

T. C.
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YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI
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**A STUDY ON VERY YOUNG LEARNERS LEARNING LEXICAL
CHUNKS**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

NURİYE DEĞİRMENCİ UYSAL

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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

TEZ ONAY SAYFASI

Enstitümüzün Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda 201312553002 numaralı Nuriye DEĞİRMENCİ UYSAL'ın hazırladığı "Anaokulu Öğrencilerinin Sözcük Öbeklerini Öğrenmesi Üzerine Bir Çalışma" konulu YÜKSEK LİSANS tezi ile ilgili TEZ SAVUNMA SINAVI, Lisansüstü Eğitim Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliği uyarınca 07/09/2015 tarihinde yapılmış, sorulan sorulara alınan cevaplar sonunda tezin onayına OY BİRLİĞİ / OY ÇOKLUĞU ile karar verilmiştir.

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Yukarıdaki imzaların adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduklarını onaylım.

07.09.2015

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Doç.Dr.Halil İbrahim ŞAHİN
Müdür

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Teaching English to very young learners has become a truly global phenomenon as English is integrated in the compulsory education from early age in countries around the world. It is widely believed that early start to learn English will contribute to speakers of English to become more proficient. However, it needs a deep understanding of teaching settings and materials and competent teachers who are aware of the characteristics of very young learners. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine the influence of chunks on teaching English to very young learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context to shed some light on learning and teaching process of very young learners.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who have supported and assisted me during my MA thesis journey.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my husband and my family who are always there to support me whenever I need.

Nuriye DEĞİRMENCİ UYSAL

ÖZET

SÖZCÜK ÖBEKLERİ KULLANILARAK OKUL ÖNCESİ İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENİMİ ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

DEĞİRMENCİ UYSAL, Nuriye

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Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Fatih YAVUZ

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Okul öncesi dönemde çocuklara yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi birçok ülkede eğitimin odak noktalarından biridir. Çocukların karakter özellikleriyle uyumlu olarak öğretim metod ve yaklaşımları ve kelime öğretimi ve öğrenimi üzerine bazı çalışmalar yapılmış olsa da, bağımsız olarak öğretilen kelimeler yerine sözcük öbeklerinin öğrenimi üzerine çok az sayıda çalışma yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma, okul öncesi dönemdeki çocukların sözcük öbeklerini öğrenme ve üretimlerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışma Necatibey Anaokulunda uygulanmış ve altı yaş grubu 14 öğrenci bu çalışmaya katılmıştır. Anaokulu öğrencilerine her hafta ve uygulama sonunda testler yapılmıştır. Bu testler sonucunda ulaşılan bilgiler SPSS yardımıyla iki aşamada değerlendirilmiştir. İlk olarak, sözcük öbeklerinin öğrenme ve üretme yüzdeliği hesaplanmış, sonrasında ANOVA değerleri ve bağımsız grup testleri incelenerek, bağımlı değişken ve bağımsız değişkenler arasındaki korelasyon bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar; sözcük öbeklerinin, dili bağlam içerisinde göstererek, anlama ve bilgiye erişimde yardımcı olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmadaki çocuklar, verilen ifadeleri büyük ölçüde anlayabilmiş ve üretebilmiştir. Bu sonuçlara dayanarak, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreniminde sözcük öbeklerine yer verilmesi önerilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce; okul öncesi dil öğretimi; sözcük öbekleri; sözcüksel yaklaşım

ABSTRACT

A STUDY ON VERY YOUNG LEARNERS LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH LEXICAL CHUNKS

DEĞİRMENCİ UYSAL, Nuriye

Master's Thesis, Department of English Language Teaching

Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Fatih YAVUZ

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Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to very young learners (VYL) is at the core of educational concerns in many countries. Some research has been conducted as to the teaching methods and approaches in accordance with the characteristics of learners. In addition, a few studies investigate the vocabulary teaching and learning of VYLs. However, there are limited studies on chunk learning rather than single vocabulary items in EFL classrooms. Thus, this study aims to examine to what extent lexical chunks are comprehended and produced by very young language learners. The study was carried out at Necatibey Preschool in Balıkesir, Turkey and the participants of the study were 14 six-year-old preschoolers. In the study, weekly tests and post-tests were administered to very young EFL learners. The data was analyzed with the aid of SPSS in two steps. First, the frequencies were found for the lexical chunks for each week. Then, the values of ANOVA and independent samples tests were examined to see the correlation between the dependent and independent variables. Results indicate that lexical chunks help comprehension and retrieve information providing students the language in context. Participants were able to understand and produce the lexical chunks to great extent. Therefore, it is suggested that lexical chunks are to be included in learning English as a foreign language.

Key words: Very young learners; English as a foreign language; lexical chunks; fixed expressions; lexical Approach

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake. It is also dedicated to my mother, who has always supported me in all of my endeavors and encouraged me to persist no matter what.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This section aims to elaborate on the rationale behind the study. First, it presents the background of the study and the overall statement of the problem. Then, the purpose of the study is explained and the significance of the research is mentioned. After the research questions are introduced, the limitations of the study are defined. Lastly, it finishes with the key terms related to the study.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Children start preschool between the ages of five and six in Turkey, in the United States, and in many other countries. They are naturally curious and willing to discover the world around them during this age period. Most children are eager to gain new experiences including learning a new language. Since they are active learners and have a lot of energy at younger ages, it makes preschool the perfect time to benefit from physical and fun activities to teach a language. However, English teaching is not formally included into the educational system until the second grade of primary school. Therefore, the first problem is that there is not any English language lessons integrated in preschool program.

Although some schools provide their preschool students English classes, various lesson plans which are not based on any professional research and background are applied. In addition, there is no common ground as to how to teach English to VYLs. Thus, the second problem is arbitrary lesson plans and syllabi that are developed without any research on related literature. VYLs are illiterate and it increases the importance of choosing the right teaching materials and subjects according to their, physical and motor, cognitive, and language development.

The last problem related to lesson plans is the syllabus design. Although there are lesson plans offered in some research (Karakoç, 2007 and

Kalaycıoğlu, 2011), they do not go beyond separated and individual words. Students are able to define the objects and say their name when asked what they are without any knowledge of appropriate collocations to use them in a meaningful context. As Halliday (1975) states meaning has superiority in learning a language and believes language arises as a result of the social process (Halliday, 1978), chunks of the language offer meaning in context and help define the semantic areas of words as well as retrieve from memory easily (Nattinger, 1988, p.69).

As a result of the problems listed above, the importance of early start in English language education is often neglected in the Turkish EFL context. Moreover, the misapplication of methods, and inappropriate learning activities and lesson plans reduce the possibility of learning a foreign language in very young learners. Lastly, arbitrary lesson plans that are applied in teaching EFL in preschools and curricula that some research suggested are not well founded in the sense that they present English at one word level. Thus, the offered language curricula for preschools are not context-bound.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

Bearing in mind the problems stated above, this study aims to give a new impulse to learning EFL in preschool offering language in a context through lexical chunks. In addition, it aims to show to what extent lexical chunks are comprehended and produced. Moreover, it is aimed to see whether lexical chunks are apprehended as a whole or separately. The paper defines first, second and foreign language acquisition and learning processes, the characteristics of VYLs, and the effect of age on language learning to help understand the language learning process. The related literature is reviewed about VYLs and observations and assessments are administered to collect data.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study is significant due to the several reasons. It is obvious that there have been only few studies on VYLs, learning English as a foreign language in preschools. First, as there is not any formal English education in preschools in Turkey, no common syllabus is applied in schools where English is integrated in their preschool program. However, the lack of EFL syllabus in preschool education attracts only a few researchers' attention and thus, the number of the studies on EFL curriculum for VYLs are fairly limited. In addition, some of the studies suggest syllabi for VYLs but they do not go beyond the idea stage and are not put into practice in real preschool classroom settings. Therefore, this study contributes to the related literature by offering a new lesson plan and applying it to see the practical side of the research. Second, most of the studies investigated EFL learning by restricting the research to one type of method such as storytelling and games. Thus, the study contributes to the related literature in a way that it integrates various methods and activities. Last, although chunk learning is emphasized as one of the best language learning strategies in many contexts, there are not enough implications carried out in language learning of VYLs, especially in foreign language classrooms. Thus, this study contributes in terms of chunk learning by assessing its comprehension and production level. Finally, it also gives an idea on how lexical chunks are stored in brain.

1.4. Research Questions

As stated above, there are some issues that constitute the background of this study. The main problem is that no formal English education is given in preschools although many studies attach great importance to early start to English learning as a foreign language. It leads the preschools that give English instruction to use their own way of learning methods and activities without reviewing the related literature. The studies which suggest EFL curricula for VYLs in preschools are very low in number and only few of them

give more than theories. In addition, separated and isolated words constitute the lesson plans that do not give language in context. Depending on these concerns, the following three research questions constitute the basis of the study:

1. Are VYLs able to comprehend lexical chunks?
2. Are VYLs able to produce lexical chunks?
3. Is there a relationship between language learning success and parents' educational level?
4. Is there a relationship between gender and language learning achievement?

1.5. Limitations

The research is limited to study is 14 EFL learners in Necatibey Preschool. Second, the study is designed to be qualitative and quantitative study that includes weekly tests, post-tests and random assignment of the participants. The length of instruction is limited to five weeks. In addition, the study is limited to 15 lexical chunks. Moreover, this study was conducted by the researcher as there was not any English teacher in charge at the Necatibey Preschool.

1.6. Definitions

In this study, the following terms should be considered in their meanings below:

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

Lexical Chunks: Lexical chunks are groups of words that can be found together in language. They can be words that always go together, such as fixed collocations and verb patterns.

English as a Foreign Language: The use or study of English in countries where English is not native or one of the official languages.

English Language Teaching: The practice and theory of learning and teaching English.

Very Young Learners (VYs): Very young learners are under 7 years old (Slatterly & Willis, 2001). VYs participated in this study were those who are 6 years old in preschool.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter consists of two sections. Theoretical framework of the study is introduced in the first chapter. It gives information about first language acquisition, second language acquisition and learning, foreign language learning processes. In addition, it includes a detailed description of characteristics of very young learners, age factor in language learning and using chunks of language to teach English. The second section reviews the literature related to the implications for teaching English to very young learners, and the effects of age and chunks in language learning.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

In this section, first, language acquisition and learning processes are explained briefly and the classroom implications are presented to teach English to very young learners. Then, the characteristics of very young learners including physical and motor, cognitive and language development are described in details. The effect of age and chunk teaching in learning English are investigated respectively.

2.1.1. First Language Acquisition

All children acquire their first language in great speed regardless of different conditions without explicit instruction. It supports the idea that there is an innate capacity to acquire a language from birth. All learners progress through the same predictable stages in language acquisition. Firstly, they go through pre-speech period in which they listen for utterances, intonation and the rhythm of the speech before they begin to utter their first words. They tend to respond to speech rather than to other sounds like music. It was observed that electrical activity increased more in the left side of the 2 month old baby's brain when they heard a human voice (Clark, 2009). They learn to distinguish sounds and recognize phonemes. For example, at three or four months, they

recognize that /p/ and /b/ are two distinct sounds. Then, babbling stage emerges at several months of age. Infants are not able to utter meaningful words but they begin to experiment vocalizations of sounds. They may produce their first word after nine months. In one word stage, these words are often simplified and mispronounced. They have difficulty in producing some sounds like /r/. Their first words are very much related to daily routines, food, and greetings. Between 18 months and 2 years of age, children begin to combine words and speak in sentences but they are not all grammatically correct yet in telegraphic stage (Clark, 2009). By about age 3, children can generate longer and more sophisticated sentences. They create an increasing number of combinations of multi-word sentences and enjoy incessant conversations (Brown, 2007).

There are certain theories that explain how languages are acquired from different views. Some focus on universal/biological aspects and processes, others underline cognitive foundations such as brain processing and strategies while social and cultural effects on learning are emphasized more on the others. Table 1 provides a summary of some popular language learning theories and approaches. Each theory offers different points of view and alternative explanations for language learning and no one theory is universally granted. However, they contribute to overall understanding of language acquisition.

Table 1. The language learning theories / approaches (Pinter, 2011, p. 38)

Behaviorism (e.g. Skinner 1957)	Stimulus and response connections build habits Complex behavior is shaped by breaking it into parts and drilling each element, adding new elements gradually Children are born as 'clean slates' and the role of the environment is significant in shaping them
Universal Grammar/ Nativist Approach (e.g. Chomsky 1987)	Humans are biologically pre-programmed to learn Language has an innate blueprint Universal Grammar contains a set of specifications for permissible structures in any language Children do not violate UG rules

Cognitive approaches (Anderson 1985)	The human mind is a computer Learning is information processing Learning involves storing and retrieving information Learning leads to automatization and developing declarative and procedural
Input and interactions (e.g. Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991)	Both comprehensible input and interaction are necessary for language learning Meaning negotiation drives language learning forward Focus on form and feedback are also essential Learners need opportunities for input, interaction and output knowledge
Socio-cultural perspectives (e.g. Lantolf 2006)	Language learning is socially mediated Dynamic relationship between individuals and environment Interactional routines are culturally determined Linguistic and cultural knowledge are inseparable

2.1.2. Second Language Acquisition

The theories have worked on the ways of developing ability in another language over the past century. Theories represent different aspects of how a person acquires or learn a second language. In the mid-century when the scientific investigation impacted all research areas, Skinner (1957) suggested that human behavior could be shaped by stimulus, response, and positive and negative reinforcement. According to behaviorists, language learning could also be learned through habit formation. However, Noam Chomsky opposed the idea that behaviorists asserted and claimed the language learning process was not merely imitation of language patterns (Ellis, 1994). Chomsky (1965) proposed the innate ability of acquiring and learning a language, called a Language Acquisition Device (LAD). According to this theory, the human mind has a faculty of for learning language, different from other faculties that serve for other cognitive activities. Other cognitivists did not agree with Chomsky, suggesting language learning ability was a component of complex cognitive structures.

In addition, Anderson (1983) developed the Adaptive Control of Thought (ACT) model and this theory aimed to explain how information processes and knowledge represents in human's mind. However, social interactionists, like Vygotsky, emphasized the role of social interaction on another language learning. According to Vygotsky (1962), humans construct knowledge through social negotiation. Within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), they acquire knowledge through interaction with other people. Working within ZPD helps learners advance their individual learning to solve problems with the assistance. Scaffolding also helps learners move forward through the learning process in collaboration with the help or guidance of an adult or more proficient peer (Bruner, 1983).

Krashen's (1985, 1994) theory became a predominant influence in second language acquisition theories. Krashen asserts that second language acquisition occurs in the presence of comprehensible input. It is the process of moving from "i" to "i+1" by understanding input which includes more than learners' knowledge. According to Krashen (1996), language acquisition occurs by receiving messages learners can understand. It should be noted that input contains "i+1" does not necessarily as a result of two-way communication. Therefore, other interactionists lay weight on the importance of social interaction and Pica (1994), Long (1985), and others express that conversational interaction has a facilitating effects on second language acquisition. According to Lightbrown and Spada (1999), "When learners are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful activities they are compelled to 'negotiate for meaning,' that is, to express and clarify their intentions, thoughts, opinions, etc., in a way which permits them to arrive at a mutual understanding. This is especially true when the learners are working together to accomplish a particular goal" (p. 122).

