

LANGUAGE TEACHING CURRICULUM OF TURKEY AND SINGAPORE IN THE CONTEXT OF READING-WRITING ACQUISITIONS

Esra Ay Karacuha
Ministry of National Education, Turkey

Ahmet Cebi
Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey

ABSTRACT: When examining the results of PISA of 2015 published by the OECD late in 2016, the average point of 72 participating countries in reading performance is seen to be 493. Out of 72 participant countries, Turkey ranked 50th in reading skills with 428 points, 65 points below the average point 493, and Singapore ranked 1st in reading skills with 535 points, 42 points above the average point 493. Between Turkey on the 50th rank in reading skills out of 72 countries and Singapore on the 1st rank, there is a 107-point difference, a very big difference not possible to overlook. Undoubtedly, there are many factors for emergence of this situation. One of the primary ones, which are frequently repeated by the mass media in many places, is selecting and training the preservice teachers of these two countries, and the positions of their teachers. A factor, which is not emphasized much, more precisely, is not emphasized at all, the properties which language educational programs of both countries have within the context of reading-writing achievements. It can be understood by considering the results of PISA of 2012 that this factor not emphasized at all is as important as the factor widely emphasized. When examining the results of PISA of 2012, it is seen that the average point of 65 participant countries is 496 in reading performance. Out of 65 participant countries, Turkey ranked 42nd in reading performance with 475 points and Singapore ranked 3rd in reading skills with 542 points. There is a 67-point difference between Turkey on the 42nd rank and Singapore on the 3rd rank in reading skills. When it comes to 2015 from 2012; while Singapore held more or less its rank in reading skills, a very big decrease occurred in reading skills of Turkey. One primary reason for this is that the language educational program, which was put into practice in Turkey in 2005, requires an early reading-writing method called “Sound Based Sentence Method” within the context of synthesis approach. In the present study here, the language educational programs of both countries should be compared within the context of reading-writing achievements and it should be tried to interpret the PISA results in this regard.

Keywords: Reading Achievements, Writing Achievements, PISA of 2012 Reading Performance, PISA of 2015 Reading Performance, Language Educational Programs

INTRODUCTION

The Singapore education system draws attention due to Singapore’s achievements in PISA examinations that OECD prepared and applied over the last years. From Singapore’s first years of independence, intensive studies have been conducted on extending basic education between 1959 and 1978. Schools were built rapidly and teachers were appointed on a large scale. A bi-lingual education system that is single and national and that teaches English and native language (Chinese, Malay and Tamil) to students was established instead of schools previously established for ethnic origins (OECD, 2016).

In Singapore, Principals Handbook that is a comprehensive reference book on situations such as the operation of schools, guidance services and so on was published by the Ministry of Education in 1981 (Wee and Chong, 1990). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education was reorganized to improve educational policies in schools and to better coordinate standardized practice. In addition to these, Curriculum Development Institute of Singapore (CDIS) was established to provide teachers with developed locally and standardized curriculum materials (Pak Tee Ng, 2008).

In 1991, Primary Education Improvement Report (MOE, 1991) recommended that all children should be educated for at least ten years. Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) was changed to a form of placement rather than an examination to direct children to appropriate fields at secondary level. In the same year, it was decided that expenditures on education within Edusave Program for every child between 6 and 16 years of age would be covered (Pak Tee Ng, 2008).

In Singapore, a new educational philosophy called “Thinking Schools, Learning Nation” (TSLN) was developed in 1997; it is aimed to develop creative and critical thinking skills and passion for lifelong learning instead of only

giving information to students with the philosophy of “Thinking Schools” (Koh, 2004). In order to achieve these goals, curriculum was organized to make more space for research-based activities. It was tried to ensure that teachers spend more time with students in planning active learning activities collaboratively. Furthermore, significant investment in information and communication technology (ICT) facilitated the emergence of new learning styles. All these efforts accelerated the formation of an open and cooperative school environment in the context of a culture of continuous development (OECD, 2016).

The momentum gained from the vision of TSLN, led to the development of a framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes. This framework expresses the basic competencies and values that enable young Singaporeans to develop in the 21st century (MOE, 2014). 21st Century Competencies framework guided the development of course content and teaching materials. Schools also use this framework to design programs that will help students improve their competencies (OECD, 2016).

Today, all children in Singapore start primary school education at the age of 7 (at least 84 months old). However, at the end of primary school 6, students took an examination, Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), to go to a secondary school that matches their learning speeds, competencies and tendencies (OECD, 2016).

