

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **English teachers' opinions on problems encountered in English language teaching in schools: The case of Karabük**

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The opinions of English teachers on the problems encountered in English teaching in the schools in Karabük Province were examined in this study, by taking a variety of variables into consideration. There are 231 English teachers in state schools in Karabük. A total of 67 English teachers serving in the primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in the central districts of Karabük Province-Turkey in the 2018-2019 school year participated voluntarily in the study, in which the Scale for Challenges Encountered by English Teachers Regarding Their Field, developed previously was translated into English and used. According to the results of the analysis, it can be said that while English teachers do not struggle with difficulties regarding collaboration with families, institutions, organisations and people in immediate and distant vicinities for the most part, they do struggle with difficulties in terms of making plans that are compatible with English teaching programmes. It was found that there are no significant differences in the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching according to the variables of age, level of education, marital status, term of office, gender and school type. In light of all these assessments, it is thought that the identification and resolution of problems by determining and evaluating the perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching will provide contributions to studies directed towards ameliorating and improving the quality of schools and education.

**Key words:** English teaching, schools, teachers, programmes.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to reach the level of contemporary civilisation and catch up with the standards of developed countries, well-planned economic investments are not enough by

themselves, being able to attain the projected standards also requires well-educated individuals. To this end, the supreme goal of educational systems these days is to be

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able to cultivate the people of this *information age*. Additionally, in a world where the importance of information is rapidly increasing and transitioning into the information society, it is seen that the social, cultural, political and technological changes that are taking place are affecting education systems and that new approaches and trends are emerging in education. According to İşisağ and Demirel (2010), nowadays, when communication has gained a paramount level of importance, it has become an indispensable need for every society to speak one or more foreign language as well as to familiarise with and understand different cultures.

Gedikoğlu (2005), who has touched upon the importance of knowing a foreign language in terms of scientific studies along with cultural exchange in today's world, states that studies which can be a source for technological developments and scientific advancements are mostly conducted abroad in Europe, America or in certain countries in the Far East. In order to be able to keep up with the advancements in science and technology, communicate with other individuals and benefit from progress of information technology, learning the prevalent foreign languages is an absolute imperative of our age. Knowing a foreign language is not merely limited to the fields of science and technology, it is a skill that inevitably needs to be possessed by the modern person in the globalising world (Gedikoğlu, 2005). In this context, by virtue of the effect of globalisation, our country is also in intense political, economic and cultural interaction with the world. It is also seen that foreigners take an interest in Turkey for similar reasons and that the most preferred language for the focus of this interaction is English, as mentioned above (Arslan and Akbarov, 2010; Başat, 2014; Hamiloğlu, 2005; Özdemir, 2006; Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE)/MEB Yabancı Dil Çalıştayı 2006). With English having become a mutual language of communication (*lingua franca*), the young and old alike are making efforts in the name of learning English. Having a command of English is considered an indicator of power and status in our society, as it is for many others (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998, cited in Yaman, 2018).

In modern times, when relations have increased in the economic, social and cultural areas within the international arena, it has become an unavoidable necessity to learn English, the common language of communication which proves to be the most important factor in regulating and actualising these relations. Therefore, the demands oriented towards learning English in our country are exhibiting an increase in parallel with this state of affairs. In this vein, there have been changes in the roles of English teachers also by far. English teachers' qualifications, skills and abilities are very important and they have big responsibilities for teaching purposes.

### Foreign language teaching studies in Turkey

It is seen that studies in foreign language teaching in Turkey have been developing in parallel with efforts to integrate with the world. The 'Foreign Language Teaching Development Centre' was established under the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) Board of Education and Discipline in 1972. The foreign language programme which was subsequently developed began to be implemented in thirty-two schools in the educational year 1972-1973 and this practice which also continued between 1973-1977 was extended to all secondary education institutions. The English programme for Anatolian High Schools was prepared in 1983 and began implementation in 1984. The level system started in 1988 was abolished after one year. In 1997, English became one of the compulsory courses in the fourth and fifth grades of primary school and it became a compulsory course starting from the second grade of primary school in 2013 (Demirel, 2016; Kırkiç and Boray, 2017).