The competition model provides an explanation for the influence of a first language on a second language. The first language may affect the second or foreign language development (MacWhinney & Bates, 1989). According to this theory, each language has different aspects that play roles as cues which help interpret and encode meaning. In English, for example, word order is a

persistent and convenient cue to distinguish the subject and object in the sentence like *the cat ate the snake*. Word order makes it easier to identify the agent of the verb. However, in other languages such as Italian, word order is not a distinctive feature to find out the subject and object of the sentence as there is no restriction on the order of words. English offers a stronger cue in word order than Italian (Liu et al., 1992). All languages have cues in all level including lexis, morphology, and phonology. Language bits and rules sometimes reinforce learning another language while they may conflict or compete with each other. In that case, it is the most reliable cue that wins the race (Cameron, 2001). Children, as shown in much research, tend to rely heavily on the cues in their first language (Bates et al., 1984). Furthermore, children resort to grammatical cues as well as vocabulary items they are familiar with when they encounter to a new language (Harley, 1994; Schmidt, 1990).

2.1.3. Second Language Learning

In his book, Yule (2010) points out the difference between second language learning and foreign language learning. While foreign language learning occurs in settings where it is not the spoken language of the surrounding, second language learning is learning a new language which is the spoken language of the community. For example, Turkish students learn English as a foreign language in schools in Turkey, where the official and community language is Turkish whereas it is the second language learning when they learn English in schools in the USA. The distinction is, thus, made between the educational settings of second language learning and foreign language learning.

It is better to explain the distinction between learning and acquisition at that point. Krashen (1982) claims that there are two ways to grasp a second language. Acquisition is subconscious and a natural way of learning a second language. Learners acquire L2 very similar to the process children go through when they acquire their first language. Learning is, on the other hand,

conscious, explicit and formal knowledge of language. Language learners know about the language and its rules when they do not acquire but learn a language.

2.1.4. Foreign Language Learning

EFL, English as a foreign language indicates teaching or learning English in a non-English-speaking region. Oxford (1990) makes a distinction between first language acquisition and foreign language learning stating that the first language is acquired through naturalistic and unconscious language use and it mostly reaches to conversational fluency; while the foreign language learning emerges in the result of the conscious knowledge of language with the help of formal instruction. However, it does not necessarily lead to conversational fluency. The amount of time allocated to foreign language learning is also critical in determining the rate and level of language acquisition they will reach in classroom context (Met & Rhodes, 1990).

Snow (1996) asserts that children do not develop first language proficiency as a single, global phenomenon but different aspects of language develop at different paces. The issue in teaching young learners a foreign language to be considered is that they will come to class with developed skills and learning abilities in their first language. Some children are good at conversational skills whereas the others find vocabulary learning easier so they may transfer these to the new language more smoothly than others. Therefore, it is likely that they learn differently promoting one domain of language to another in the same language class. Thus, there will not be the same ZPD for all aspects of language in second or foreign language (Cameron, 2001).

2.1.5. Characteristics of Very Young Learners

Characteristics of very young learners are to be considered in foreign language learning context. Activities should be designed according to their physical and motor development, cognitive development and language development. Keeping learner styles in mind helps teacher to organize the instruction and interaction, and appeal to different learners in classroom environment. Individual variations can be handled using various modality of learning in each activity. It is substantial to address different intelligences to make learning permanent and easy to grasp. The information about learners' characteristics and learning styles at that age period gives a valuable clue for foreign language learners and provide opportunity to apply it in foreign language learning context to get to know the learners better.

2.1.5.1. Physical and Motor Development

There is a significant change in the acquisition and performance of children's locomotors and object control skills in preschool years (William et al., 2008). The preschool setting holds great potential for activities focusing on physical activity and gross motor development (Larson et al., 2011). As there is a growing number of children enrolled in preschools, preschools should provide opportunities for children to engage in physical activities and reinforce adoption of a physically active lifestyle (Ward, 2010). The fact that they are physically very active and learn to use their bodies makes active learning important. Physical and motor development of very young learners gives clues on how they learn and make sense of the world around them. Moving, doing and experiencing play a large role in motor and skill development which can be supported by activities including walking, dancing, and jumping. These kinds of activities let them make connections among themselves, objects, movements, and the environment around them. In addition, activities which include using scissors, drawing and coloring to enhance fine motor development as well as large motor activities are efficacious. It is valuable to

show and model the task as children at the preoperational stage learn mostly through modeling and demonstrations (Morrison, 2003).

2.1.5.2 Cognitive Development

Since VYL are in the preoperational stage of intelligence according to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, they are not qualified enough for operational thinking (i.e. appropriate use of logic). They are egocentric and they are unable to see the viewpoint of others. They need to explore and experience concepts and processes to understand. Therefore, learning can be boosted by helping them experience with concrete materials such as objects, pictures, stories, and videos. When teaching them fruit, it is better to use real fruit to make VYL feel, smell, touch, and taste it (Morrison, 2003). Implications of preoperational stage on teaching need to be handled meticulously by professionals to promote learning. Hughes' research on children and number shows one of the best examples of children's way of learning:

Hughes: How many is two and one more?

Patrick (4): Four

H: Well, how many is two lollipops and one more?

P: Three

H: How many is two elephants and one more?

P: Three

H: And two giraffes and one more?

P: Three

H: So, how many is two and one more?

P: (Looking Hughes straight in the eye) Six (Hughes, 1986, p. 47).

As it can be seen in the example, children tend to grasp the meaning when the information is given with the help of concrete items. New concepts are to be instructed through the concrete materials available in immediate environment. Learning takes place best when children make connections

between known and unknown. Therefore, it is suggested to make sense of unknown through known for very young learners (Morrison, 2003).

2.1.5.3 Language Development

Children's language skills continue to develop rapidly during the preschool years. As they are getting better at syntax and grammar, their vocabulary knowledge expands and they produce longer and more complex sentences. Their auditory memory skills develop and they are able to listen and remember songs and poems. They understand more than they can produce. In other words, receptive skills remain behind expressive skills. Modeling the articulation of words and sounds works better than correcting their errors at this age of period. They begin to utter intelligible enunciation and enjoy practicing the language with the people in different social settings. Although they follow predictable patterns of language development, they may not be ready for learning the same thing all at once (Morrison, 2003).

Their receptive skills prevail productive skills. Thus, they understand more than they produce. In addition, certain structures and concepts may not be available both in first and second language of VYL. Therefore, readiness and their cognitive stage should be considered in language teaching to very young learners. Second or foreign language learning is recognized to occur after three to five years when first language is mostly acquired (McLaughlin, 1978; Schwartz, 2003; Meisel, 2008). Although age three is considered as a threshold (McLaughlin, 1978), a first language is not acquired fully until around age three (Lakshmanan, 1995).

Children have rapid intellectual and language growth during this age period. They have tremendous energy and capacity to learn words (Morrison, 2003). They like to be verbal and their interest in talking should be supported by language activities such as singing songs, reciting poems and playing games. Additionally, to ensure learning, it is imperative to appeal to their needs and interests. Topics such as food and family, their immediate environment,

experiences that they can see, feel, touch, smell, and taste, and chunks of language attract their attention. Their interest wanes so fast that the learning environment is to be organized flexibly.

2.1.5.4 Learner Styles

As Harmer (2001) notes in his book, the methodologist Tony Wright (1987) describes four different learner styles. The “enthusiast” sees the teacher as a reference and prioritizes the goals of learning group. The “oracular” also follows the teacher but is more concerned about personal goals. The “participator” is likely to focus on group goals and cooperation while the “rebel” looks to the learning group as a point of reference and is mainly oriented to his or her own goals. On the other hand, Keith Willing (1987) has different descriptions for learner styles. According to Willing (1987), “convergers” are independent learners avoiding group works whereas “conformists” tend to dependent on the authority and like to learn ‘about language’. In addition, “concrete learners” are similar to conformists but they also prefer to engage in communicative activities. Lastly, “communicative learners” are able to participate in social interaction without the guidance of the teacher and happy to use language in a communicative way.

2.1.5.5 Individual Variations

The most outstanding theory on individual differences is Multiple Intelligence Theory by the Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner. In his book *Frames of Mind*, Gardner states there is not a single intelligence but a number of different intelligences humans have (Gardner, 1983). He suggests seven intelligences including Musical / Rhythmic, Verbal / Linguistic, Visual / Spatial, Bodily / Kinesthetic, Logical / Mathematical, Intrapersonal and Interpersonal. Each individual is equipped with all type of intelligences and not restricted to one modality of learning but rather one (or more) of the intelligences is dominant to others. Gardner (1993), later, added Naturalistic intelligence which

account for the ability to recognize and categorize plants and animals in nature. He includes the ninth intelligence Existential intelligence and this refers to the sensitivity and capacity of questioning human existence and meaning of life (Gardner, 2000).

2.1.6. Age Factor in Foreign Language Acquisition and Learning

Slattery and Willis (2001) make a distinction between learners under age 7 (very young learners) and learners aged 7-12 (young learners). They have different characteristics and should be treated accordingly. Very young learners acquire a foreign language through speaking and listening like the way they acquire their first language, while young learners have access to written forms of language. Learning is not deliberate as VYLs mostly learn from play, talk, and imitation. VYLs are not able to organize and take responsibility for their learning like young learners.

The age of acquisition and learning is at the core of many conversations among researchers in second and foreign language acquisition and learning. The younger, the better constitutes the common ground in the debate. Most studies have been done on the second language learning and there have been few studies on foreign language learning. Therefore, the studies on age factor on second language learning are also included to give more ideas and information for foreign language learning. After reviewing the studies, it has been found out that younger learners have superiority over older learners in language proficiency, especially in pronunciation (e.g. Oyama, 1976, 1978; Patkowski, 1980; Krashen, et al., 1982; Felix, 1985, 1991; Singleton, 1989; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Bley-Vroman, 1990; Johnson, 1992; Slavoff & Johnson, 1995). It is widely accepted that there is a critical period till puberty for children to learn a foreign language especially in terms of native-like proficiency, comprehension and grammaticality judgment of the target language (Hakuta et al., 2003; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Flege et al., 1999; Krashen et al., 1979; Oyama, 1976; Stevens, 1999).

Long (1990) confirms the necessity of early acquisition by proving it based on many evidences in his review on second language acquisition. The study reports that age six is almost the endpoint to achieve native-like proficiency in phonology and there emerges allied problems in morphology and syntax after age 12. Haznedar and Uysal (2010) also confirm there are critical periods after which achieving native-like proficiency is not possible in language acquisition and learning. Although it is asserted that there is a decrease in language proficiency after age six, Long (1990) suggests there is a gradual decrease in language proficiency rather than a single critical age. As Steven Pinker (1994) states, “acquisition.... is guaranteed for children up to the age of six, is steadily compromised from then until shortly after puberty, and is rare thereafter” (p. 293), and a similar process is also true for second or foreign languages. However, instead of only crediting critical period for L2 acquisition, social, environmental and individual factors should also be considered in young learners’ success. Not a clear-cut and sharp but continuous and linear decline in ability to acquire L2 can be observed across the whole life span (Pinter, 2011).

According to Morrison (2003) many parents are more likely to favor the age of 6 to start formal education as they think children are more ready at that period. Some young learner researchers do not agree that the early start guarantees success (Singleton, 2003). Moreover, the availability of optimum conditions rather than an early start are more important in language acquisition (Moon, 2004; Nikolov & Curtain, 2000; Rixon, 2000). Younger learners may not find a reason to learn a language and may not understand what a new language is. They are probably interested in English mostly because they like their teachers and enjoyable activities (Nikolov, 1999).

2.1.7 Classroom Implications

In classroom activities, using Total Physical Response (TPR) by James Asher (1977) can be highly useful in teaching English to VYLs. This method shows a link between the language and physical movement keeping children

active and interested. They are easily distracted and have very poor concentration; therefore, activities that last longer than 5 and 10 minutes are not a good choice in teaching them. Scott and Ytreberg (1990) suggested creating various activities where each task focuses on different skills while using individual, pair work, group work or whole class activities alternately. There should also be a place for children that let them learn from each other by integrating pupil-to-pupil interaction into the activities in addition to teacher-to-pupil interaction. Lastly, there should be a balance between mentally and physically engaging activities to create both peaceful and dynamic learning environment.

As active learners, who are involved in the learning process, very young learners create their own learning by exploring immediate settings (Piaget, 1970). They do not merely imitate the sounds they hear, but rather they generate rules and justify or refute their assumptions (Wells, 1999). They need hands-on experiences for efficacious learning (Donaldson, 1978 & Hughes, 1986). Activities that are engaging within concrete environment are favorable for very young learners who have a lot of energy but minimum concentration. As Scott and Ytreberg (1990) asserted, they make the most of their hands and eyes and ears to understand the world around them. Moreover, it is a good idea to give them a chance to create their own visuals and materials as it will probably lead to higher participation in activities and encourage them to take more responsibility for the learning and teaching equipment (Moon, 2000).

As Susan Halliwell states "We are obviously not talking about classrooms where children spend all their time sitting still in rows and talking only to teacher" (1992:18). Children have incredible energy and creativity so they need to experience a variety of activities so as not to bore children. Games, songs, drawing pictures or puzzle-like activities favor their imagination and canalize their energies to learning. It is also important to recognize gender differences in learning and development. Boys may be aggressive at that period of age probably due to the changes in their hormones and it may hard to keep them still as a result of high energy they have (Biddulph, 1998).

Furthermore, boys lag behind girls up to one year in linguistic skills, fine motor skills and concentration (Khan, 1998; Biddulph, 1998; McIlvain, 2003).

As very young learners are illiterate, they learn language through speaking and listening. Hence pronunciation and reiteration of words often are of utmost importance. In order to acquire the words and phrases in an appropriate context, more emphasis is to be put on pronunciation and repetition. Children feel more confident and comfortable when they face something familiar to them; therefore, it is needless to hesitate in repeating the same song or story again and again (Linse & Nunan, 2006). Teachers are probably the only model for learners in foreign language teaching so they function as a bridge to integrate previous learning into their class routines and give many opportunities to repeat the new language (Shin, 2007).

The learning environment is to be designed to encourage cooperation. As they are a part of a community of learners, individual competition should be avoided (Philips, 2001). Activities and materials designed related to their immediate environment help children enjoy and engage in learning. Harmer (2001) suggests VYLs tend to learn from what they hear, see, and touch rather than instruction and description. They benefit from physical activities to explore the environment by experiencing and manipulating the objects around them (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). In addition, Pinter (2006) underlines that they eagerly discover the things and concepts from concrete to abstract, and also confirms that they have a natural passion to investigate everything they see around them. Thus, it is needed to associate topics with concrete rather than abstract things to boost learning. For this reason, activities like playing with sand or water, or building toy bricks are suitable for their interest and cognitive level. Teachers should teach abstract concepts through concrete things (Pinter, 2006). It is a good idea to start with the topics they are acquainted with such as colors, greetings, fruit, food and drink, everyday sentences and phrases (Juhana, 2014). Exposing many aspects of what is taught like the smell of flowers, the touch of plants and fruit and the taste of fruit help them to internalize the concepts. Audio and visual aids like video, pictures and music contribute a lot to support learning (Brown, 2001).

Children have limited attention spans and intellectual development, therefore, they are easily distracted and bored (Brown, 2001). Children cannot handle a lot of information at the same time so they should be introduced one theme at a time, otherwise, it will lead them to disappointment and failure (Shin, 2007). Children become restless and lose interest and control of their behavior. While adults are more controlled and take responsibility of their learning, children cannot resist showing their feelings and letting teacher know they get bored. Therefore, children are not as persistent as older learners because they cannot manage their behavior and feelings yet (Clark, 1990). Most children do not have intrinsic motivation to learn a language so they need to be boosted and motivated to learn better and enthusiastically. Thornton (2001) also states that some specialists stress motivation more than aptitude and teaching methods. However, one certain thing about children's learning is that they love having fun here and now language activities and they engage children in learning by motivating them in their natural world.