In 1924, an *Elifba Congress* (Alphabet Congress) was held in Istanbul in order to address the first *reading and writing* problem, with the initiative of Istanbul Ministry of Education Director Saffet Bey. In the Congress, the *word method* within the *analysis approach* was focused on the suggestion of Sadrettin Celal, the teacher of Daru'l-fünun (Ottoman University). On the other hand, Satı Bey defended the method of sound “*usul-i savti*”. Discussion of the *word method-sound method* in the congress continued (Çebi, 2011).

In 1924 First Schools Curriculum Program, which have characteristics of being the first Curriculum specific to Republic, the teachers are given freedom to make a choice between *the word method* within the context of *the analysis method* and *the sound method* within the context of *synthesis approach* and to apply them in the light of discussions in Elifba Congress (Cebi, 2011).

Synthesis approach and methods were excluded from the curriculum in 1926 *First Schools Curriculum Program*. 1926 Curriculum left teachers the choice between *the word method* and *mixed method*. In 1928, New Turkish letters that meet the phonetic characteristics of Turkish were accepted instead of the Arabic letters (Çebi, 2011).

In the section on the first reading and writing of 1936 curriculum, *synthetic analysis method* is included. *1936 Primary School Program* left teachers the choice by offering *the word method* and *the sentence method* options within the context of *synthetic analysis approach* (Çebi, 2011).

Synthetic analysis approach was made clear with the clarification made in 1948 *Primary School Program*. “The first reading and writing will begin with simple sentence and words. Over time, these sentences will be divided into words, words into syllables and syllables into letters; New sentences and words will be formed with the word, syllables obtained at the end of these analyses (MEB, 1948: 114). This approach in 1948 Curriculum was continued in 1962 *Primary School Program Draft* and 1968 *Primary School Program*. However, it is stated that reading and writing should start with absolute sentences instead of simple sentences and words as in 1948 Curriculum. With this narrative, 1968 curriculum blocked teacher to choice method. 1982 Elementary Schools Turkish Education Program requires the sentence method as curriculum dated 1968 (Çebi, 2011).

Singapore firstly attended to PISA examinations in 2009. Considering 2015 PISA results published and explained by OECD towards the end of 2016, it is seen that the average score of OECD countries in the field of reading skills is 493. Turkey is ranked 50th among 72 participating countries with 428 scores, 65 scores lower than the average of 493 in reading skills; Singapore is ranked 1st among 72 participating countries with 535 scores, 42 scores more than 493 of OECD average in reading skills.

In the field of reading skills, there is a non-negligible difference of 107 scores between Turkey ranked 50th and Singapore ranked first among 72 countries. There are, of course, many factors in the occurrence of this situation. One of the most prominent of these, which is repeated frequently in many places through the mass media, is the election of the teacher candidates of these two countries, their training and their teachers’ positions. An unregarded factor is the features of language education curriculum in the context of reading-writing acquisitions of both countries.

It is understandable that unregarded factor is also important in the extent of very common factor, considering the results of 2012 PISA. Considering 2012 PISA results, it is seen that the average score of 65 participating countries