In the following years, the Bologna process expanded to include 48 different countries including Turkey (Aksoy et al., 2018). In all of the countries participating in the Bologna Process, which Turkey joined on 19 May 2001, foreign language education was incorporated into the compulsory courses and it was settled that these courses comprise 10% of the teaching programme (Durukafa, 2007).

In other respects, in the English programmes which were prepared in accordance with the contemporary developments and European Union (EU) standards, the behaviourist approach that held sway for years is being abandoned and a student-centered, process-oriented constructivist approach is being taken as a basis with communicative functions being incorporated. This programme in which the mixed-type programme development approach (structural, situational, subject-oriented, conceptual/functional, process/task and skill-oriented approaches) is used, can easily coalesce with the European Language Passport. This passport shows student proficiencies in foreign languages. Furthermore, it supports every foreign language programme aiming to develop student communicative proficiencies (Kıroğlu, 2008).

In the regulation of the Turkish Ministry of National Education Foreign Language Education and Teaching (2006), the aim of foreign language education and teaching in parallel with the English programme is stated as: "In conformity with the general aims and fundamental principles of National Education and by taking the aims and levels of schools and institutions into consideration in the foreign language that is being taught, ensuring that individuals gain listening-comprehension, reading-comprehension, speaking and writing skills, use the language learned and develop a positive attitude towards

foreign language teaching".

### **The teacher factor**

Radical changes are being made in our education system with each passing day. The improvement, development and sustainability of the country is rendered possible by the materialisation of these changes, recognition of them, the healthy operation of this democratic structure along with the cultivation of qualified workforce. When a qualified workforce is mentioned in the globalising world, individuals who have knowledge and skill with regard to language come to mind, in addition to those with a view to technology. In foreign language teaching, English teachers are considered to bear key significance. This is because it is apparent that the language which has the most prevalent area of usage as the language of science and commerce is English. It is seen that the social, cultural, political, technological and economic changes affect education systems throughout the world, where the importance of information is rapidly increasing and where there is a transition into the information society.

The competitive environment that has formed as a result of globalisation has resulted in the necessity of training individuals who have superior qualifications. When it is taken into account that the way to endow these qualities is through education, the importance of training teachers on the global competitive scale will be better understood.

According to Aydın (2016), Takkaç (2014) and Yalçın (2017), the competitive environment that has formed as a result of globalisation in today's world has brought forth the necessity of training individuals who have superior qualifications and hence, an ideal foreign language teacher needs to possess certain qualities. First and foremost, foreign language teachers need to be proficient, well-equipped and competent in terms of fundamental language knowledge and skills. However, the teacher who enters the profession as highly equipped with regard to fundamental knowledge and skills, will not necessarily stay at the same level for his/her whole professional life. For this reason, the ideal teacher needs to commence the profession having gained an adequate level of research skills to guide them in the subsequent years. In other respects, Demirpolat (2015, cited in Alagözlü, 2017) and Seferoğlu (2006), state that teacher preparation is a complex task and requires careful planning and skilful adherence of a quality standard for pre-service training. This solution would enable the teacher to access to the target language in order to render them capable of establishing communication in the foreign language in the class, and to assess their teaching skills before commencement of a formal teaching program.

Routinely, language teaching is generally discussed

from the perspective of the teacher. It should not be forgotten that the purpose of teaching is to enable learning, and that learning is not an exact reflection of teaching. For as much as a teacher's beliefs, aims, attitudes and decisions regarding teaching affect their teaching, a student's beliefs, aims, attitudes and decisions regarding teaching and learning affect their learning. In the interpretation of many foreign language learning models, the student's beliefs regarding teaching and learning play the fundamental role (Akalin and Zengin, 2007).

In this study, the opinions of teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools have been evaluated. One of the most important aims of the study is to set forth the precautions to be taken by identifying the challenges encountered in English teaching.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions of this study were composed as: "What are the perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools?"