Young children's communication in preschool years is bound to their environment and experiences as they are not able to interact in a de-contextualized manner. They cannot perceive the existence of objects out of their sights. They expect the listener to see what they are showing on the phone (Pinter, 2011). They are likely to blame the listener for miscommunication (Robinson & Robinson, 1983). Young learners predominantly make best use of visual and kinesthetic learning styles. Decorating classroom environment with visual aids leads learners to find out meanings from the context instead of giving them direct instruction. The more colorful and bigger they are, the better it is to attract their attention. Teachers should abundantly use visual aids to make learning memorable, entertaining, and interesting (Celce-Murcia & Hilles, 1988).

Moreover, stories which show the language in context are of a great value in foreign language teaching (Slatterly & Willis, 2001). Stories use a "holistic approach to language teaching and learning that places a high premium on children's involvement with rich, authentic uses of the foreign language" (Cameron, 2001:159). Cameron (2001) asserted that children use

'mentalese', a mental processing, in formulating meaning independent from the language. Therefore, children tend to understand the story they have heard in a foreign language, and summarize it to the most extent in their first language using visual aids. However, it is not probable to retell the story in foreign language. It shows that speaking is required more than grasping the meaning and more demanding than listening. Therefore, Pinter (2006) asserted that while input focused on meaning is crucial, it also has high importance to ensure production with language focused activities, too.

Young learners are willing to sing songs most of the time as it creates a stress-free environment and lots of fun. Entertaining activities block out anxiety and undergird learning. Gradual introduction of structures and relating vocabulary to daily life accompanied by constant review is crucial. They are enthusiastic about learning new things so their flexible minds and malleable tongues facilitate language learning. While speaking and pronunciation skills are promoted in teaching to very young learners, grammar is noticed instead of teaching explicitly (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2006). As Cameron (2003) states, "children see the foreign language 'from the inside' and try to find meaning in how the language is used in action, in interaction, and with intention, rather than 'from the outside' as a system and form" (p.107).

As active learners, they are open to new experiences and have full of curiosity. They try to find out, experiment, and practice the skills until they become proficient just like learning to ride a bicycle (Donaldson, 1978; Tizard and Hughes, 1984; Montessori, 1983). Language learning is also in the heart of their interest. Errors are inevitable in discovering a new world show us how active they are in their own language learning as in Garvey's (1982) example: "I am blocking" [building a tower with block]; "Look! A sweep!" [a toy broom] page 62). Playing with sounds and engaging in rhythms and rhymes are the way they practice language and have fun (Weir, 1972; Garvey, 1982; Chukovsky, 1963). Garvey (1982) adduced evidence for this practice play:

"Now it's done un un
Done un un un un", and

"Let bono bink. Bink ben bink. Blue ink." (p. 64, 67)

Language is commonly divided into four skills: Listening, speaking, reading and writing in applied linguistics. Grammar, vocabulary and phonology are added as additional skills lately. However, this division is not quite reliable and has been challenged (Widdowson, 1998). Very young learners start learning a new language without any knowledge or skills of reading and writing. They are only exposed to spoken language. Thus, it is not appropriate to divide into four skills and an alternative division may be applied (Cameron, 2001). If literacy skills is removed from language development, there remains more than speaking and listening. They are not only skills but also a medium to understand, practice, and learn. In a classroom setting, very young learners mostly encounter a new language orally, understand orally and aurally and practice orally as it is the prime source of language learning (Cameron, 2001).

There are also some factors to be considered in assessing very young learners that differ from assessment practices in other foreign language situations. Age and the context of language learning are the key concepts to practice and assess oral skills and vocabulary. Themes that appeal to their motor, linguistic, social, and conceptual development are designed as teaching material and transfer to children through games, songs, rhymes, and stories in order to create meaningful input. Assessment of young learners, therefore, is concerned with measuring learning through performance in activities (Cameron, 2001).

2.1.8. Using Lexical Chunks in Foreign Language Learning

2.1.8.1. Definition of Lexical Chunks

Many attempts have been made to define lexical chunks and there are many definitions for this language phenomenon in the linguistic field. According to Wray (2002) a lexical chunk is "a sequence, continuous or

discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appear to be, prefabricated; that is, stored and restricted whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar (p.9). On the other hand, Nattinger (1986) describes lexical phrases as “Conventionalized structures that occur more frequently and have more idiomatically determined meaning than language that is put together each time” (p.3) (cited in Decorrigo & Nattinger, 1988).

2.1.8.2. Classification of Lexical Chunks

Like the definition of lexical chunks, classification of lexical chunks can vary. There is not one classification accepted and most linguists come up with their own criteria from different perspectives (Zhao, 2009). However, the classifications made by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) and Lewis (1993) are more commonly approved than others. Lewis (1993) classifies the lexical chunks into four different basic types: polywords, collocations, institutionalized utterances and sentence frames and heads. Polywords are extension of words, which are composed of more than one word such as *on the one hand*, *after all* and *as soon as*. Collocations are words that frequently co-occur with each other like *bread and butter*, *shake hands* and *bright red*. Institutionalized utterances are whole units like *I'd be delighted to* and they may be full sentences such as *can I give you a hand?* Lastly, sentence frames and heads are the framework builders of the whole sentences such as *it is suggested that*, *the fact is* and *this paper concentrates on* (pp.92-95). Lewis (1993) suggests that the first two categories, polywords and collocations, are related to referential meaning while the latter two are primarily based on pragmatic meaning. On the other hand, another prestigious classification presented by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992, pp. 37-44) are mainly concerned with structural criteria. Nattinger and DeCarrico's (1992) typology of lexical chunks is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. Nattinger and DeCarrico's (1992) Classification of Lexical Chunks

Types of lexical chunks	Examples
Poly words: short, fixed lexical phrases with no variability, and they are associated with a wide variety of functions.	Idioms: kick the bucket topic shifter: by the way summarizer: all in all, above all
Institutional expression: lexical phrases of sentence length, and allowing little variability. They provide the framework for particular social conversation.	Leaving: I'm afraid I have to be going now Accepting suggestions: that's a good idea Greeting: how do you do, long time no see Inviting: would you like to ...?
Sentence builders: lexical phrases that provide the framework for whole sentences, containing slots for parameters or arguments for the expression of entire ideas, and allowing considerable variation	Adding: not only..., but also... Comparator: the ...er the ...er Suggesting: my point is that... Topic marker: let me start by/with...
Phrasal constraints: short to medium length phrases, allowing variation of lexical and phrasal categories, and associated with many functions	Timing: a ... ago Apologizing: sorry about ... Partings: see you then/ see you later Relator: __as well as__

2.1.8.3. The effects of Lexical Chunks on Foreign Language Learning

Corpus Linguistics have recently begun to study on the native speaker selection of a language to find out the reasons behind it. Collection data of a language, the aim is to see what parts of language are preferred by the native-speakers of that language. By this way, it is possible to find out commonly used vocabulary items in a written work or a society. "The main focus of Corpus Linguistics is to discover patterns of authentic language use through analysis actual usage" (Krieger, 2003, p.1). Therefore, it has been common to have corpora for many modern languages, and it is regarded as a new and original way of language analysis among linguists. However, Corpus Linguistics is heterogeneous (Kaszubski, 2003, p.416) and some users see it as

technological enhancement while the others concern about the quality of information on corpus. The studies on corpus lead researchers to the lexis and lexicography in language teaching, which shows itself in the studies of Michael Lewis on Lexical Approach (Mısırlı, 2008).

Lewis (1993) also points out the significance of chunks and suggests that native speakers have a great stock of lexical chunks which are critical for fluency in Lexical Approach. It focuses on the retrieval of phrasal units from memory. According to this approach, meaning-centered syllabus is to be developed on lexis instead of grammar. Lexical units function better than separated and isolated words to learn and remember a language. Production and fluency are facilitated by prefabricated chunks including collocations, fixed and semi-fixed expressions, idioms and sentence frames. Collocation, in that case, is "the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in natural text with greater than random frequency" (Lewis, 1997a, p. 8).

The prefabricated chunks that help retain and produce language at a very high speed enhance learners' fluency providing quick and easy access to the long-memory when needed. (Al Ghazali, 2006). Therefore, Nattinger (1980) emphasizes the crucial role of chunks in language learning and teaching and suggests that teaching should be organized around the ready-made units in an appropriate context. Pinter (2011) also states that discourse is built around the contextual use of the language and the way the chunks are used includes discourse used for real purposes. It is not limited to the length of a sentence or smaller like 'keep off!' to describe naturally bounded use of language (Pinter, 2011).

According to Cowie (1988), both native English speakers and English language learners depend mostly on chunks to accelerate production. The widespread "fusion of such expressions, which appear to satisfy the individual's communicative needs at a given moment and are later reused, is one means by which the public stock of formulae and composites is continuously enriched" (p. 136). Accordingly, it is observed that children apply many strategies to learn a language and one of them is to make use of chunks.

Moon (2000) gives an example of how a Spanish-speaking child who is a learner of English uses ready-made phrases in the conversation recorded by Linda Ventriglia (1982):

Children are talking about wooden blocks which are in a cardboard box:

Miguel: Vamos a hacer un tren fantastic con estos bloques

(Let's make a pretend train with these blocks)

Pon el mas grande aqui

(Put the biggest one here)

Maria: Pero necesitaremos mas bloques grandes.

No podremos hacerlo con los pequeños.

(But we will need more large blocks. We will not be able to make it with the small ones)

Miguel: Claro que si. We have the technology.

(Yes, we can) (p.6).

The child says the last phrase in English. He has probably learned the phrase in school or on TV as a whole and he uses it properly in a conversation. Chunks like I don't know, come on, and good bye are acquired easily as whole phrases and make it easier to retrieve. Learners of foreign a language, later, break down and change some parts of phrases and create new language structures. They may change a part, e.g. *We don't know* or add more words, e.g. *I don't know his name*. These alterations clearly show language development.

2.1.9. Conclusion

Some conclusions were reached from the review of the theoretical background on very young learners learning a foreign language. First, there is a critical period till puberty in foreign language learning like the first language learning. It is important to expose the target language for a learner until puberty to be able to reach native-like mastery of the foreign language (Hakuta et al., 2003;

Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson, 2001; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Lenneberg, 1967; Flege et al., 1999; Krashen et al., 1979; Stevens, 1999) especially in pronunciation (Oyama, 1976). Additionally, the early acquisition of the target language is also necessary for full understanding of grammaticality judgment (Johnson & Newport, 1989). Furthermore, it was concluded that in addition to the age period, lexical chunks has crucial role in foreign language learning. Nattinger (1980) offers organizing the lesson around lexical chunks in an appropriate context while Pinter (2011) suggests that lexical chunks include discourse used for real purposes. Lastly, Cowie (1988), confirms the significant role of lexical chunks in language use as both native English speakers and English language learners make use of lexical chunks for fluency.

2.2 Literature Review

In this section, firstly, research on teaching very young learners are examined. Then, the studies on the effects of age in language teaching are presented. Lastly, research findings are given on the effects of chunks in language learning. Reviewing the related literature, it has been found out that there have limited studies on foreign language learning. Thus, the studies on second language learning and acquisition are included to provide insight and give ideas on foreign language learning.

2.2.1. Research on Teaching Very Young Learners

In the study, Kalaycioğlu (2011) aimed to explore the effect of the educational games on four-year-old preschool students. Vocabulary Performance checklist was prepared by the researcher. In an experimental study, 24 vocabulary items were taught with the help of picture cards by using Total Physical Response Method to both groups. The experimental group was presented picture vocabulary games additionally. The results showed that the experimental group which was instructed with the educational picture vocabulary games performed better than the control group. Furthermore,

Özçelik (2013) conducted study to find out the effects of English talking toys on vocabulary learning of very young learners (VYLs). The study investigates the students at one of the public preschools in Yenimahalle / Ankara. There were 48 five-year old children from two classes. Vocabulary was instructed using talking toys in the experimental group while flashcards were used to introduce vocabulary in the control group. The researcher developed a new vocabulary checklist to assess children's vocabulary learning. It was found that the experiment group instructed with English talking toys performed better on both receptive and expressive/productive vocabulary.

Haznedar and Uysal (2010) review theoretical aspects of foreign and second language learning and give practical suggestions. By investigating variables affecting the nature of young learners, it also provides useful information on integrated language skills, vocabulary and grammar teaching, materials development, use of technology and stories, as well as ways of assessment and evaluation for young learners. In addition, according to Çakır (2004) teaching young learners is a very difficult task for foreign language teachers as it requires appropriate knowledge convenient for the subject group. Teachers should be informed about many aspects of young learners, such as age, material, interest, level, intelligence, time, and physical conditions in the classroom in order to be able to instruct the subjects in the classroom sufficiently. Therefore, the author aimed to supply essential information for the EFL teachers to have the ultimate feedback from young learners.

In their project, Garton et al. (2011) investigated policy and syllabus practices around the world and examined the main pedagogies that teachers benefit. It also described the difficulties the teachers faced, and the local solutions to pedagogical issues. A survey was conducted and resulted in 4.696 responses from 144 countries from all continents. There were also five observational classroom case studies of teaching practices in Colombia, Italy, Korea, Tanzania, and the UAE. It was suggested that there needed to be more pre-service and in-service training for the teachers of young learners and they were to be provided opportunities to share opinions and experiences among primary school teachers of English both nationally and internationally. In

addition, it was pointed out that teaching young learners required a wide range of materials and educational policy developers needed to follow the recent research, present useful classroom practice and develop an efficient curriculum to improve young learners' learning experience.

In the book, Tabors (1997) had suggestions for preschool teachers and managers to improve efficient programs for children as second language learners. There was some information about the significance of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of children, useful techniques for language classrooms, and the role of second-language learners' families in linguistic and educational decisions and how they were to be integrated into the basic knowledge of child development. Two case studies were used to explain the process. Lastly, it provided suggestions on assessment, classroom organization and curriculum to facilitate L2 learning.

Biricik (2010) aimed to investigate the ways of keeping very young learners motivated in classrooms. There were 45 participants, whose age range is between 5-6 years. The data was analyzed in terms of three main aspects; teacher attitude, classroom atmosphere and activities and materials used in class. The results show that motivation affected their performance and the classroom atmosphere and teacher's attitude towards the learners had an essential role in promoting motivation. Moreover, children were more motivated if they were engaged in activities that they are physically active. Furthermore, Kultti (2014) conducted a study on the effect of routine activities on communication and language development. The data was collected in eight toddler groups in a Swedish city. The mealtimes interactions were video recorded and analyzed by using an interaction analytic approach. The findings showed the essential role of communication and participation in common and shared routines.

Elkılıç and Akça (2008) applied questionnaire to 21 students from the 4th year of Kafkas University private primary school in Kars, Turkey in order to assess their motivation for learning English as a foreign language and their attitudes towards learning English through storytelling. The results revealed

that not only storytelling but also grammar was comprehended as by the majority of the participants. In addition, it was found that they preferred the language games, acting out the stories and the stories. It was found out that the most popular learning activities were language games, acting out, and the stories respectively while the least preferred activities were tests and writing. The participants reported that they enjoyed all activities, though.

In the study, Garcia (2006) analyzed the very young learners' speech in both high- and low-immersion classroom contexts. The study aimed to create the taxonomy of the communicative functions of five-year-old L2 learners of English and to analyze them in various contexts. The analysis pointed out the necessity of purpose to use L2 in classroom context and students were to be encouraged to interact for real purposes similar to those found in first language interaction.