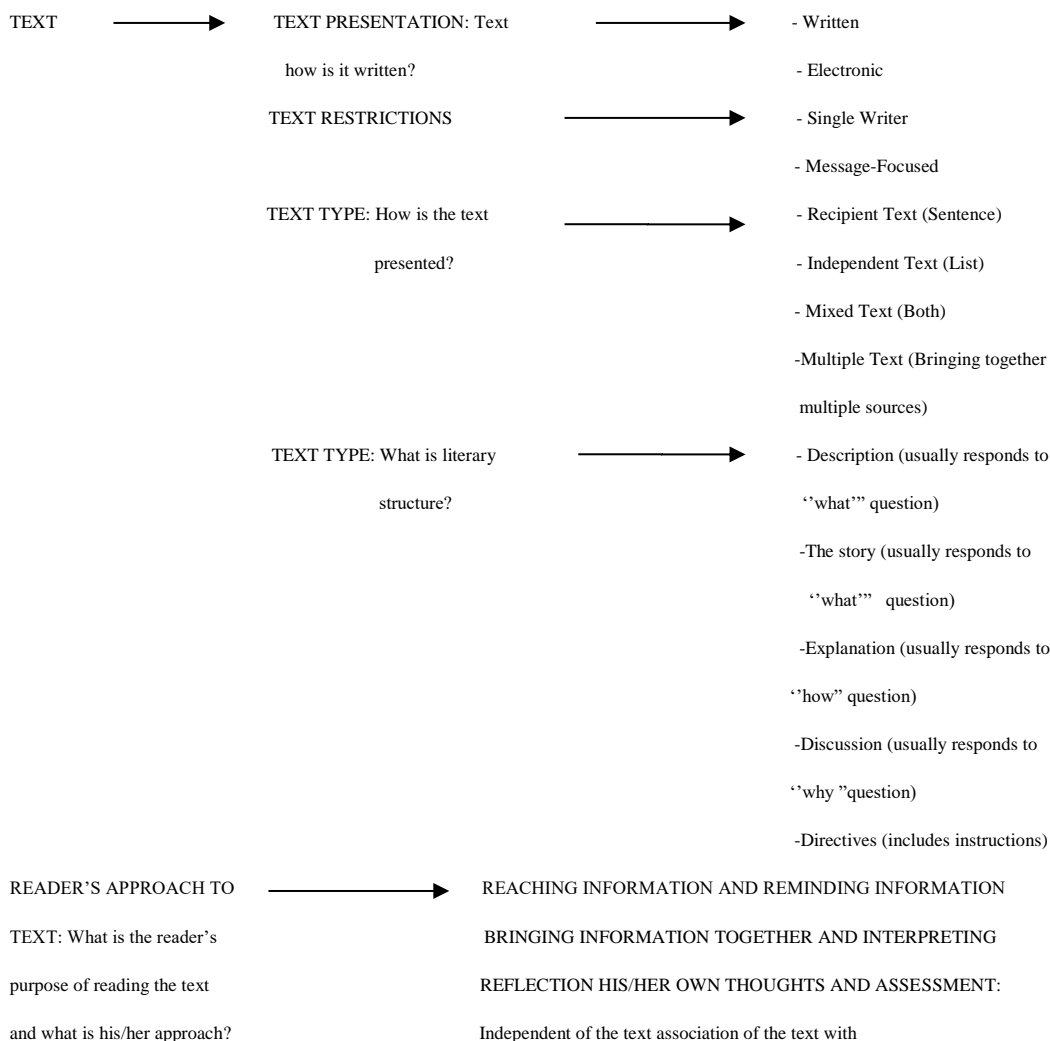
is 496 in the field of reading skills. Turkey is ranked 42nd among 65 participating countries with 475 scores in reading skills; Singapore is ranked 3rd among 65 participating countries with 542 scores in reading skills. There is a difference of 67 scores between Turkey ranked 42nd and Singapore ranked 3rd among 65 countries in reading skills.

From 2012 to 2015, while Singapore maintains its place in reading skills; Turkey's reading skills showed a great decline. The most prominent reason for this is the necessity for reading and writing method such as "phonovisual method", which is named "sound based method" in the first reading and writing field of language curriculum implemented in Turkey, in 2005.

In the acquisition of first reading-writing skills for students, teaching approach and the choice of the method in the context of that approach are recognized as "great debate" (Shapiro & Riley, 1989) and "reading wars" (Kim, 2008) in many important sources referred to historical process in relation to the subject, and it is focused on differentiation from "parts to the whole" and "the whole to parts", the former was sometimes defended and brought into the forefront (Dehaene, 2009), and sometimes it was developed an attitude towards the latter. However, a very serious recent scientific study (Glezer and other, 2015) revealed new findings in favor of the latter.

Competences dealt in PISA in reading skills range from simple analysis of a word to vocabulary knowledge, grammar, knowing linguistic and textual structure and properties, having knowledge of the world we live. In PISA 2009, reading skills are defined as acquiring personal targets, increasing knowledge and potential that a person has in a particular context, being a participant in society and understanding written texts, using, reflecting on and engaging with written texts (OECD, 2010).

The General Characteristics of PISA 2009 Reading Skill Assessment Framework were formulated in the OECD report as follows:



INTENDED USES:	→	personal experience
According to the writer's point of view,		PERSONAL: To meet his/her own interests
written for?		PUBLIC: What is the text addressed to large masses
		TRAINER: Used in the guidelines
		PROFESSIONAL: On the business world (EARGED,2010)

In this study, Singapore and Turkey's language teaching curriculum were compared in terms of reading-writing acquisitions, and PISA reading acquisition (performance) was tried to be revealed in detail by considering evaluation criteria.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to compare 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish curriculum (MEB, 1981, 2005, 2015) and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English curriculum (MOE 2001, 2010) by correlating PISA results in the context of the five variables related to reading-writing acquisitions. These variables are: (1) Reading-Writing Approach and Method, (2) Font Type Used to Learn Writing, (3) Using Reading-Writing Tools, (4) Reading-Writing Preparation and (5) Acquiring Reading-Writing during the Process For the above purpose, the answers to the following questions were searched, respectively:

1. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of Reading-Writing Approach and Method variables?
2. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of Reading-Writing Approach and Method variables?
3. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of Reading-Writing Using variables?
4. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of Reading-Writing Preparation variables?
5. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of Reading-Writing Acquisition variables during Process?