The sub-problems categorised are as follows:

- 1) What are the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools?
- 2) Do the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools, exhibit significant differences according to the variables of:
  - a) Gender
  - b) Age
  - c) Level of education
  - d) Marital status
  - e) Term of office (experience)
  - f) School type

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research model**

The research is descriptive and was conducted using the survey model. Survey models are research models which aim to describe a situation from the past or still current (event, person, object) as it is and with respect to its own conditions. General survey models are survey arrangements which are applied in a population consisting of multiplexed members and carried out on the whole population or a group, example or sample to be taken out of it, with the aim of

reaching a general estimation about the population (Karasar, 2006).

### Study group

Karabük is a small province with the population of more than 100000. Totally, 3149 teachers are available in Karabük Province (<https://karabuk.meb.gov.tr/>). Out of 3149, there are 231 English teachers work for state schools in Karabük. 67 English teachers in 20 schools accepted the participation voluntarily in the survey. These English teachers serving in primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in Karabük Province-Turkey in the 2018-2019 school year. The questionnaire was distributed among the participants and about five minutes were given to respond it.

### Data collection tool

In the study, *The Scale for Challenges Encountered by English Teachers Regarding Their Field* developed by Özel (2011), has been adapted, translated into English by the author and used. Its validity value was found reliable. The questionnaire used in the study consists of two main parts. The first part of the questionnaire comprised of personal information questions (gender, age, level of education, marital status, term of office-experience, school/institution of affiliation). The second part of the scale comprised of questions verbalising the difficulties encountered by teachers regarding their field and scaled as *Yes (1), Partially (2), No (3)* in compliance with the 3-item Likert Scale.

### Data analysis

The answers given to the data collection tool by the teachers were coded and loaded into the SPSS 22 statistics software pack. This program analysed the data given automatically. The 2 poles (ranges) on the scale for challenges encountered by English teachers regarding their field were divided into 3 options (2:3=0,66) and by adding the retrieved number onto the lowest number representing the options, it was evaluated as:

1.00 - 1.66= Yes, 1.67 - 2.33= Partially, 2.34 - 3.00 = No.

In the analysis of the survey questions, descriptive methods such as mean and standard deviation were used along with parametric tests (t-test and OneWay ANOVA for the independent groups) and the results have been expressed through tables. Since the Cronbach Alpha value of reliability which had been sought in order to determine the reliability and validity of the data was 0.90, the reliability of the data has been found to be high. In the interpretations, the arithmetic means of the groups and "p" significance value have been taken into account.

## FINDINGS

### Descriptive findings regarding the participants

The findings regarding the 67 participants who participated in the study and answered all of the questions in the survey are given in Table 1.

When the Table 1 was examined in detail, it was seen that 48 of the participants (71.6%) were female and 19 of the participants (28.4%) were male. It was determined

that 19 participants (28.4%) were in the 20-29 age group, 12 participants (17.9%) were in the 30-39 age group, 18 participants (26.9%) were in the 40-49 age group, 15 participants (22.4%) were in the 50-59 age group and 3 participants (4.5%) were aged 60 and above. It was ascertained that 57 participants (85.1%) attained undergraduate degrees, while 10 participants (14.9%) attained postgraduate degrees. It was seen that 41 participants (61.2%) were married, 26 participants (38.8%) were single, 18 participants (26.9%) had completed 0-5 years of service, 7 participants (10.4%) 6-10 years, 8 participants (11.9%) 11-15 years, 10 participants (14.9%) 16-20 years, 8 participants (11.9%) 21-25 years, 16 participants (23.9%) 26 years and above and 11 participants (16.4%) worked in primary schools, 16 participants (23.9%) in secondary schools and 40 participants (59.7%) in high schools.

### English teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools

English teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to their perceptions are given in Table 2.

When Table 2 is examined in detail, it can be seen that while the participants responded to the proposition of *Making plans that are suitable for the English teaching programme*, with the lowest degree in the level of 'Yes' with a mean of ( $\bar{x}=1,63$ ), they have shown a high level of participation to the proposition of *Collaborating with families and institutions, organisations and individuals in immediate and distant vicinities for students to use the foreign language*, with the highest degree in the level of 'Partially' with a mean of ( $\bar{x}=2,33$ ). Thus, it can be said that while the English teachers do not encounter challenges for the most part in terms of collaborating with families and institutions, organisations and individuals in immediate and distant vicinities for students to use the foreign language, they do encounter challenges in terms making plans that are suitable for the English teaching programme.