Tunçarslan (2013) aimed to develop a syllabus for teaching vocabulary in English language to very young learners through the short story-based sample syllabus. Hence, this study was carried out with 28 preschoolers aged three to four in Neşeli Adımlar Preschool in Ankara, Turkey. The units designed with the short stories for experiment group; while the students in control group were instructed English with other type of activities. As a result, the students in the experiment group were more motivated and engaged in the English courses and remembered more words than the others. In addition, Civan (2013) aimed to develop an English language teaching syllabus within the scope of Brain-based learning for very young learners in her study. The data was collected and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The study was conducted with 18 children in the pre-school section of Hendekyanı Primary School. There were 12 units designed and applied for three hours a week. The findings suggested the advantage of the syllabus designed within the procedure covering Brain-based learning principles in teaching English to very young learners and it was also concluded that it might increase both their cognitive and motor skills.

In the study, Sert (2004) stated the lack of formal assessment of foreign language teaching and national curriculum in preschool education. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to describe the current situation of English language teaching in preschool classes at Ayşe Abla Private Primary School in Ankara, Turkey. It also gave suggestions for the design and the implementation of a preschool program. On the other hand, in their study, Yıldırım and Doğan (2010) examined a young learner (YL) English teacher profile from students' point of view. 544 fourth grade 10-11-year-old students in Nevşehir, Turkey participated in this study. The findings suggested some implications to enhance teacher education programs and assessment of teacher performance in Teaching English to Young Learners. This study provided many implications for the Ministry of National Education, English teachers, schools authorities, ELT departments, and teacher trainers. It also revealed that most of the teachers do not apply many methods, techniques, materials and assessment tools in their classes. Hence, the teachers also do not make use of certain activities such as songs, stories, games, and riddles. In addition, it was suggested that as it is important to arouse students' interests, teachers should utilize a variety of materials, and activities instead of depending merely on the course books.

In a paper, Carless (2002) focused on task-based learning with young learners, the use of L1, the student attention, and the role of drawing or coloring activities. The qualitative classroom observation data from case studies of three EFL classes in Hong Kong primary schools was interpreted. The paper also suggested some strategies and implications including activities and tasks for young EFL learners. On the other hand, songs are of vital importance in the development of young children learning a second language. For this reason, Millington (2011) investigated the pedagogical value of songs in English language teaching. It mainly aimed to find out how songs can facilitate vocabulary teaching and sentence structures and how songs might be used to improve their listening skills and pronunciation. Additionally, the cultural reflection in songs was discussed. The researcher suggested some practical and engaging activities that were used as enjoyable language tasks.

Lastly, the paper discussed how classic songs for children could be adapted to the classroom setting and integrated into the curriculum.

2.2.2. Research on the Effects of Age on Foreign Language Learning

Many studies have been conducted on teaching a second language to very young learners in language immersion schools in the North America. Children are native speakers of French placed in English-speaking preschools schools and vice versa (Harley & Swain, 1984; Lightbown & Spada, 1994; Harley et al., 1995). The advantage of early start of language learning is found in some language skills. Very young learners have better results in listening and pronunciation which has longer term benefits. Although they start earlier and are exposed to language more, VYLs are slower in grammar learning than older learners. It is suggested that time spent in learning does not affect all aspects of language learning (Harley et al., 1995). In addition, it does not show a difference in the balance of benefits, asserting that grammar needs cognitive maturity, and productive skills and grammar lag behind receptive skills in L2 acquisition. Similar processes are also valid for foreign language learning that receptive skills are likely to remain ahead of productive skills, and grammatical knowledge. The reason is not all about the language development but also the cognitive development of very young learners (Cameron, 2001). Thus older learners progress faster in L2 grammar and vocabulary due to their cognitive maturity (e.g. Harley & Wang, 1997). Long (1990) confirms quick-start advantage of older learners while pointing out that it is a short term effect in language learning process.

Some neurological experiments show that there are different ways of processing language for older and younger learners. In their studies, Weber-Fox and Neville (1996, 1999) investigated the different brain patterns of younger and older second language learners. They discovered a difference in the way older and younger learners process L2 although the result may be affected by varying proficiency level of groups. In addition, in the study by Kim

et al. (1997), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) was used to find out the location of two languages in the brain in bilingual learners. While older and younger learners were studying on sentence generating task, their brain activity was monitored. Findings showed that there were two distinct areas in Broca's area for older learners whereas younger ones had only one area for both languages. It proves the neurological difference between younger and older learners' brains in processing L2.

A series of studies were conducted in a naturalistic setting in the Netherlands. 69 English speaking subjects of all ages from very young to adult learners were participants of the study who were classified as new arrivals to the target country. Subjects had been in the country either one year or three months. The researchers tested the first group who had been there for a whole year only once while the second group was tested every four months in a year. It was aimed to compare subjects with different length of residence. Various tests were used to bear on subjects' pronunciation, auditory discrimination ability, morphology, vocabulary, sentence repetition, and translation. The results showed a great deal of advantage of older learners over younger ones at first but it started to fade away by the end of the year. The instruments used in the study militate in favor of older learners because they required more explicit and abstract knowledge. The only test that tapped into phonological and phonetic skills did not display an indicative difference between younger and older learners (Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978a, 1978b).

Yeung and Chan (2013) conducted a study to examine the role of phonological awareness and oral proficiency in very young learners. One hundred and sixty-one children selected from seven preschools in Hong Kong. There were assessments on English reading, English and Chinese phonological awareness, English oral ability and letter naming ability. It was found that phonological awareness contributed to oral language proficiency and phonological sensitivity were to be acquired in early years. In addition, in the study on the learning processes of 4-6 year-old children learning English, Peçenek (2002), aimed to examine the foreign language learning practice in pre-school education applied to 4-6 year-old Turkish children. 61 pre-school

children, 2 education consultants, 2 teachers of English working in the two institutions and the children's families were participated in this study. The data was gathered through interview, observation and survey techniques and analyzed for the research group of 4-6 year-old children. The results showed that 6 year-old children performed better and were more interested in learning a foreign language.

Many studies show that older learners use many strategies and have cognitive maturity and outperform on measurement tests. Their cognitive maturity, motivation, and learning strategies make them progress fast but young learners are likely to overtake them in the long run (Pinter, 2011). For this reason, Damar, Gürsoy and Korkmaz (2014) applied to the teacher trainers' opinions about the starting age for L2 learning and English teaching methodology in their study. The data was collected by surveys. The participants were 72 EFL teacher trainers from seven different public and private universities. The results showed that EFL teacher trainers promoted early start of language education and suggested teaching at the very first stage of primary school and even earlier, i.e. at preschool. Overall, older learners will be able to achieve native-like accent and pronunciation if they are devoted and motivated enough with the help of formal education, however, young learners' success in authentic pronunciation cannot be denied (Pinter, 2011).

Snow and Höfnagel-Höhle (1977) conducted both naturalistic and laboratory test. Dutch words which were imitated by the participants and were later evaluated by native speakers for accent in laboratory test. Subjects were tested every four to five months in their first year in the Netherlands using spontaneous task as well as an imitation task which was also judged by native speakers. There were an initial advantage of older learners over younger learners but after 10 to 11 months of residence, the latter become better at pronunciation. Some adults got lower scores than children after 18 months of residence. Oyama (1978) also confirmed the superior ultimate attainment of younger learners in the study. Twelve short English sentences were listened to and repeated by the participants. Results showed that subjects of 11 years and under were native-like whereas older subjects were not. Furthermore, it

was suggested there may be a second cut-off point for pronunciation as subjects over 16 did markedly worse than natives.

2.2.3. Research on the Effects of Lexical Chunks on Foreign Language Learning

A number of researchers have indicated that formulaic expressions are stored and used as whole units rather than as individual words and processed holistically (Altenberg, 1998; Raupach, 1984; Schmitt & Carter, 2004; Spöttl & McCarthy, 2004). In addition, Pawley and Syder (1983) stated that lexical chunks have a significant role in discourse and are widely used in language. They help learners understand, memorize, and retrieve efficiently. It is easier and faster to process chunks even though they are consisted of a sequence of individual words rather than the same sequences of words which are generated creatively.

In a paper, Henry (1996) showed how chunks of language created awareness in the paradigmatic, syntagmatic and phonological aspects of the language being taught. In addition, Lindstromberg and Boers (2008) aimed to discover facilitating means of chunk-learning in their paper. According to the findings, they also confirmed the positive effect of lexical chunks in L2 learning. Moreover, Jiang and Nekrasova (2007) examined the process of formulaic sequences in grammaticality judgment experiments. The participants were speakers of English as a second language and native speakers of English. Both groups of speakers processed formulaic phrases significantly more quickly and with fewer errors than nonformulaic phrases. The results found evidence in support of the holistic representation of formula in second language speakers.

Conklin and Schmitt (2008) compared reading times for formulaic sequences versus matched nonformulaic phrases for native and nonnative speakers. It was found that participants in both groups read the formulaic sequences more quickly than the nonformulaic phrases. This result supports

the advantage of formulaic sequences in processing the language. Furthermore, they also discovered that non-natives had the same type of processing advantage as natives.

2.2.4. Conclusion

After reviewing the related research, some conclusions were reached. Firstly, it is important to provide materials and activities appropriate for many aspects of very young learners such as age, material, interest, level, intelligence and time (Çakır, 2004). Therefore, educational policy developers are responsible for developing an efficient curriculum to improve very young learners' language proficiency (Garton et al., 2011). Next, teaching very young learners is very demanding and requires appropriate knowledge convenient for the subject group. Thus, enjoyable activities including picture vocabulary games (Kalaycıoğlu, 2011), stories (Elkılıç & Akça, 2008; Tunçarslan, 2013), drawing and coloring (Carless, 2002) and songs (Millington, 2011) are to be used in foreign language teaching context. In addition, it is a wise idea to integrate common and shared classroom routines into foreign language learning with the help of Total Physical Response as routine activities have essential role in communication and language development (Kultti, 2014).

In addition, the advantage of early start of language learning is found in some language skills. Very young learners have better results in listening and pronunciation (Harley et al., 1995). Due to the fact that older learners are more cognitively mature (Cameron, 2001), older learners progress faster in L2 grammar and vocabulary due to their cognitive maturity (e.g. Harley & Wang, 1997). Their cognitive maturity, motivation, and learning strategies make them progress fast but young learners are likely to overtake them in the long run (Pinter, 2011). The results showed a great deal of advantage of older learners over younger ones at first but it started to fade away by the end of the year (Long, 1990; Snow & Höfnagel-Höhle, 1977; Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978a, 1978b).

Lastly, the role of lexical chunks on learning was reviewed. It was asserted that lexical chunks were stored and used as whole units rather than as individual words and processed holistically (Altenberg, 1998; Raupach, 1984; Schmitt & Carter, 2004; Spöttl & McCarthy, 2004). Therefore, they help learners understand, memorize, and retrieve efficiently (Pawley & Syder, 1983). Moreover, lexical chunks have positive effect on second and foreign language and facilitate learning (Lindstromberg & Boers, 2008). It was also found that lexical chunks helped learners make correct grammatical judgment (Jiang & Nekrasova, 2007) and process lexical chunks significantly more quickly and with fewer errors than non-formulaic phrases. The same type of processing advantage was also found for non-natives as natives (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008).

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information about the description of the research design. The data collection tools and procedures are presented as well as the participants and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

This study was a mixed methods research. It was a qualitative study in the sense that it allowed the researcher to study individual performance closely (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). On the other hand, it was a quantitative study as it was the systematic investigation of observable phenomena with the help of statistics and allowed generalization to other groups, on the idea that sampling procedures are adequate (Shulman, 1981). Purposive sampling was used in the study as the participants were selected according to the specific predefined purpose. This study used two-step procedure: (1) administration of weekly tests and (2) administration of post-tests. Five lesson plans were prepared for five weeks and it aimed to teach new lexical chunks for each lesson. Lexical chunks used in the study are carefully selected from the most common phrases in daily life. While choosing the phrases, it has utmost importance that they are highly relevant to their age, interest, and characteristics and help conversational skills as they need to perform meaningful interaction to bridge between language and meaning. The researcher observed and kept records of this teaching period. A pre-test was not carried out to the students since they were unfamiliar with the phrases. There was an evaluation at the end of each unit. In addition, post-tests were applied at the end of the research to assess long term results of chunk teaching. To evaluate these data, the students were observed in their natural environment and assessed in a stress-free environment since the participants were very young learners.

Cameron (2001) suggests some simple ways of assessing young learners. The most common way of recording children's performance is the assessment checklist. They are easily managed by simply putting a tick when

a goal is accomplished. It is kept in mind that charts are designed to cover and identify every bits of language for assessment. They are tools for assessment not learning objectives. They provide a more detailed assessment framework against which teachers can judge the outcome of their students' learning. Over the course, the formal records and informal records give an overall picture of children's development and learning. For example, if the aim is to assess how well children learn the names of animals, it can be conducted in two phases. The first part tests understanding: Children listen to words and show the correct pictures. Next, children are asked to name the animals shown in pictures to test production. This kind of assessment is not threatening for children as they can be observed easily without much intervention. Overall, it requires finely tuned observation and systematic, detailed record keeping. In the study, this kind of assessment was also used to describe phrases. When the researcher pointed to the picture, children were supposed to say the correct phrase. Thus, it was aimed to evaluate oral skills related to the vocabulary which included understanding the meaning of chunks, recalling them and pronunciation of words and chunks. Furthermore, assessment by observation during the process of classroom activities was one of the key concepts of the study. It was noticed that some students did not seem to understand the meaning or pronunciation of what they were watching or singing. While some were performing along and know the whole parts, the others stayed quietly or moved their lips randomly. In that case, it is the teacher who should observe the class and adjust learning with the feedback they get from their observation (Cameron, 2001).

According to the purpose of the assessment, a distinction can be made in assessment. Formative assessment helps teacher get information about ongoing teaching and learning. It provides feedback both for teachers and students and gives a chance to spare more time to practice when needed (Gipps, 1994). In this study, weekly achievement tests are formative assessment in a way that they give clues about where children have difficulty and need repetition. Before moving on to the next round of teaching, the tests can reveal problematic areas. Because a testee not only is required to answer the questions or do what they are supposed to do but also have a chance to

discover to what extent they remember, assessment has a powerful washback effect to reach a complete understanding (Cameron, 2001). On the other hand, summative assessment at the end of study aims to assess overall learning.

Additionally, test items and tasks should be familiar to the pupils so as not to risk validity by reducing their performance. For example, in addition to flashcards, a game similar to Simon Says was used during the instruction of sit down, stand up and clap hands in the fourth week. Before the game began, the researcher modeled the game and then asked students to join the activity. Modeling was precious and functional to show what was expected from them. Furthermore, children gave directions to the researcher in turn in the second round of the game. They impatiently and enthusiastically waited their turn to use the chunks. It was also an indication of communicative means of language use for them since they could use the new language to interact with people. During the assessment process, as Dossena (1997) states there is no sense of creating game-like activities in assessment unless children play games in the learning environment, the game was also included in the assessment process to test comprehension in relation with the instruction materials.