The questions for which the answers were searched, based on three sub-variable of fifth variable:

- 5.1. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of sub-variable for Correlating Reading-Writing Process with Life?
- 5.2. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of sub-variable for Improving Vocabulary During Reading-Writing Process?
- 5.3. What kind of view do 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2001, 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum reveal in terms of sub-variable for Performing Reading-Writing Process in the context of Interaction?

METHOD

Curriculum in studies of education, are of particular importance because they are official public records and it removes a scientific concern that has emerged as a very important problematic for the qualitative researcher and a concern whether the documents were acquired from the primary source (Meriam, 2009).

In this study, document review method that is one of the three basic methods of collecting information was used for qualitative research. Documents can be classified in a variety of formats. The documents subject to this study, as mentioned, are official public records. The curriculum in the research are the documents prepared by the Ministries of Education in Singapore and Turkey.

In this study, it was applied to a document review method which includes Reading and Writing Approach and Method determined as a result of the screening of some basic application sources (Cheek and others, 1989; Durkin, 1989; Heilman and others, 1990; Spache & Spache, 1986;) about the first reading and writing teaching literature, The Type of Writing Used to Learn to Write, Using Reading-Writing Tools, Reading-Writing Preparation, the descriptive properties of five basic variable in the form of Acquiring Reading-Writing during the Process and the

descriptive properties of a sub-variable within the scope of basic variables determined in the form of Acquiring Reading-Writing during the Process.

Sub-variables of the Variable for Acquiring Reading-Writing during the Process were formed as a result of measuring some key concepts obtained by scanning the literature on the first reading and writing teaching process (Beck, 1960; Çebi, 2011; Çebi ve Karaçuha, 2015, 2016; D'archy, 1973; Herrick and other, 1962); related sub-variables are listed in the study under the following names: Associating Reading-Writing Process with the Life, Developing Vocabulary During Reading-Writing Process, Performing Reading-Writing Process in the Context of Interaction

Reading-Writing Approach and Method determined in this research, Type of Writing Used to Learn Writing, Using Reading-Writing Tools, Reading-Writing Preparation, five basic variables in the form of Acquiring Reading-Writing Process were formed. These five basic variables formed by variable for Acquiring Reading-Writing During Process, Variable for Acquiring Reading-Writing During Process formed by Associating Reading-Writing Process to Life, Developing Vocabulary During Reading-Writing Process, Sub-variables for Performing Reading-Writing Process in the Context of Interaction.

Turkey's 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore's 2001, 2010 English Curriculum obtained in the context of the five basic variables determined and the three sub-variables based on a basic variable other than these, were discussed in detail in the context of variables and sub-variables, and the similarities and the differences of the aforementioned Curriculum were shown by materializing with charts.

FINDINGS AND COMMENT

The following chart (Chart 1) includes the criteria of Reading-Writing Approach and Method variable for Turkey's 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore's 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 1. Acquisitions of Curriculum Based on Reading-Writing Approach and Methods Variable

Reading-Writing Approach and Method				
1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore's English Curriculum	2010 Singapore's English Curriculum	
<p>Class 1: Starts firstly reading and writing with short sentences that can be understood.</p> <p>-In the first reading and writing, short sentences are divided into words, words into syllable over time.</p> <p>- In the first reading and writing, the sounds of the letters in the syllable are detected over time.</p> <p>-New sentences and words are formed by the words, syllables and letters obtained at the end of analysis</p>	<p>Class 1: Reads by forming syllables from sounds, words from syllables, sentences from words.</p> <p>Class 1: Syllables, words and phrases are read fluently (2015).</p> <p>Class 1: Writes by forming syllables from sounds, words from syllables, sentences from words.</p> <p>Class 1: Forms syllables from sounds, words from syllables, sentences from words.</p>	<p>Class 1: Blend sounds of consonants and vowels to make words</p> <p>Class 1: Understand that as letters of words change, so do the sounds.</p>	<p>Class 1: Identify and differentiate among common sounds in words</p> <p>Class 1: Differentiate sounds through letter blends, segmentation, substitution and deletion</p> <p>Decoding through Phonics</p>	

The approach and method of the first reading and writing teaching in 1981 Turkey's Turkish curriculum was explicitly stated and the teacher was prevented from choosing the approach and method in the first reading and writing teaching. The first reading and writing approach, which is mandatory in the curriculum, is the *analysis* approach, and the method is the *sentence* method. The method and approach of the first reading and writing teaching in 2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, was clearly stated as in 1981 Turkey's Turkish curriculum and the teacher was not authorized in choosing the method and approach in the same way. In 2005 Turkey's Turkish

curriculum, the approach and method in 1981 Turkey's Turkish curriculum was abandoned and *synthesis approach* and "sound-based method with the own expression of the curriculum, "*phonovisual method*" in the literature was required. 2015 Turkey's Turkish curriculum is in the nature of both consecutive of 2005 Turkey's Turkish curriculum and sustainer. In 2015 Turkey's Turkish curriculum, synthesis approach and sound-based method was required.