The general mean is seen to be at the level of 'Partially' with a mean of ( $\bar{X}=1,90$ ). Thus, it was extrapolated that the perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered concerning their field are at the level of 'Partially' and that they encounter challenges concerning their field from time to time.

### The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the gender variable

The results of the t-Test carried out for the differences

**Table 1.** Descriptive analysis regarding the participants.

Variables	Category	Number	%
Gender	Female	48	71.6
	Male	19	28.4
Age	Ages 20-29	19	28.4
	Ages 30-39	12	17.9
	Ages 40-49	18	26.9
	Ages 50-59	15	22.4
	60 and older	3	4.5
Level of Education	Undergraduate	57	85.1
	Postgraduate	10	14.9
Marital Status	Married	41	61.2
	Single	26	38.8
Term of office (experience)	0-5 Years	18	26.9
	6-10 Years	7	10.4
	11-15 Years	8	11.9
	16-20 Years	10	14.9
	21-25 Years	8	11.9
	26 years and above	16	23.9
The School of Affiliation	Primary school	11	16.4
	Secondary school	16	23.9
	High school	40	59.7

**Table 2.** The perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

Propositions	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	Level of participation
Making plans that are suitable for the English teaching programme	67	1.63	0.76	Yes
Organizing the suitable settings for English teaching	67	1.75	0.79	Partially
Understanding what is read in English	67	1.76	0.72	Partially
Using materials and resources which are suitable to the process of English teaching	67	1.78	0.69	Partially
Ensuring that students speak English accurately and comprehensibly	67	1.78	0.71	Partially
Using methods and techniques that are suitable to the process of English teaching	67	1.79	0.59	Partially
Interpreting the assessment results directed to determining the language development of the students and providing feedback	67	1.79	0.66	Partially
Developing students' listening/watching skills	67	1.82	0.72	Partially
Carrying out formative assessment in English teaching	67	1.82	0.72	Partially
Preparing different tools and methods for assessment and evaluation that can be used in English teaching	67	1.82	0.78	Partially
Developing students' reading skills	67	1.84	0.69	Partially
Being a model for students in terms of speaking English fluently and accurately	67	1.84	0.77	Partially
Writing in English	67	1.84	0.79	Partially
Developing students' writing skills	67	1.87	0.76	Partially
Understanding what is being listened to in English	67	1.94	0.74	Partially
Using the assessment and evaluation tools and methods which are to be used in the teaching process by benchmarking them in terms of practicality, validity and reliability	67	1.96	0.68	Partially

**Table 2.** Contd.

Reflecting the studies he/she carries out which are directed to his/her professional development on the teaching process applications	67	2.03	0.74	Partially
Designing new assessment and evaluation tools	67	2.15	0.70	Partially
Knowing the culture of the language that is being taught	67	2.15	0.76	Partially
Preparing original activities which will improve the use of English in daily life	67	2.15	0.80	Partially
Collaborating with families and institutions, organizations and individuals in immediate and distant vicinities for students to use the foreign language	67	2.33	0.77	Partially

**Table 3.** The t-Test results according to the gender variable of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	p
Female	48	40.21	8.24	65	0.596	0.553
Male	19	38.79	10.07			

\* $p < 0.05$ 

according to the gender variable of the opinions of English teachers participating in the study regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools are given in Table 3.

According to the analysis results in Table 3, it is seen that a significant difference does not manifest between the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the gender variable. [ $t_{(65)}=,596$ ;  $p > ,05$ ]. While the arithmetic mean of the opinions of female teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools is ( $\bar{x}=40,21$ ), the arithmetic mean of the opinions of male teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools is ( $\bar{x}=38,79$ ). The quantitative difference between them does not constitute a statistically significant difference. This finding can be interpreted as that the participants' genders do not cause any differentiation in the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

#### **The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the age variable**

The ANOVA results for the difference of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching according to the age variable are given in Table 4.

According to the results of the analysis in Table 4, it is seen that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the age

variable [ $F_{(4-62)}= ,841$ ;  $p > ,05$ ]. This finding can be interpreted as that the ages of participants do not cause any difference in the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

#### **The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the level of education variable**

The t-test results for the difference in the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching according to the level of education variable are given in Table 5.