3.2. Participants

The participants of the study were 61-69 month old students in the Necatibey Preschool in Balıkesir, Turkey. There were 14 students in the class. Of the participants, 5 (36%) were female and 9 (64%) were male students. They have not had formal English education before as they do not have any English teachers at the school. Their socio-economic backgrounds were similar. They were willing to participate in the lessons. They had two-hours-English lesson in a week for this research.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

The study used the English as a foreign language (EFL) Performance Checklist which was prepared in accordance with the research content by the researcher and the experts as teachers to collect data. The items of the checklist were chosen from a variety of topics according to degree of difficulty and age level of the participants. 15 lexical chunks were selected from various domains and the EFL Performance Checklist was prepared. The validity of the EFL Vocabulary Performance Checklist was ensured by consulting about content validity to the expert teacher from Foreign Language Education Department. Both weekly tests and post-test were applied to check the reliability of the study. The reliability coefficient was found .762 which meant that the data were reliable. So as not to make personal judgments during rating how well the student performs, the checklist items are prepared in details to make every item clear. Table 3 presents sample items of the EFL Performance Checklist.

Table 3. Sample Items of the EFL Performance Checklist

	Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
	The child stands up		
	The child sits down		
	The child claps hands		
Sit down	The child says "sit"		
	The child says "down"		
Stand up	The child says "stand"		
	The child says "up"		
Clap hands	The child says "clap"		
	The child says "hands"		

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Throughout the research, data were obtained through observation and EFL Performance Checklists. All lessons were observed and assessed by the researcher. The total of 15 items were introduced in English lessons and lasted five weeks. There were two English classes a week and each lesson was approximately 30-minute long. The weekly tests and post-tests were conducted and used for data analysis. The participants were assessed weekly to find out the short term effects of learning in chunks. At the end of the course, post-tests were applied using the same materials and teaching methods to ensure validity. The tests were applied to each child separately in a different room in order to protect internal validity in case the children might copy the others. In total, 15 lexical chunks were taught using pictures, games, real objects and songs. They also involved in activities physically by drawing, singing, showing and acting. In the assessment process, checklists and observation reports obtained from children's natural learning environment during teaching were used to collect data.

3.4. Data Analysis

In this study, the data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. They were observations and the EFL Performance Checklists which assessed both understanding and production of chunks. The data were analyzed with the aid of SPSS in two steps. First, the frequencies were found for the chunks taught for each week. Then, the values of ANOVA and independent samples tests were examined to see the correlation between the dependent and independent variables. In this study, the dependent variables were 15 lexical chunks in the study whereas the independent variables were age, gender, socioeconomic status and parents' educational level and working conditions.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the findings of the study based on each data collection tool. It revealed the findings from weekly tests, post-tests, observations and the results of students' natural learning process. Findings also answered research questions. In the tables, frequencies of each lexical chunk are listed both for weekly tests and post-tests and *comprehension* means they understood, performed and match the pictures successfully but weren't able to produce the chunk at all. The data were analyzed statistically with the aid of the computer software SPSS.

4.1. Comparison between Weekly Tests and Post-tests: Statistical Analysis

In the first week of the study, an enjoyable video was shown about introducing yourself. It was a song and puppets were playing and asking each other "Hello, what is your name?" The characters told their names using "My name is..." Children listened to the song and watch the video a few times and then they began to sing the song. Some of them were able to catch the whole phrase *my name is*, whereas others only focused on the name part. At the end of two hours of instruction, 11 of them produced full form of chunk, while three of them only said their names with the greeting word *hello*. In post-test, the number of students who used the whole chunk decreased to five, showing the time effect on retrieving information (Table 4).

Table 4. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 1: Hello/ My name is

	F	%		F	%
Hello/ Name	3	21.4	Hello/ Name	9	64.3
Hello/ My name is	11	78.6	Hello/ My name is	5	35.7
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

In week 2, chunks *I am happy*, *I am sad* and *I am hungry* were taught through a video including a song. The same characters in the first week's video answered the question *Hello, how are you today?* The same procedure was applied allowing children to practice it. The researcher helped learners understand and remember better by using facial expression and body language. Children were interested in them to show their feelings so much that they waited for the chunks impatiently to make a smiley face etc. Table 5, 6 and 7 show the comparison between weekly tests and post-test for the chunks *I am happy*, *I am sad* and *I am hungry*. Most of them tended to remember better at the end of unit test rather than post-test. In addition, it was observed that they went beyond comprehension although a great number of students could only produce a part of a chunk.

Table 5. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 2: I am happy

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	2	14.3	comprehension	1	7.1
I am	1	7.1	I am	1	7.1
happy	8	57.1	happy	10	71.4
I am happy	3	21.4	I am happy	2	14.3
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Table 6. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 2: I am Sad

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	1	7.1	comprehension	2	14.3
sad	6	42.9	sad	8	57.1
I am sad	7	50.0	I am sad	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Table 7. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 2: I am Hungry

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	3	21.4	comprehension	7	50.0
hungry	7	50.0	hungry	6	42.9
I am hungry	4	28.6	I am hungry	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

In the third week, a video with a song was introduced about greetings. It was aimed to use visual clues such as waking up in the morning, going to bed at night and leaving a place in the video. Children danced through the song while watching it curiously and silently for the first few times. They sang

along the song when they were ready. There was no limit to watch a video or sing a song as they were likely to repeat it again and again as long as they were interested. They also drew pictures for each chunk similar to the visuals shown in the video to reinforce understanding. Most of them asked the first word *good* for a clue, therefore, they tended to produce second part of chunk more. One of the students only remembered *good* except for the first chunk *good morning* in weekly test. He stated that all phrases started with good and he could not recall the rest. The frequencies and percentages are shown in table 8, 9 and 10 below.

Table 8. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 3: Good Morning

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	3	21.4	comprehension	1	7.1
			good	1	7.1
morning	1	7.1	morning	8	57.1
good morning	10	71.4	good morning	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Table 9. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 3: Good Night

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	4	28.6	comprehension	9	64.3
good	1	7.1	good	1	7.1
night	3	21.4	night	2	14.3
good night	6	42.9	good night	2	14.3
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Table 10. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 3: Good bye

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	2	14.3	comprehension	3	21.4
good	1	7.1	good	1	7.1
bye	2	14.3	bye	3	21.4
good bye	9	64.3	good bye	7	50.0
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Flashcards were used for instruction in the fourth week. The phrases were *clap hands*, *sit down* and *stand up*. Students were shown pictures of a man sitting down and standing up, and clapping hands. Since flashcards were not engaging enough to attract their attention for a long time, the researcher modeled the activity first and then wanted them to perform the instructions.

After it was ensured that the students understood the relationship between the directions and the language chunks, a game similar to “Simon Says” offered to children. They eagerly joined the game and performed the given instructions. The comprehension and production outcomes are shown for the chunks *clap hands*, *sit down* and *stand up* in table 11, 12 and 13 both for weekly tests and post-tests. According to the tables, *clap hands* was produced significantly more than the others by the students while there were some problems with the comprehension of *sit down* and *stand up*. They confused *stand up* with *sit down* or vice versa and mismatched the pictures. However, it was observed that they could produce the chunk if they were given first words as clues.

Table 11. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 4: Clap Hands

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	1	7.1			
hands	2	14.3	hands	2	14.3
clap hands	11	78.6	clap hands	11	78.6
Total	14	100.0	clap	1	7.1
			Total	14	100.0

Table 12. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 4: Sit Down

	F	%		F	%
comprehension	1	7.1			
down	7	50.0	down	5	35.7
sit down	5	35.7	sit down	6	42.9
no comprehension	1	7.1	no comprehension	3	21.4
Total	14	100.0	Total	14	100.0

Table 13. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 4: Stand Up

	F	%		F	%
up	7	50.0	comprehension	2	14.3
stand up	6	42.9	up	5	35.7
no comprehension	1	7.1	stand up	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0	no comprehension	3	21.4
			Total	14	100.0

In the 5th week, the chunks *eat cake*, *eat pizza*, *drink milk* and *drink water* were aimed to teach through the week. Flashcards and realia were used for instruction. The students practiced what they had learned from flashcards while they were actually drinking their milk and water during and after the mealtime. Results showed that children managed to retrieve chunks in table 14 and 15 to a great extent both in weekly and post assessments whereas they were less successful in producing and recalling the chunks in table 16 and 17. They were very precise in showing the right pictures and there were not any problem observed in comprehension for all collocations.

Table 14. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 5: Eat Cake

	F	%
cake	1	7.1
eat cake	13	92.9
Total	14	100.0

	F	%
cake	2	14.3
eat cake	12	85.7
Total	14	100.0

Table 15. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 5: Eat Pizza

	F	%
pizza	1	7.1
eat pizza	13	92.9
Total	14	100.0

	F	%
pizza	2	14.3
eat pizza	12	85.7
Total	14	100.0

Table 16. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 5: Drink Milk

	F	%
milk	7	50.0
drink milk	7	50.0
Total	14	100.0

	F	%
milk	11	78.6
drink milk	3	21.4
Total	14	100.0

Table 17. Comparison of Weekly Test and Post-test in Unit 5: Drink Water

	F	%
water	7	50.0
drink water	7	50.0
Total	14	100.0

	F	%
comprehension	2	14.3
drink	1	7.1
water	8	57.1
drink water	3	21.4
Total	14	100.0

4.2. Statistical Analysis of Scores

Scores were calculated in Microsoft Office Excel according to their comprehension and production level and analyzed in the computer software SPSS. Table 18 and 19 show the minimum and maximum scores for each week and their mean and standard deviations are also given both for weekly tests and post-tests. According to the tables, there was a decrease in scores in post-tests for each week.

Table 18. Weekly Test Scores for Each Week and Mean Scores of the Tests

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ScoreW1	14	67.00	100.00	92.93	14.05
ScoreW2	14	33.00	100.00	73.21	17.81
ScoreW3	14	33.00	100.00	79.50	18.92
ScoreW4	14	56.00	100.00	81.14	13.25
ScoreW5	14	67.00	100.00	90.36	10.82
Mid Mean Score	14	68.00	98.00	83.43	7.56

Table 19. Post-test Scores for Each Week and Mean Scores of the Tests

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PostScoreW1	14	67.00	100.00	88.21	16.41
PostScoreW2	14	44.00	100.00	64.50	15.26
PostScoreW3	14	33.00	100.00	63.57	21.24
PostScoreW4	14	56.00	100.00	78.00	14.31
PostScoreW5	14	58.00	100.00	83.14	11.81
Post Mean Score	14	61.00	100.00	75.29	11.10

4.2.1. Gender effect on tests scores

The Significance (2-Tailed) value for the first week as a result of weekly test scores is .041 (Table 21). This value is less than .05. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores and gender. Since table 20 reveals that the mean for the male students' scores in the first week was greater than the mean for the female students'

scores, it can be concluded that male participants were able to recall significantly more than female participants in the first week.

Table 20. Descriptive Statistics of Weekly Scores by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ScoreW1	Female	5	86.80	18.07	8.08
	Male	9	96.33	11.00	3.67
ScoreW2	Female	5	80.20	14.34	6.41
	Male	9	69.33	19.11	6.37
ScoreW3	Female	5	91.20	9.20	4.12
	Male	9	73.00	20.16	6.72
ScoreW4	Female	5	78.00	17.39	7.78
	Male	9	82.89	11.15	3.71
ScoreW5	Female	5	86.60	13.87	6.20
	Male	9	92.44	8.96	2.99
Mid Mean Score	Female	5	84.60	4.67	2.09
	Male	9	82.78	8.98	2.99

Table 21. Correlation between Weekly Scores and Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
ScoreW1	Equal variances assumed	5.25	.04
	Equal variances not assumed		
ScoreW2	Equal variances assumed	.07	.80
	Equal variances not assumed		
ScoreW3	Equal variances assumed	2.16	.17
	Equal variances not assumed		
ScoreW4	Equal variances assumed	1.07	.32
	Equal variances not assumed		
ScoreW5	Equal variances assumed	1.03	.33
	Equal variances not assumed		
Mid Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	1.34	.27
	Equal variances not assumed		

As shown in table 23, the significance value is .041 for the post-test scores of fourth week. A statistically significant difference between the mean

of scores and gender was found. Table 22 gives the description of the mean for the male and female students' scores for each week and it can be seen that the mean for males' scores was greater than the mean for the female students' scores in week 4. Therefore, female students were able to recall significantly less than their male counterparts in the fourth week.

Table 22. Descriptive Statistics of Post-test Scores by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PostScoreW1	Female	5	86.80	18.07	8.08
	Male	9	89.00	16.50	5.50
PostScoreW2	Female	5	64.80	4.92	2.20
	Male	9	64.33	19.14	6.38
PostScoreW3	Female	5	66.80	23.69	10.59
	Male	9	61.78	21.04	7.01
PostScoreW4	Female	5	73.60	19.98	8.94
	Male	9	80.44	10.69	3.56
PostScoreW5	Female	5	81.40	15.01	6.71
	Male	9	84.11	10.53	3.51
Post Mean Score	Female	5	74.40	10.50	4.70
	Male	9	75.78	12.02	4.00

Table 23. Correlation between Post-test Scores and Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
PostScoreW1	Equal variances assumed	.18	.68
	Equal variances not assumed		
PostScoreW2	Equal variances assumed	4.51	.06
	Equal variances not assumed		
PostScoreW3	Equal variances assumed	.19	.67
	Equal variances not assumed		
PostScoreW4	Equal variances assumed	5.49	.04
	Equal variances not assumed		
PostScoreW5	Equal variances assumed	.23	.64
	Equal variances not assumed		
Post Mean Score	Equal variances assumed	.14	.72
	Equal variances not assumed		

4.2.2. The Effect of Educational Level of Parents on Test Scores

In table 24, the frequencies and percentages for the educational level of fathers are given. 3 of the fathers (21.4%) are university and 6 of them (42.9%) are high school graduates while there are 3 fathers (21.4%) graduated from secondary school and the rest of them (14.3%) are primary school graduates.

Table 24. The Educational Level of Fathers

	F	%
university	3	21.4
high school	6	42.9
secondary school	3	21.4
primary school	2	14.3
Total	14	100.0

Descriptive statistics of weekly scores with fathers' educational level are shown in table 25 below. The mean scores for educational level differ from each other in each week and do not show any stable decreases or increases. The significance values of five weeks are not less than .05 so it is not possible to show a statistically significant difference between the mean of scores and fathers' level of education (Table 26).

Table 25. Descriptive Statistics of Weekly Scores by Fathers' Educational Level

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	
ScoreW1	university	3	100.00	.00	.00
	high school	6	89.00	17.04	6.96
	secondary school	3	89.00	19.05	11.00
	primary school	2	100.00	.00	.00
	Total	14	92.93	14.05	3.76
ScoreW2	university	3	74.33	12.70	7.33
	high school	6	68.67	22.77	9.29
	secondary school	3	85.33	16.80	9.70
	primary school	2	67.00	.00	.00
	Total	14	73.21	17.81	4.76
ScoreW3	university	3	96.33	6.35	3.67
	high school	6	72.33	25.15	10.27
	secondary school	3	81.67	6.35	3.67

	primary school	2	72.50	7.78	5.50
	Total	14	79.50	18.92	5.06
	university	3	74.33	16.80	9.70
	high school	6	85.33	15.03	6.14
ScoreW4	secondary school	3	78.00	11.00	6.35
	primary school	2	83.50	7.78	5.50
	Total	14	81.14	13.25	3.54
	university	3	77.67	9.24	5.33
	high school	6	94.33	8.78	3.58
ScoreW5	secondary school	3	94.33	9.81	5.67
	primary school	2	91.50	12.02	8.50
	Total	14	90.36	10.82	2.89

Table 26. Correlation between Weekly Scores and Fathers' Educational Level

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ScoreW1	Between Groups	388.93	3	129.64	.60	.63
	Within Groups	2178.00	10	217.80		
	Total	2566.93	13			
ScoreW2	Between Groups	645.69	3	215.23	.62	.62
	Within Groups	3478.67	10	347.87		
	Total	4124.36	13			
ScoreW3	Between Groups	1270.33	3	423.44	1.25	.34
	Within Groups	3385.17	10	338.52		
	Total	4655.50	13			
ScoreW4	Between Groups	285.21	3	95.07	.48	.71
	Within Groups	1996.50	10	199.65		
	Total	2281.71	13			
ScoreW5	Between Groups	628.05	3	209.35	2.34	.14
	Within Groups	893.17	10	89.32		
	Total	1521.21	13			

Table 27 shows the frequencies and percentages for the educational level of mothers. 3 of the mothers (21.4%) are university graduate whereas 6 of them (42.9%) graduated from high school. Only 2 mothers (14.3%) graduated from secondary school and 3 of the mothers (21.4%) are primary school graduates. There is not much difference in distribution of educational levels between mothers and fathers.