Three of Turkey's Turkish Curriculum does not consider the teacher as competent in choosing the approach and method of the first reading and writing teaching. Furthermore, there is a base-line opposition between 1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and 2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum in determining the approach and method of the first reading and writing teaching. The former imposed and required analysis approach and the sentence method within its scope; the latter imposed and required synthesis approach and ound method within its scope. The children selected from the sample of Turkey for 2015 PISA applications prepared by OECD, are the children who participated in the education activities with 2005 Turkey Turkish for the first time starting from the first class. In this case, the students who participated in 2015 PISA applications in Turkey are the children who learn to read and write by using analysis method applied for the first reading and writing teaching in 2005 and the sound-based method included in this approach.

In Singapore 2001 and 2010 English curriculum, there is no such thing as any approach and method determination, approach and method enforcement in the acquisition of curriculum of approach and method to be used in the first reading and writing teaching. However, the impression we gained from the acquisitions in both curriculum as below: It is apparent that *synthesis analysis* approach and *word method* involved in this approach were suggested in the first reading and writing teaching in Singapore's curriculum. Students who participated from Singapore sample in 2009, 2012, 2015 PISA applications prepared by OECD, are the first reading and writing learners with the 2001 Singapore's English curriculum. 2001 Singapore's English curriculum has great importance in successes that Singapore achieved in these examinations.

View of Font Type Variable Used to Learn to Write

The following chart (Chart 2) includes the teaching criteria of Font Type Variable Used in Learning to Write for Turkey's 1981, 2005 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore's 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 2. Acquisitions of Curriculum Based on Font Type Variable Used to Learn to Write

Font Type Used to Learn to Write			
1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore's English Curriculum	2010 Singapore's English Curriculum
<p>Class 1: Learns upper and lower case letters in accordance with the writing principles determined by the program at the beginning of reading and writing. [Curriculum requires font type with basic vertical letter.]</p>	<p>Class 1: Writes adjacent italic letters according to their rules. Class 1: Writes all papers with adjacent italic letters. [Curriculum requires font type with adjacent italic letter.]</p>	<p>Class 1: Space letters, words and sentences appropriately. [Curriculum requires font type with basic vertical letter.]</p>	<p>Class 1: Use regular and appropriate spacing between letters, words, sentences and/ or paragraphs. [Curriculum requires font type with basic vertical letter.]</p>

In 1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, as can be understood from the acquisitions, basic vertical lettering was required from the font types used in learning to write. 2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum was separated sharply from 1981 Turkey's Turkish curriculum in this respect, adjacent italic lettering font type among font type used in learning to write. The discussions about the font type used in learning to write in Turkey since 2005 has been ongoing. In a comment made by Turkey's Minister of Education recently on Twitter, it is stated that the basic vertical lettering will be used while the writing being taught during the first reading-writing phase starting from 2017-2018 academic year. The children selected from the sample of Turkey for 2015 PISA applications prepared by OECD learned the writing by adjacent italic lettering as a mandatory.

In both Singapore 2001 and 2010 English curriculum, as understood from acquisitions, it was mandatory for basic vertical lettering for learning to write. The children selected from the sample of Turkey for 2015 PISA applications

prepared by OECD learned the writing by basic vertical lettering as a mandatory. Because 2001 Singapore English curriculum, as it was clearly understood from the relevant acquisition, required the basic vertical lettering.

View of Reading-Writing Tools Using Variable

The following chart (Chart 3) includes the teaching criteria of Reading-Writing Tools Using Variable for Turkey’s 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore’s 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 3. Acquisitions of Curriculum Based on Using Variable of Using Reading-Writing

