be done for students as well as teachers so as to determine the objectives of the curriculum. This can pave the way for taking the students' individual interests into consideration. (2) It is recommended that, over the course of designing the curriculum, all the stakeholders should participate in setting goals, learning experiences, learning methods and assessment criteria. (3) It can be advised that, the four skills of the language should be emphasized in the curriculum in such a way that there could be a balance among them. To do this, in-class activities and group-work exercises can be arranged. Furthermore, applying the principles of project-assisted learning can contribute to focusing on all the skills. (4) It is also recommended that diversity of the audio visual materials should be increased and the utilizing of them should be encouraged (5) Knowledge of English needed in real-life situations and required fields of study should be the focal point of the curriculum and this has to be considered in the process of design. (6) It is recommended that the codes of peer learning should be emphasized and the students should be encouraged to acquire habit of learning in groups by designing learning atmospheres which stimulate group work. (7) Interviewing with the teachers and the students regarding their priorities, concerns, wishes and recommendations is thought to be helpful in developing the curriculum.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

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