Table 27. The Educational Level of Mothers

	F	%
university	3	21.4
high school	6	42.9
secondary school	2	14.3
primary school	3	21.4
Total	14	100.0

In table 29, correlations between weekly scores and mothers' educational level are analyzed and found that the significance value for the third week is .024. It indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean of scores and mothers' educational level. The fact that the children's mean score for the mothers who are university and high school graduates in week 3 were greater than the mean for the secondary school and primary graduates (Table 28), it can be suggested that the educational level of mother has a significant effect on children's scores in the third week.

Table 28. Descriptive Statistics of Weekly Scores by Mothers' Educational Level

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
ScoreW1	university	3	100.00	.00
	high school	6	83.50	18.07
	secondary school	2	100.00	.00
	primary school	3	100.00	.00
	Total	14	92.93	14.05
ScoreW2	university	3	85.33	16.80
	high school	6	70.50	21.97
	secondary school	2	61.50	7.78
	primary school	3	74.33	12.70
	Total	14	73.21	17.81
ScoreW3	university	3	96.33	6.35
	high school	6	83.50	15.16
	secondary school	2	50.00	24.04
	primary school	3	74.33	6.35
	Total	14	79.50	18.92
ScoreW4	university	3	78.00	19.05
	high school	6	87.17	12.86
	secondary school	2	67.00	.00
	primary school	3	81.67	6.35
	Total	14	81.14	13.25
ScoreW5	university	3	83.33	16.50

high school	6	91.50	9.31	3.80
secondary school	2	91.50	12.02	8.50
primary school	3	94.33	9.81	5.67
Total	14	90.36	10.82	2.89

Table 29. Correlation between Weekly Scores and Mothers' Educational Level

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
ScoreW1	Between Groups	933.43	3	311.14	1.91	.19
	Within Groups	1633.50	10	163.35		
	Total	2566.93	13			
ScoreW2	Between Groups	763.02	3	254.34	.76	.54
	Within Groups	3361.33	10	336.13		
	Total	4124.36	13			
ScoreW3	Between Groups	2766.67	3	922.22	4.88	.02
	Within Groups	1888.83	10	188.88		
	Total	4655.50	13			
ScoreW4	Between Groups	648.21	3	216.07	1.32	.32
	Within Groups	1633.50	10	163.35		
	Total	2281.71	13			
ScoreW5	Between Groups	205.88	3	68.63	.52	.68
	Within Groups	1315.33	10	131.53		
	Total	1521.21	13			

Post-test mean scores by fathers' educational level are described in table 30. Table 31 displays no significant difference between post-test scores and educational levels of fathers for all weeks. It can be inferred that educational levels of fathers do not affect the scores.

Table 30. Descriptive Statistics of Post-test Scores by Fathers' Educational Level

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	
PostScoreW1	university	3	100.00	.00	.00
	high school	6	83.50	18.07	7.38
	secondary school	3	89.00	19.05	11.00
	primary school	2	83.50	23.33	16.50
	Total	14	88.21	16.41	4.39
PostScoreW2	university	3	63.33	6.35	3.67
	high school	6	70.50	20.73	8.46
	secondary school	3	59.33	13.28	7.67
	primary school	2	56.00	.00	.00
PostScoreW3	Total	14	64.50	15.26	4.08
	university	3	78.00	19.05	11.00
	high school	6	51.67	25.18	10.28

	secondary school	3	67.00	11.00	6.35
	primary school	2	72.50	7.78	5.50
	Total	14	63.57	21.24	5.68
	university	3	70.67	25.40	14.67
	high school	6	79.83	12.86	5.25
PostScoreW4	secondary school	3	81.67	12.70	7.33
	primary school	2	78.00	.00	.00
	Total	14	78.00	14.31	3.82
	university	3	74.67	14.43	8.33
	high school	6	81.83	10.96	4.48
PostScoreW5	secondary school	3	88.67	9.81	5.67
	primary school	2	91.50	12.02	8.50
	Total	14	83.14	11.81	3.16
	university	3	77.00	11.79	6.80
	high school	6	73.33	15.47	6.32
Post Mean Score	secondary school	3	77.00	2.65	1.53
	primary school	2	76.00	8.49	6.00
	Total	14	75.29	11.10	2.97

Table 31. Correlation between Post-test Scores and Fathers' Educational Level

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
PostScoreW1	Between Groups	596.36	3	198.79	.69	.58
	Within Groups	2904.00	10	290.40		
	Total	3500.36	13			
PostScoreW2	Between Groups	444.67	3	148.22	.57	.65
	Within Groups	2582.83	10	258.28		
	Total	3027.50	13			
PostScoreW3	Between Groups	1669.60	3	556.53	1.33	.32
	Within Groups	4197.83	10	419.78		
	Total	5867.43	13			
PostScoreW4	Between Groups	221.83	3	73.94	.30	.82
	Within Groups	2440.17	10	244.02		
	Total	2662.00	13			
PostScoreW5	Between Groups	457.05	3	152.35	1.13	.39
	Within Groups	1354.67	10	135.47		
	Total	1811.71	13			
Post Mean Score	Between Groups	41.52	3	13.84	.09	.97
	Within Groups	1561.33	10	156.13		
	Total	1602.86	13			

As shown in table 32 and 33, a statistically significant correlation is not observed between mothers' educational level and post-test scores for each week. The significance found in weekly test scores in the third week tends to disappear in post-test scores. Thus, it suggests that the advantage of mothers' educational level on scores has faded away.

Table 32. Descriptive Statistics of Post-test Scores with Mothers' Educational Level

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
PostScoreW1	university	3	100.00	.00	.00
	high school	6	83.50	18.07	7.38
	secondary school	2	83.50	23.33	16.50
	primary school	3	89.00	19.05	11.00
	Total	14	88.21	16.41	4.39
PostScoreW2	university	3	74.33	22.90	13.22
	high school	6	63.00	17.00	6.94
	secondary school	2	61.50	7.78	5.50
	primary school	3	59.67	6.35	3.67
	Total	14	64.50	15.26	4.08
PostScoreW3	university	3	78.00	19.05	11.00
	high school	6	63.00	24.17	9.87
	secondary school	2	38.50	7.78	5.50
	primary school	3	67.00	11.00	6.35
	Total	14	63.57	21.24	5.68
PostScoreW4	university	3	70.67	25.40	14.67
	high school	6	79.83	14.62	5.97
	secondary school	2	78.00	.00	.00
	primary school	3	81.67	6.35	3.67
	Total	14	78.00	14.31	3.82
PostScoreW5	university	3	80.33	21.13	12.20
	high school	6	85.83	6.94	2.83
	secondary school	2	71.00	5.66	4.00
	primary school	3	88.67	9.81	5.67
	Total	14	83.14	11.81	3.16
Post Mean Score	university	3	80.33	17.39	10.03
	high school	6	74.83	11.30	4.61
	secondary school	2	66.50	6.36	4.50
	primary school	3	77.00	6.25	3.61
	Total	14	75.29	11.10	2.97

Table 33. Correlation between Post-test Scores and Mothers' Educational Level

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
PostScoreW1	Between Groups	596.36	3	198.79	.69	.58
	Within Groups	2904.00	10	290.40		
	Total	3500.36	13			
PostScoreW2	Between Groups	391.67	3	130.56	.50	.69
	Within Groups	2635.83	10	263.58		
	Total	3027.50	13			
PostScoreW3	Between Groups	1918.93	3	639.64	1.62	.25
	Within Groups	3948.50	10	394.85		
	Total	5867.43	13			
PostScoreW4	Between Groups	221.83	3	73.94	.30	.82
	Within Groups	2440.17	10	244.02		
	Total	2662.00	13			
PostScoreW5	Between Groups	453.55	3	151.18	1.11	.39
	Within Groups	1358.17	10	135.82		
	Total	1811.71	13			
Post Mean Score	Between Groups	240.86	3	80.29	.59	.64
	Within Groups	1362.00	10	136.20		
	Total	1602.86	13			

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

According to the statistical results and observations, there are some points to consider. In the first week, male students did significantly better than female students in their weekly test. However, this difference disappeared in the post-test. The results may give the idea that male learners are more extrovert and happy to introduce themselves while female learners are shier. The fact that the difference between female and male learners faded away in post-test, it may support the suggestion above because female learners and the researcher got familiar with each other after five weeks.

In the second week, all children were able to comprehend *I am hungry* but most of them could not produce it. They had less difficulty in producing *I am happy* and *I am sad* either as whole chunks or only part of them. This result may suggest that being hungry is less clear in meaning and is harder to show it in action. When they sang the song in the video, they mimicked the smiley and sad face whereas they showed their stomachs to imitate being hungry. Although it was clearly instructed that it means being hungry, most children might not successfully relate it to the meaning and failed to remember consequently. It may also suggest that very young learners tend to keen on emotional rather than physical needs.

Moreover, the pictures of newly acquired vocabulary are to be part of classroom design. The class environment attracts children's attention and enables them to remember and motivate them to learn. Besides, Shin (2007) states young learners enjoy being in structured environments and reiteration of certain class routines, the phrases *hello*, *good morning*, and *good bye* became a part of English class routines during the study. The students joined the morning class so it was not possible to practice good night in classroom routines. However, only a few of the students reported they said good night to

their parents before going to bed. That mostly explains why students learn and remember good morning and good bye easier than good night.

In week 4, children learned and produced clap hands better than the other chunks (Table 11). It was observed that they enjoyed making sounds by clapping. One of the students reported that the sound of clapping was similar to the word clap and the researcher used the idea generated by the student to give it as a cue for all children and they appreciated it. However, some of the students had difficulty in comprehension for the chunks sit down by confusing with stand up or vice versa (Table 12 and 13). The findings offer that words or chunks with similar pronunciation or same beginning sounds may result in confusion in children's mind and impede learning.

The materials in immediate environment should be included in teaching to boost learning. For example, while teaching colors, teacher can use the color of objects around them and relate them what they already know. Here and now context makes it easier to make sense of unknown (Juhana, 2014). In week 5, *drink water* and *drink milk* phrases were instructed in company with the objects and realia around them, i.e. water, water bottles and milk. They always had water bottles in classroom environment so they had a chance to experience drinking water in action. It created a perfect link between actions they did every day to language phrases. Therefore, teaching fruit, food and drink works best when accompanied with real objects at hand. The taste of drinks here helped them internalize the concepts (Brown, 2001). Therefore, all teachers are to keep track of food and drinks scheduled in the mealtime to reinforce learning.

Furthermore, collocations of the verb *eat* were selected from the words which are familiar to the children. The words for *pizza* and *cake* are almost the same in their first language. Although the written form of *cake* is different, it is not the case for very young learners as they are illiterate. They are only exposed to the spoken form of language. As a result they retrieved and produced the collocations with the verb *eat* more than the chunks *drink milk* and *drink water*. This finding supports the idea that children rely on

grammatical and vocabulary cues in their first language when they face a new language (Bates et al., 1984; Harley, 1994; Schmidt, 1990). However, it can be seen that the production rate of *drink milk* and *drink water* was also very high yet they produced only the first or the second part of the chunks most of the time. As shown in tables 18 and 19, the highest mean scores occurred during the first and the fifth weeks. The chunks in the first week were not very demanding so the result was predictable. Although there were more chunks in the last week, it had higher mean score than the others. It may offer the advantage of using familiar words and chunks and being active in the learning process. The chunks that describe actions facilitated learning and made them involve in learning.

As Moon (2000) discussed how children learn and make use of chunks either they learn formally or on TV. The child in the study displays a perfect example of breaking down and recombining chunks in new ways. Cameron (2001) also stated that grammar skills needed creative use of whole-learnt chunks. In the study, while reviewing the phrases *eat cake* and *eat pizza*, one of the students showed a picture of an apple on the wall and said *eat elma* (apple). He did not know the meaning of *elma* (apple) in English but the point is he recombined the chunk appropriately even if it's not entirely English. It shows that he grasped the meaning and usage of the chunk. Furthermore, it proves the acquisition of English word order (S)VO although it is vice versa in Turkish OV(S).

Overall, that they eagerly explore the environment and interact with people helps them to construct their understanding of the world they live in. An important way that they do this is through physical activity and experiencing things first hand (Moon, 2000). Physical activities, e.g. making things, action songs, and games provide great context for language learning. They learn through doing and they give clues about the meaning of language used and support linking language with physical movement as well as giving a purpose for using a language. TPR activities need less effort as they only need to understand the command and perform them. Speaking is challenging and requires more than listening skills, thus these types of activities allow children

to respond to the language while allocating time to produce language until they are ready. Furthermore, in early stages of language learning, children may not be so enthusiastic about taking part in conversations. Therefore, fixed collocations encourage them to take over and participate and thus the input they're exposed to increases. Songs, rhymes, and classroom routines are best to teach ready-made bits of languages (Moon, 2000).

Moreover, a positive start to language learning helps children to gain confidence and sustain children's language learning in following years of education. Not only language but also intercultural understanding can be developed. Children are more aware of independency of language and the object by having a chance to see language with its own right. It is possible to raise consciousness in both their own language and other languages. They develop new strategies to learn a new language and so it may accelerate the cognitive development that Piaget focuses on (Curtain, 1990).

This study concludes that children need to be active in their own learning and enjoy more hands-on activities. Concrete rather than abstract subjects are to be tailored carefully in a way that help children understand and process the meaning. A wide range of activities should be designed to get VYLs' attention and arouse constant interest. The combination of physical activities such as walking, running, jumping, dancing and climbing with language contributes positively to learning. It is possible to practice language and form context while they relish fine-motor activities such as drawing, coloring, painting, cutting, and pasting in classroom activities. In addition, age factor in language acquisition is important both in first, second and foreign language. Studies suggest the advantage of early start in language learning to reach ultimate proficiency especially in pronunciation (e.g. Oyama, 1976, 1978; Patkowski, 1980; Krashen, et al., 1982; Felix, 1985, 1991; Singleton, 1989; Long, 1990; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Johnson and Newport, 1989; Bley-Vroman, 1990; Johnson, 1992; Slavoff & Johnson, 1995). While there is a consensus on the presence of a critical period, instead of one single age, a gradual loss of language learning ability is suggested (Long, 1990; Pinker, 1994; Pinter, 2011). In addition, cognitive development is also crucial

in the language acquisition process as well as language development. However, many researchers support the view that although older learners are cognitively more mature and perform better initially, it is only short term advantage and younger learners have long term superiority over older learners (Long, 1990; Harley & Wang, 1997).