Using Reading-Writing Tools			
1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore's English Curriculum	2010 Singapore's English Curriculum
<p>Class 1: Uses the tools and equipment necessary for reading and writing. Learns how to keep the pencil. Learns how to keep the book and notebook and how to turn the pages. Learns the techniques of how to write on the notebook with the pencil and how to delete the wrongs from the notebook.</p>	<p>Class 1: Use the book with care. Class 1: Pay attention to page layout and cleanliness. Class 1: Performs various coloring/stroking exercises using the writing materials appropriately (2015).</p>	<p>Classes 1-2: Understand and use appropriately terms relating to: - books: cover, title, author, illustrator, page number -text types e.g. fairy tale: hero, character, beginning / ending of a story -electronic books: arrows, icons -" Instructions e.g. recipes, instructions from craft books and computer programmes -" Lists e.g. shopping Narratives e.g. fairy tales, rhymes, riddles *Personal recounts e.g. oral anecdotes, diary entries -Scrapbooks</p>	<p>Class 1: Read and view a variety of reading-age-appropriate and high-interest books and texts from print and non-print sources: Poetry (e.g., rhymes, cinquains, haiku) - Personal recounts (e.g., diary entries, biographies) -Narratives (e.g., fables, historical fiction, pourquoi tales) - Procedures (e.g., recipes, directions, instruction manuals) -Information reports (e.g., project reports, fact sheets) - Factual recounts (e.g., eye-witness accounts, news bulletins) -Explanations (e.g., how something works) ° Expositions (e.g., reviews, arguments) Class 1: Use appropriate writing instruments (e.g., first, a pencil and then a pen)</p>

In 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum, *notebook, book, pencil, eraser* were defined as reading-writing tools in acquiring reading-writing during the process. In 2005 and 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum, *notebook, book, pencil, eraser* were defined as reading-writing tools in acquiring reading-writing during the process.

2001 Singapore’s English curriculum *books, stories and features* (For example, *Fairy tale: protagonist, characters, start/end of story etc.*), *electronic books, directives* (For example, *food definitions, directives, books on handicrafts, computer softwares, personal narratives* (For example, *verbal narratives, diaries, personal recordings*)) were defined as reading-writing tools in acquiring reading-writing. In 2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum, books and visual aids supporting them, texts in printed and unprinted sources, poems, personal records (diaries, biographies), narratives, directives, information reports, explanations, etc., pencil, pen were defined as reading-writing tools in acquiring reading-writing.

Considering the determinations in the framework of ISA reading skill assessment, we see that features such as *text presentation, text writing form, being electronic or written, font type, literary structure of the text* are described as criteria. 2001 Singapore’s English curriculum, which defines *books, stories and features, electronic books,*

directives, computer softwares, personal narratives as reading-writing tools in acquiring reading-writing, is in full compliance with PISA reading skills assessment criteria in this context starting from the first class. 2015 Singapore's English curriculum defines texts as a tool and in full compliance with PISA reading skills starting from the first class, and Acquisitions in 2001 Singapore's English curriculum is more detailed than 2010 English curriculum. The text was described as a tool for reading- writing in Turkey's Turkish curriculum.

View of Preparation Variable for Reading-Writing

The following chart (Chart 4) includes the teaching criteria of Preparation Variable for Reading-Writing for Turkey's 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore's 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 4. Acquisitions Based on Curriculum's Preparation Variable for Writing

Preparation for Reading-Writing			
1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore's English Curriculum	2010 Singapore's English Curriculum
<p>1. Class: Prepares to read. Keeps understanding area of the eye wide (leaping motion) from left to right in the reading. Gets habit of passing to the bottom line at the end of the line in the reading. Grasps that writing is a way of narration. Participates in the development study of vocabulary before moving on to reading and writing. Class 1: Prepares to write. Draws freehand line and scratches on the page with pencil. Gets the idea of reading and writing the text on the page from top to bottom, left to right. Italic and rounded lines from top to bottom, left to right. Draws rounded lines from top to bottom, left to right.</p>	<p>Class 1: Prepares to read. (Explanation) The text to be read and a suitable seating format are determined. The distance between the book and the eye and the light level are adjusted. Class 1: Prepares to write. (Explanation) Seating, holding pen, bookkeeping, hand preference, line and painting exercises, free and canonical lines, tools, preparation of equipment.</p>	<p>Classes 1-2: Understand concepts about print: print is written from left to right and top to bottom, capitalisation, spacing between words, differences between letters, words and sentences.</p>	<p>Class 1: - Recognise and name the letters of the alphabet - Identify upper and lower case letters - Develop knowledge of the concepts of print: - Identify common terms relating to books (e.g., title page, author, illustrator, front/back cover, table of contents) - Adjust directionality (e.g., from left to right, foreground to background) in accordance with the reading/ viewing text - Identify word spacing - Distinguish between letters, words and sentences on a printed page - Recognise the grammatical features of a sentence (i.e., capital letters, punctuation marks) Class 1: - Recognise and name the letters of the alphabet - Match letters to their corresponding sounds (i.e., the alphabetic principle) - Know the concepts of print (e.g., directionality: left to right, top to bottom of the page) - Adopt appropriate writing posture and hand grip - Position paper appropriately - Position print on a line</p>

-Write from left to right and top to bottom of the page
 -Use regular and appropriate spacing between letters, words, sentences and/ or Paragraphs.