According to the analysis results in Table 5, it is seen that no significant difference manifests between the opinions of the participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the level of education variable. [ $t_{(65)}=1,299$ ;  $p > ,05$ ]. While the arithmetic mean of the opinions of teachers who hold an undergraduate degree regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools is ( $\bar{x}=39,23$ ), the arithmetic mean of the opinions of the participants who hold a postgraduate degree regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools is ( $\bar{x}=43,10$ ). The quantitative difference between them does not constitute a statistically significant difference. This finding can be interpreted as that the participants' level of education does not cause any differentiation in the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

**Table 4.** One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results for the difference of english teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the age variable.

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	S
ages 20-29	19	37.00	7.99
ages 30-39	12	39.67	11.63
ages 40-49	18	40.61	9.15
ages 50-59	15	42.33	6.84
Age 60 years and older	3	40.67	5.69

  

The Source of Variance	KT	SD	KO	F	p	Difference
Between Groups	259.533	4	64.883	0.841	0.504	
Within Groups	4780.944	62	77.112			--
Total	5040.478	66				

**Table 5.** The t-test Results of the Opinions of English Teachers Regarding the Challenges Encountered in English Teaching in Schools According to the Level of Education Variable.

Level of Education	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	p
Undergraduate	57	39.23	8.24			
Postgraduate	10	43.10	11.09	65	1.299	0.199

\* $p < 0.05$ .

**Table 6.** The t-test results of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools According to the marital status variable.

Marital Status	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	p
Married	41	39.90	7.75			
Single	26	39.65	10.27	65	,113	.911

\* $p < 0.05$ .

**The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the marital status variable**

The t-test results for the difference in the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching according to the marital status variable are given in Table 6.

According to the analysis results in the Table 6, it is seen that a significant difference does not manifest between the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the marital status variable [ $t_{(65)} = ,113$ ;  $p > ,05$ ]. While the arithmetic mean of the opinions of the married participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools is ( $\bar{x} = 39,90$ ), the arithmetic

mean of the opinions of the single participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching is ( $\bar{x} = 39,65$ ). The quantitative difference between them does not constitute a statistically significant difference. This finding can be interpreted as that the participants' marital status does not lead to any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

**The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the Term of Office variable**

The ANOVA results for the differences in English teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered

**Table 7.** One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the difference of English teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the term of office variable.

Variable		N	$\bar{X}$	S			
	0-5 years	18	36.94	8.73			
	6-10 years	7	41.14	11.58			
	11-15 years	8	38.75	8.58			
	16-20 years	10	39.90	10.89			
	21-25 Years	8	40.63	6.80			
	26 years and above	16	42.50	7.03			
Term of office	<b>The Source of Variance</b>	<b>KT</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>KO</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Difference</b>
	Between Groups	290.401	5	58.080	0.746	0.592	
	Within Groups	4750.077	61	77.870			--
	Total	5040.478	66				

**Table 8.** One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for the Difference of English Teachers' Opinions Regarding the Challenges Encountered in English Teaching in Schools According to the School Type Variable.

Variable		N	$\bar{X}$	S			
	Primary School	11	36.55	9.41			
	Secondary School	16	41.56	8.67			
	High School	40	40.00	8.56			
School Type	<b>The Source of Variance</b>	<b>KT</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>KO</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Difference</b>
	Between Groups	167.813	2	83.906	1.102	0.338	
	Within Groups	4872.665	64	76.135			--
	Total	5040.478	66				

in English teaching according to the term of office variable are given in Table 7. According to the analysis results in the Table 7, it is seen that a significant difference does not manifest between the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the term of office variable [ $F_{(5-61)} = ,746$ ;  $p >,05$ ]. This finding can be interpreted as that the participants' term of office does not lead to any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

#### **The comparison of the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools according to the school type variable**

The ANOVA results for the differences in English teachers' opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching according to the school type variable are given in Table 8.