To sum up, the results of the present study suggests that very young learners were able to comprehend lexical chunks as a whole to a great extent. The problems arose from similarities in pronunciation and sounds of the words and they mismatched the lexical chunks with the pictures or performed wrongly although they were able to produce the whole or a part of the lexical chunk. In addition, they were able to produce lexical chunks mostly when they were given clues for the first words of lexical chunks. The results suggests that lexical chunks help children remember the other pair immediately after they heard the first word of the lexical chunk. The results seem to be parallel with the previous literature that lexical chunks are stored as whole units rather than as individual words and processed holistically (Altenberg, 1998; Raupach, 1984; Schmitt & Carter, 2004; Spöttl & McCarthy, 2004). Furthermore, it might offer the idea that children learned the words in context when they remembered the collocation of the given word since the way lexical chunks are used includes discourse and context (Pinter, 2011). Moreover, a few children produced the lexical chunks as a whole correctly while most of them were able to produce only one part of lexical chunks. The findings confirm the idea that their productive skills lag behind receptive skills (Cameron, 2001). As for the relationship between language learning success and parents' educational level, although it was found a significant difference between the scores and educational level of mothers in the third week, the difference faded away in the post-test. There was not any significantly important difference found between educational level of fathers and children's scores. Lastly, the results suggest that there seems to be a little relationship between gender and language learning success in the first and fourth week, the difference faded away in the post-test for the first week, though.

The fact that there have been only few studies on VYLs, learning English as a foreign language in preschools and there are not any widely accepted EFL syllabi in preschool education, this study contributes to the related literature by offering a new lesson plan and applying it to see the practical side of the research. Furthermore, the study has considerable contributions to the related literature in terms of demonstrating the efficiency of lexical chunks in language learning. The research also contributes to the current literature in Turkish EFL context in terms of chunk learning both in comprehension and production level. It also gives an idea on how lexical chunks are learned and retrieved.

5.2. Suggestions

As a final note, some recommendations are presented. There are not any national curriculum and formal education of English language teaching and assessment in preschool education in Turkey. Therefore, policy makers, curriculum and material developers should work on common core standards in the light of the previous studies and needs of children according to their age. As there is not an obligatory English language education in preschool, only few schools integrate English language teaching into their curriculum. Moreover, it is not applied by the professionals most of the time which lead to lack of or misapplications of teaching methods and assessment. The advantages of an early start to English language teaching are proved in much research but it needs to be handled meticulously to make the most of it (e.g. Oyama, 1976, 1978; Patkowski, 1980; Krashen, et al., 1982; Felix, 1985, 1991; Singleton, 1989; Long, 1990; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Johnson & Newport, 1989; Bley-Vroman, 1990; Johnson, 1992; Pinker, 1994; Slavoff, G.R. & Johnson, 1995; Harley & Wang, 1997; Pinter, 2011). In addition, teachers are the key aspects of the implication and assessment of ELT and this put all on us on the teacher to provide exposure to the language and give many learning opportunities to reach success. Thereby, it is suggested that there should be specially designed curriculum for English teachers who will teach English to VYLs. Additionally, it may be a wise idea to provide in-service training, which

addresses to needs and language development of children, for English teachers in preschools.

Lastly, further research is necessary on young learners' learning process, and their characteristics and learning styles. There is also a limited number of studies on future effects of early start and lexical chunks in learning the foreign language rather than the second language. Accordingly, chunk learning is to be examined in details and various lexical chunk based syllabi should be designed and assessed in different contexts in accord with appropriate activities.

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7. APPENDIX

Appendix 1. English Lesson Plan: Unit 1

ENGLISH LESSON PLAN

Class: Nursery Class

Class size: 14 students

Student age: 61-69 month old

Estimated time: 30+30 minutes

Date: .10-12.12.2014

Unit: 1

Subject: Introducing oneself

Vocabulary: Hello, what's your name? and my name is...

Materials: Video, song, flashcards, TV or projection

Objectives

- The students will be able to say hello
- The students will be able to understand the question
- The students will be able to say their name

Language Tasks and Study Skills/Methods

Explanations, question and answer, the communicative Approach, TPR, translation

Teaching & Learning Process

The teacher says hello to the students and then asks their names in their first language. Then, the teacher says hello to the classroom teacher and asks her name. After that, the teacher repeats the same greeting in the target language with the classroom teacher to model the activity. Lastly, the teacher says hello and asks the students the same question.

The teacher tells the students that they are going to watch a video and listens a song. Then, the students watch the video and sing the song including the vocabulary *hello, what's your name? my name is....* The teacher replays the video a few times until the students understand and learn the vocabulary.

Lastly, the teacher practice the vocabulary with each student. The students sing the song by heart with the help of the teacher. Then, they say hello to each other and say their name.

Appendix 2. English Lesson Plan: Unit 2

ENGLISH LESSON PLAN

Class: Nursery Class

Class size: 14 students

Student age: 61-69 month old

Estimated time: 30+30 minutes

Date: 17-19.12.2014

Unit: 2

Subject: Emotional & Physical Condition

Vocabulary: I'm happy, I'm sad, and I'm hungry

Materials: Video, song, flashcards, TV or projection, stickers

Objectives

- The students will be able to answer the question *how are you today?*
- The students will be able to understand the target vocabulary
- The students will be able to produce the target vocabulary

Language Tasks and Study Skills/Methods:

Explanations, question and answer, the communicative Approach, TPR, translation, dramatization

Teaching & Learning Process:

The teacher shows flashcards and explains their meaning to the students. Next, the classroom teacher asks “*how are you today?*” in the target language to the teacher and the teacher tells her feelings by imitating and mimicking them to model the activity. Then the teacher asks the students the question and asks them to imitate the feeling for each vocabulary.

After that, the teacher plays a video about feelings. The students watch it and listen to the song. The teacher replays the video a few times and then asks the students sing it together. The teacher makes the students practice the vocabulary by asking the question each of them in the classroom.

Lastly, the teacher asks students the question *how are you today?* and gets various answers. When the students answer the question they get stickers as an award. If there are students who do not want to answer to the question, the teacher asks them just to imitate the feeling without saying it. This process goes on until every one of them has a sticker.

Appendix 3. English Lesson Plan: Unit 3**ENGLISH LESSON PLAN**

Class: Nursery Class

Class size: 14 students

Student age: 61-69 month old

Estimated time: 30+30 minutes

Date: 24-26.12.2014

Unit: 3

Subject: Greetings

Vocabulary: Good morning, good night, and good bye

Materials: Video, song, flashcards, TV or projection, paper, crayons

Objectives

- The students will be able to understand the greetings
- The students will be able to greet people
- The students will be able to produce the target vocabulary

Language Tasks and Study Skills/Methods:

Explanations, question and answer, the communicative Approach, TPR, translation, dramatization, drawing and coloring activities

Teaching & Learning Process:

The teacher shows flashcards and explains their meaning to the students. Next, the teacher asks them to draw a picture for each vocabulary. The teacher says they do not have to draw the same pictures. The students draw pictures for *good morning*, *good night* and *good bye* context. Then, the students show their drawings to the teacher and practice the vocabulary.

After that, the teacher plays a video about greetings. The students watch it and listen to the greeting song. The teacher replays the video a few times and then asks the students sing it together. They practice the vocabulary by greeting each other in the classroom.

Lastly, the teacher asks students to greet their parents every day when they are at home. The teacher also greets the students before and after every English class.

Appendix 4. English Lesson Plan: Unit 4**ENGLISH LESSON PLAN**

Class: Nursery Class

Class size: 14 students

Student age: 61-69 month old

Estimated time: 30+30 minutes

Date: 29-30.12.2014

Unit: 4

Subject: Imperatives

Vocabulary: Sit down, stand up, and clap hands

Materials: Flashcards, TV or projection, chairs

Objectives

- The students will be able to understand the instruction
- The students will be able to perform the instruction
- The students will be able to produce the target vocabulary

Language Tasks and Study Skills/Methods:

Explanations, question and answer, the communicative Approach, TPR, translation, dramatization, game (Simon says)

Teaching & Learning Process:

The teacher shows flashcards and explains their meaning to the students. Next, the teacher shows the activity using the target vocabulary. After that, the teacher asks for a volunteer and models the activity with a student. Then, the teacher says that they are going to play a game and explains the game rules. According to the game, when the teacher says sit down, the students sit down, and it is the same with other vocabulary.

Now that the teacher give them the instructions, it is the students' turn to give the instructions. Each student says sit down, stand up or clap hands to the teacher and the teacher performs it. Each student has only one change to give an instruction as it takes a lot of time.

Lastly, the teacher asks students to give instruction to each other and lets them to learn from each other.

Appendix 5. English Lesson Plan: Unit 5**ENGLISH LESSON PLAN**

Class: Nursery Class

Class size: 14 students

Student age: 61-69 month old

Estimated time: 30+30 minutes

Date: 07-09.01.2015

Unit: 5

Subject: Food& Drinks

Vocabulary: Eat pizza, eat cake, drink water, and drink milk

Materials: Flashcards, TV or projection, milk, water, water bottles

Objectives

- The students will be able to understand the instruction
- The students will be able to perform the instruction
- The students will be able to produce the target vocabulary

Language Tasks and Study Skills/Methods:

Explanations, question and answer, the communicative approach, TPR, translation, dramatization

Teaching & Learning Process:

The teacher shows flashcards and explains their meaning to the students. Next, the teacher shows the activity using the target vocabulary. After that, the teacher asks for a volunteer and asks the student to show the correct pictures. The teacher also asks the students imitate the actions, drinking and eating, when she says *eat cake, eat pizza, drink milk, and drink water*.

The teacher asks the students take their milk and water bottles and asks them to imitate or perform the actions, drinking milk or drinking water, when they are told to do so. Secondly, the teacher put the flashcards of the target vocabulary

on the different sides of the classroom. When the teacher gives the instruction, the students go the right side of the classroom. For example, if the teacher says *eat cake*, the students go to the one side of the classroom where the flashcard for *eat cake* is hung.

Appendix 6. Assessment Process

ASSESSMENT

The assessment takes place in two phases: Weekly tests and a post-test. After each unit, there is a weekly test to assess the target vocabulary on that unit. There is also a post-test that will be held at the end of five week instruction. The same learning and teaching methods and materials are used in the assessment part. As an assessment material, EFL Vocabulary Performance Checklist is prepared and applied for each test. If the student points to the right picture or performed the correct action such as sitting down and standing up, the teacher put a check on Performed. If the child performs incorrectly, in other words, if s/he physically points to the incorrect picture card or produce the target vocabulary incorrectly, the teacher puts a check on Not Performed. The tests were applied to each child separately in a different room in order to protect internal validity in case the children might copy the others.

WEEK 1

If the student says hello, the teacher checks on the performed row in the EFL Vocabulary Performance Checklist. If the student answers the question *what's your name?* with *my name is [name]* then the teacher put checks for both *my name is* and *name* row. If the student only says his/her name, the teacher put a check in the *name* row.

WEEK 2

The teacher asks the question “how are you today?”. Then the teacher shows the pictures for the target vocabulary. If the student physically points to the correct picture, the teacher put a check on Performed. If the student produces the target vocabulary correctly, the teacher put a check on Performed. If the student performs incorrectly, in other words, if s/he physically points to the incorrect picture card or produce the target vocabulary incorrectly, the teacher puts a check on Not Performed.

WEEK 3

The teacher shows the flashcards describing the greetings *good morning*, *good night* and *good bye*. The teacher further elicits the meaning of the pictures by explaining the student in his/her first language. Then, the teacher says each greeting and asks the student to point to the right picture. After that, the teacher points to the pictures and asks the student to produce them. The student gets one point for each check on Performed.

WEEK 4

The teacher plays the game *Simon says* and commands the target vocabulary *stand up*, *sit down* and *clap hands* and asks the student to show the action. The student who acts correctly gets one point for each phrase. Next, the teacher shows the flashcards for the phrases *stand up*, *sit down* and *clap hands* and asks them to produce the target vocabulary. If the student produces the correct word or words, the teacher puts a check on Performed and the student gets one point for each word they produce.

WEEK 5

The teacher shows the pictured vocabulary cards for each phrases, eat cake, eat pizza, drink milk, and drink water. The teacher asks the student to point to the correct picture when the teacher commands. The student gets one point for each correct answer. After that, the teacher points to the pictures and

asks the student to name them. If the student says it correctly, the teacher puts a check on Performed. The student gets one point for each word s/he produce.

Appendix 7. The EFL Vocabulary Performance Checklist

WEEK 1

Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
The child says "hello"		
The child says "my name is"		
The child says his/her name		

WEEK 2

	Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
	The child points to the picture "I'm happy"		
	The child points to the picture "I'm sad"		
	The child points to the picture "I'm hungry"		
I'm happy	The child says "I'm"		
	The child says "happy"		
I'm sad	The child says "I'm"		
	The child says "sad"		
I'm hungry	The child says "I'm"		
	The child says "hungry"		

WEEK 3

	Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
	The child points to the picture "good morning"		
	The child points to the picture "good night"		
	The child points to the picture "good bye"		
Good morning	The child says "good"		
	The child says "morning"		
Good night	The child says "good"		
	The child says "night"		
Good bye	The child says "good"		
	The child says "bye"		

WEEK 4

	Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
	The child stands up		
	The child sits down		
	The child claps hands		
Sit down	The child says "sit"		
	The child says "down"		
Stand up	The child says "stand"		
	The child says "up"		
Clap hands	The child says "clap"		
	The child says "hands"		

WEEK 5

	Performance Indicators	Performed (1)	Not Performed (0)
	The child points to the picture "drink milk"		
	The child points to the picture "drink water"		
	The child points to the picture "eat cake"		
	The child points to the picture "eat pizza"		
Drink milk	The child says "drink"		
	The child says "milk"		
Drink water	The child says "drink"		
	The child says "water"		
Eat cake	The child says "eat"		
	The child says "cake"		
Eat pizza	The child says "eat"		
	The child says "pizza"		