In 1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, the direction of reading writing and the study of lines as well as the development of vocabulary were described as a preparation for reading writing in acquisitions of preparation for reading-writing. In 2005, 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, acquisitions of preparation for reading-writing are related to the physical and physiological aspects of the preparation dimension.

In acquisitions of 2001 Singapore's English curriculum, it was focused on preparation for reading-writing including acquisitions such as the direction of writing and recognizing the spacing between letters, words, and sentences, and acquisitions related to preparation for writing are not included. 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum, included acquisitions for reading writing in more detail than 2001 Curriculum by adding preparation for reading.

View on Variable of Acquiring Reading Writing during Process

Variable of *Acquiring Reading-Writing During Process* includes three sub-variables including (1) associating the reading-writing process with life, (2) developing the vocabulary during the reading-writing process, and (3) performing the reading-writing process in the context of interaction.

View on Sub-Variable of Associating Reading-Writing Process with Life

The following chart (Table 5) includes the teaching criteria *on Sub-Variable of Associating Reading-Writing Process with Life* for Turkey's 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish native language curriculum and 1997, 2010 English Language Arts of the United States State of California.

Table 5. Acquisitions Based on Curriculum's *Sub-Variable of Associating Reading-Writing Process with Life*

Associating Reading-Writing Process with Life			
1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore's English Curriculum	2010 Singapore's English Curriculum
Class 1: Acquires reading and writing skills in the process. Understands that first-class reading and writing activities are an integral part of the activities of this class. Realizes classroom and school life that social studies topics created natural opportunities for reading and writing.	Classes 1-5: Gives examples from his own life and daily life in writings. Class 1: Tells the people he knows, his place, the events he knows and express his thoughts and feelings about them (2015).	Classes 1-2: Make predictions about storyline, characters using their own experience and contextual clues.	Class 1: Make connections between a text and personal experiences/ real life.

1981 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, associated reading-writing process with life by stating that Social Studies topics and the life in classroom will create natural opportunities for reading writing in Associating Reading-Writing Process with Life. 2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum associated language activities with life in the context of giving examples from daily life in writing; 2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum associated language activities with life in the context of talking about known people in narrative, known places and events.

In Singapore 2001 and 2010 English Curriculum, reading-writing process was associated with the life by including acquisitions creating associations between personal experience and texts. In reflecting and evaluating their own thoughts among PISA reading skills assessment criteria, it is mentioned the performance of association criteria of the text with the personal experiences independently from the text. Considering these evaluation criteria, it is seen that acquisitions of 2001 and 2010 Singapore's English Curriculum include the assessment criteria.

View on Sub-Variable of Developing Vocabulary during Reading-Writing Process

The following chart (Table 6) contains learning criteria related to Sub-Variable of Developing Vocabulary During Reading-Writing Process for Turkey’s 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore’s 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 6. Acquisitions Based on Curriculum’s Sub-Variable of Developing Vocabulary During Reading-Writing Process

Developing Vocabulary during Reading-Writing Process			
1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore’s English Curriculum	2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum
<p>Class 1: The words and sentences that are emphasized are known in stories, tales, and rhymes.</p> <p>Class 1: Writes sentences and words that they have yet learned at the same time.</p>	<p>Class 1: Uses words that they have yet learned in speeches.</p> <p>Class 1: Learns words that they do not know (2015).</p>	<p>Classes 1-2: Use grammar, punctuation and vocabulary appropriately.</p> <p>Classes 1-2: Use prior knowledge: familiar words, word association.</p>	<p>Class 1: -Age-/ year level-appropriate high-frequency words, including non-decodable words, function words and high-interest words</p> <p>-Frequently misspelled words (e.g., ‘their’, ‘they’re’, ‘there’)</p> <p>looking up words in a dictionary (e.g., an online dictionary or the spell-check function in a word processing software)</p>

In 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum, the development of vocabulary was dealt with in the context of a whole (sentence, story, fairy tale, rhyme, etc.) in accordance with the first reading and writing teaching approach. 2005 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum includes an acquisition for using the words that the student newly learned, while 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum includes an acquisition for learning a new word.

2001 Singapore’s English Curriculum includes an acquisition for using preliminary knowledge in both using words and establishing a relationship between words, 2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum includes acquisitions for recognizing frequently used words and using dictionary for word recognition.