According to the analysis results in Table 8, it is seen

that a significant difference does not manifest between the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools and the school type variable [ $F_{(2-64)} = 1,102$ ;  $p >,05$ ]. This finding can be interpreted as that the school type in which participants serve does not lead to any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Sixty seven English teachers serving in 20 schools which comprised of primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in the Karabük Province, participated in the study. 48 of the participants were male while 19 of them were female. The ages of the teachers in active service were between the band of 20 and the band of 60 and above. According to the data obtained from the English teachers, 11 of them served in primary schools, 16 of them served in secondary schools and 40 of them served in high schools.



The quantitative difference between the opinions of male and female teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools does not constitute a statistically significant difference. This finding can be interpreted as that the gender of the participants does not cause any differentiation in the opinions of participants regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools. Moreover, it can be extrapolated that the ages of the participants does not cause any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

Fourteen of the 67 English teachers who participated in the study held a Master's degree. The results have also been compared according to the level of education and it has been understood that the participants' level of education does not lead to any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching.

In other respects, there is not a considerable difference between the arithmetic means of the participants, 41 of whom were married and 26 of whom were single, regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools again, according to the findings obtained, it was ascertained that the participants' terms of office does not cause any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools.

As mentioned above, English teachers who served at the primary, secondary and high school levels participated in the study and it has been determined that the school type in which the participants serve does not cause any differentiation in their opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools. Hence, it can be stated that the opinions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools, do not exhibit significant differences according to the variables of; gender, age, level of education, marital status, experience, school type.

Nonetheless, according to the results of the data, it can be said that while the students of the English teachers do not encounter challenges in terms of 'participating in collaboration with families and institutions, organisations and individuals in immediate and distant vicinities', they do encounter *challenges* in terms of 'making plans that are suitable for the English teaching programmes'. Thus, it was extrapolated that the perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered concerning their field are at the level of 'Partially', and that they encounter challenges concerning their field from time to time.

This inference corresponds to the views of: Işık (2008), who complained about there not being a proper foreign language teaching programme; Enginarlar (2014) who expressed that programmes should be revised; and Tütüniş (2014) who pointed out the curricular problems that are caused by not taking the opinions of English teachers at the stage of preparing teaching programmes

and course books. Moreover, Yılmaz and Yücel (2017) added that course books play a very great role in language teaching. In parallel with these, when the issue of English teaching in Turkey is viewed in a general sense, in the joint study carried out by the British Council and TEPAV (2013) called 'Turkey National Needs Assessment of State School English Language Teaching', problems such as English teachers not being able to reflect their potential to their classes, being too dependent on the course book and the teacher-centralism of education were mentioned. On the other hand, Unal and İlhan (2017), in their research on higher education state that "students and instructors' suggestions also centered upon 'educational system', 'instructional program' and 'learning environment', and there were very limited suggestions about teaching materials."

## Conclusion

In this study, the teacher opinions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools in the Karabük Province and the responds for aforementioned research questions have been investigated. In the light of all of these assessments, it is thought that the identification and resolution of problems by determining and evaluating English teachers' perceptions regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching will provide contributions to studies directed towards ameliorating and improving the quality of schools and education.

Revealing the challenges encountered by teachers in the application of various curricula and presenting proposals for solutions with this study, will prove instructive for the more effective and successful implementation of the programme in the future. Within this scope, for as much as the study is presumed to contribute to the improvement of English teaching programmes, it is also considered that it will be an aid in the clarification of more effective, useful and realistic teaching programmes through the detection of the reasons that hinder the attainment of the specified goals and the corresponding solution proposals. The fact that information has shown quantitative and qualitative increase and that the individuals need to learn the information in a systematic manner has also increased, has laid the groundwork for the improvement and change of education programmes and learning approaches.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This research study aimed to identify the perceptions of English teachers who teach at primary, secondary and high schools. When it is taken into account that success cannot be achieved despite all the changes and

innovations made in foreign language teaching and programmes, this study will prove most instructive in order to make the best use of the labour, effort and economic resources allocated to education. However, this study is limited by the survey of Karabuk Province in order to understand the perceptions of English teachers regarding the challenges encountered in English teaching in schools, many more cities can be included for further studies in order to obtain a more general and common conclusion and to develop some generalizations.

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## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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