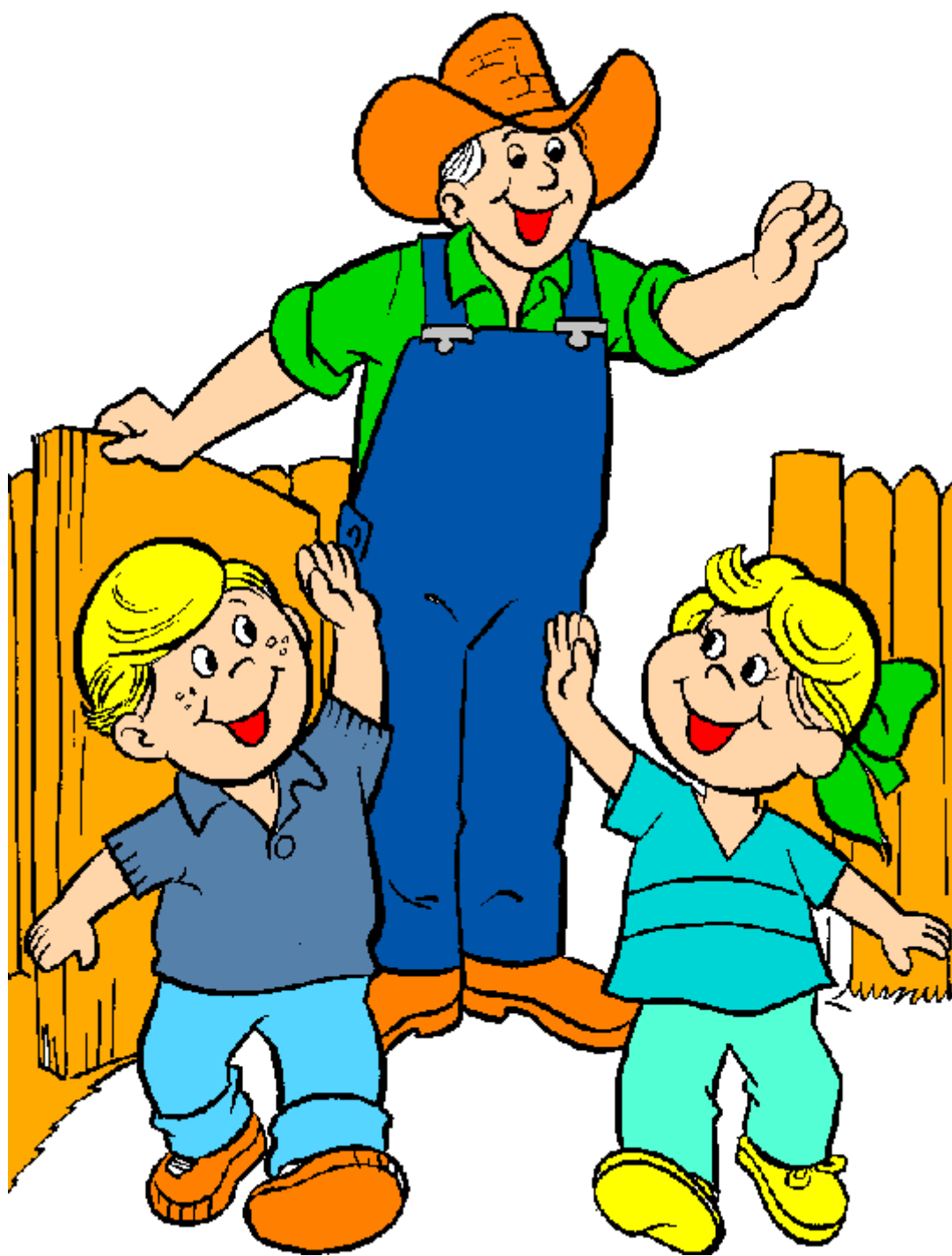
Appendix 8. The pictures used in the instruction and the assessment



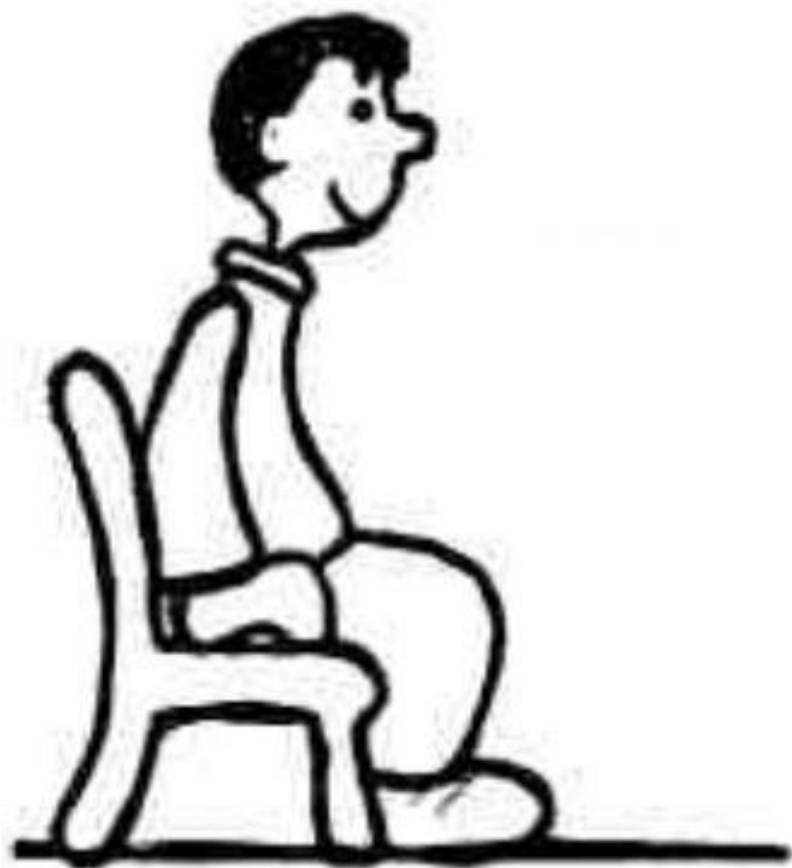
Sleeping Time

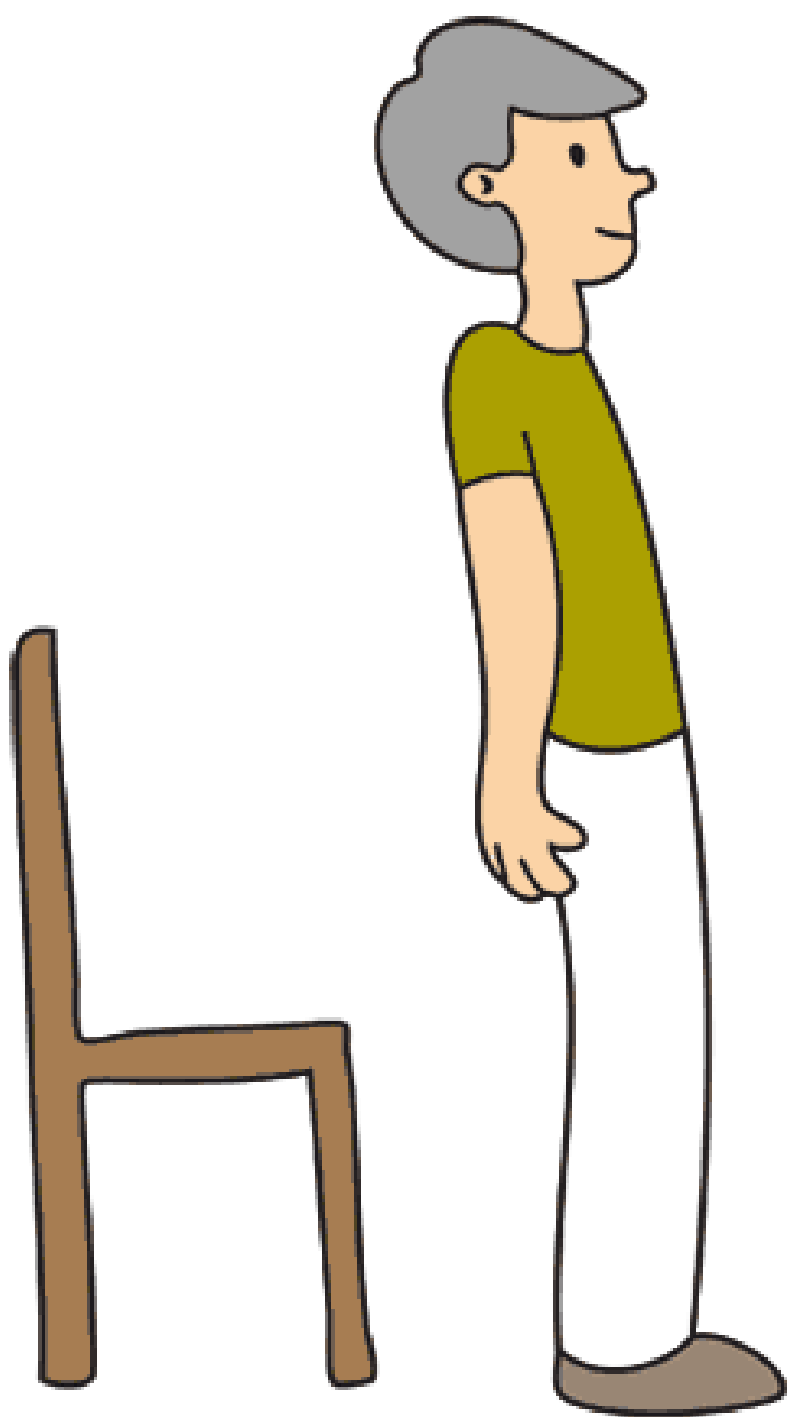


Picture-scrap.com



















Appendix 9. Links for the videos used in the classroom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv1JkBL5728>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVIFEVLzP4o>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teMU8dHLqSI>

Appendix 10. Research Permission Letter

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 31/12/2014-26919



T.C.
BALIKESİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 20381301 /300/
Konu : Araştırma İzni/Nuriye Değirmenci
UYSAL

YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞINA

Balıkesir Valiliği İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğünüzün 15.12.2014 tarih ve 99191664/605.01/6462167 sayılı Nuriye Değirmenci UYSAL'ın araştırma izni ile ilgili olur yazısı ekte gönderilmiştir.

Bilgilerinizi ve öğrenciye duyurulması hususunda gereğini rica ederim.

e-İmzalıdır
Doç. Dr. Murat DOĞDUBAY
Müdür a.
Müdür Yardımcısı

EK :
Valilik Onay Örneği ve Ekleri

Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Çarşı Yerleşkesi 10145 Balıkesir Ayırtılı bilgi için İrtibat: Hatice Kapucu
Tel: 2666121400-1401 Faks: 2666121307
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Bu belge, 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununa göre Güvenli Elektronik İmza ile imzalanmıştır.

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 25/12/2014-16710



T.C.
BALIKESİR VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 99191664/605.01/6462167
Konu: Araştırma İzni

15/12/2014

BALIKESİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜNE
(SOSYAL BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ)
BALIKESİR

İlgi : 24.11.2014 tarihli ve 27183868/105.01.03/8202 sayılı yazınız.

İlgi yazınıza istinaden; Enstitünüz Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü Yabancı Dil Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Nuriye Değirmenci UYSAL 'ın Müdürlüğümüze bağlı Altıeylül İlçesi Necatibey Anaokulu'nda yapmayı planladığı "Şık Kullanılan İfadelerle Okul Öncesi İngilizce Öğretmeni" konulu araştırma iznine ait Valilik onay örneği ekte gönderilmiştir.

Bilgilerinizi arz ederim

Yusuf CENGİZ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürü

Eki: Valilik Onay Örneği ve Ekleri (3 Sayfa)

Emin AYGÖL
V.B.İ.
Görevli Elektronik İmza
Aşlı ile Aynadır
15 Aralık 2014

Not: Araştırma izniniz için ekte gönderilen anketinizin Müdürlüğümüz tarafından mühürlenmiş hali çoğaltılarak kullanılacaktır.

Kanaplar Mahallesi Sındırgı Caddesi No:1 Merkez/BALIKESİR
Elektronik Ağ: balikesir.meb.gov.tr
E-posta: stratejigelismec10@meb.gov.tr

Ayrıntılı bilgi için: Emre YILDIZ Memur
Tel: (0 266) 239 62 73 - 175
Faks: (0 266) 239 62 74

Bu evrak çevresel elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır. İmza adresi: http://evrak.kocaeli.meb.gov.tr adresindedir. İS47-7bae-3c89-a541-1420 kodu ile teyit edilebilir.

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 24/11/2014-8202

AYLAR	HAFTALAR	HOUR (SAAT)	FUNCTIONS (HEDEF VE DAVRANIŞLAR)	TOPICS (KONULAR)	LANGUAGE TASKS AND STUDY SKILLS/METHODS (YÖNTEM VE TEKNİKLER)	VOCABULARY (KELİMELER)	MATERIALS (KULLANILAN EĞİTİM TEKNOLOJİLERİ-ARAÇ VE GEREÇLER)	EVALUATION (DEĞERLENDİRME)
KASIM	17-21/11/2014	2	Kazanım: Karşımdakinin ismini sorabilir, kendi ismini söyleyebilir.	Asking And Saying Name İsim Sorma ve Söyleme	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama	Hello! What is your name? My name is	Video Resimler Şarkı	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
		2	Kazanım: "Güneydin, iyi geceler, hoşçakal" yapılarına kullanılabilir.	Greeting Selanlaşma	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama 8. Çizme/ boyama	Good morning Good night Goodbye	Video Resimler Şarkı Kağıt ve boya kalemleri	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
	24-28/11/2014	2	Kazanım: Duygusal ve fiziksel durumunu bir-iki cümleyle anlatabilir.	Emotional& Physical Condition Duygusal ve Fiziksel Durum	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama	How are you today? I am happy. I am sad. I am hungry.	Video Resimler Şarkı	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
		2	Kazanım: Bazı yiyeceklerin adlarını ve birlikte kullanılan eylemlerini söyleyebilir.	Food& Drinks Yiyecekler ve İçecekler	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama	Eat pizza Eat cake Drink milk Drink water	Resimler Gerçek nesnelere	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz



Bu belge, 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununa göre Güvenli Elektronik İmza ile imzalanmıştır.

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 24/11/2014-8202

ARALIK		01-05/12/2014				
2	Kazanım: Bazı hareket eylemlerini (otur, kalk, alkışla...) söyler ve komut verildiğinde uygular.	Imperative Sentence Emir Cümleleri	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama	Sit down. Stand up. Clap hands.	Resimler Gerçek nesneler	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
2	Kazanım: Öğrendiği bilgileri tekrar eder.	General Repetition Genel Tekrar	1. Soru - cevap 2. Dramatizasyon 3. Anlatım 4. Dinleme, konuşma 5. Ezberleme 6. Canlandırma 7. Tekrarlama	All phrases	Video Resimler Şarkı Gerçek nesneler Kağıt ve boya kalemleri	Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
2	Genel Değerlendirme	Tüm Konular All Topics		All phrases		Karşılıklı diyalog Quiz
08-12/12/2014						



611 hücre 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununa göre Güvenli Elektronik İmza ile imzalanmıştır.



T.C.
BALIKESİR VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı: 99191664/605.01/6169140

08/12/2014

Konu: Araştırma İzni

VALİLİK MAKAMINA
BALIKESİR

İlgi : a) Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğü'nün 07.03.2012 tarih ve 2012/13 sayılı genelgesi
b) T.C. Balıkesir Üniversitesi Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı'nın 24.11.2014 tarihli ve 27183868/ 105.01.03/ 8202 sayılı yazısı

Başvuru Sahibinin Adı Soyadı	Nuriye DEĞİRMENCI UYSAL		
Danışman	Yrd.Doç. Dr. Fatih YAVUZ		
Kurumu/Üniversite/Görev Yeri	Balıkesir Üniversitesi		
Alan/Bölüm	Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anadilim Dalı		
Tez,Araştırma veya Anketin Konusu	Sık Kullanılan İfadelerle Okul Öncesi İngilizce Öğretimi		
Başvuru Tarihi	28.11.2014	Başvuru Sayısı	5795289
Çalışma Başlama Tarihi	10.12.2014		
Çalışma Bitiş Tarihi	10.01.2015		
Veri Toplama Araçları	Sosyo-Ekonomik Durum Ölçeği ve Okuma Metinleri		
Araştırma Türü	Yüksek Lisans Tezi		

ÇALIŞMA YAPILACAK EĞİTİM KURUMLARININ LİSTESİ

S.No	Okulun Adı	S.No	Okulun Adı
1	Altıeylül İlçesi Necatibey Anaokulu		

Bakanlığımıza bağlı okul ve kurumlarda yapılacak Araştırma, Yarışma ve Sosyal Etkinlik izinleri ilgi (a) genelge gereğince yukarıdaki bilgileri belirtilen çalışmanın, eğitim kurumlarında, okul/kuram müdürlüklerinin denetiminde yapılması Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmektedir.

Makamlarınızca da uygun görüldüğü takdirde olurlarınıza arz ederim.

Hüseyin AŞIK
Müdür a.
Müdür Yardımcısı

OLUR
08/12/2014
Yusuf CENGİZ
Vali a.
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürü

Eki :
Yazı ve Ekleri (13 Sayfa)