“Understanding” having an important place among the assessment criteria of PISA reading skills, is a determinant that is particularly relevant to the relationship between words within the whole and the words. In this context, it is seen that one of the two most suitable curriculum for PISA reading skills assessment criteria is 1981 Turkey’s Turkish curriculum and the other is 2001 Singapore English curriculum.

View on Sub-Variable of Performing Reading-Writing Process in the context of Interaction

The following chart (Table 7) contains learning criteria related to Sub-Variable of Performing Reading-Writing Process in the context of Interaction for Turkey’s 1981, 2005, 2015 Turkish Curriculum and Singapore’s 2001, 2010 English Curriculum.

Table 7. Acquisitions Based on Curriculum’s Sub-Variable of Performing Reading-Writing Process in the Context of Interaction

Performing Reading-Writing Process in the Context of Interaction			
1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2005 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum	2001 Singapore’s English Curriculum	2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum
<p>Class 1: The teacher, along with corrections and explanations, allows children to examine their own</p>	<p>Class 1: Writes in cooperation.</p> <p>Class 1: Share what they read with others.</p> <p>Class 1: Share what they wrote (2015).</p>	<p>Classes 1-2: -Ask / talk about people, places, things</p> <p>-Participate in discussion</p> <p>- Agree / disagree at appropriate</p>	<p>Class 1: Discuss collaboratively to achieve the objective of a task, e.g.,</p> <p>- Generate ideas (e.g., brainstorming, listing)</p>

writings in groups of four people, to find their wrong and successful aspects and to help them.	Class 1: Read plain text and poems and actively participate in group reading (2015).	times - Speak in turn Learn and contribute Follow agreed upon rules for group work
---	---	--

1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum included acquisitions of group work for performing Reading-Writing Process in the Context of Interaction. 2005 and 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum has acquisitions that includes cooperation and sharing, but there is no indication of how cooperation and sharing shall be performed.

2001 Singapore’s English Curriculum included acquisitions of group work in detail. Singapore’s 2010 English Curriculum included acquisitions required cooperative work and brainstorming.

In PISA 2009, the reading skills are emphasized that it is possible to develop potential the people has in certain areas by being a participant in society (OECD, 2010). In this context, it can be seen that 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum and 2001 and 2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum are compatible with this emphasis of PISA 2009.

CONCLUSION

1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum required the analysis approach and the sentence method within the scope of the analysis approach in the first teaching of reading and writing. 2005 and 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum required the synthesis method within the scope of the synthesis method in the first reading and writing teaching. The last two and the first one, as you can see, is basically opposite to each other for the first reading and writing approach and method. However, in terms of the approach and method used in the teaching of the first reading and writing, one common feature of the three curriculum examined is to require “one approach, one method” in Turkey.

In 2001, 2010 In Singapore’s English Curriculum, there is no obligation to impose “one approach, one method” in the teaching of first reading and writing. The choice of approach and method in the first reading and writing teaching is left to the teacher. However, when it is read between the lines, it is seen that both Singapore’s English Curriculum proposed indirect synthesis analysis approach and the word method within the scope of the approach in the first teaching of reading and writing.

We are witnessing that 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum suggests the basic vertical lettered writing in the performance of the first reading and writing teaching; 2005 and 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum suggests cursive italic lettered writing. However, the Ministry of Education stated that the basic vertical lettered writing, not cursive italic lettered writing, would be used in the first reading and writing teaching during the 2017-2018 academic year.

2001, 2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum suggests the basic vertical lettered writing in the first reading and writing teaching.

1981, 2005, 2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum list pencil, notebook, eraser, writing board etc. As the first reading and writing instruments. Although some technological instruments are addressed in curriculum, it is witnessed that ICT creates the focal point of reading and writing activities.

In 2001, 2010 Singapore’s English curriculum, especially in 2001 curriculum, it is witnessed that technology is addressed in a very detailed manner in terms of tools and instruments, beyond that, ICT was made the focal point. 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum discussed the preparation for writing and the preparation for reading in a very detailed way; 2005-2015 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum generally addressed the preparation for reading and writing.

In 2001 Singapore’s English Curriculum, there is preparation for writing, but the preparation for reading is not mentioned. 2010 Singapore’s English Curriculum, detailed both preparation for writing and the preparation for reading.

In 1981 Turkey’s Turkish Curriculum, acquisition variable of reading-writing during the process are consistent with association of reading-writing with life, developing vocabulary in the reading-writing process, sub-variables of performing reading-writing process in the context of interaction and the recommendations related to PISA

reading skills. In 2005-2015 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum, the same sub-variables of the same variable can hardly be mentioned in terms of their consistency with PISA reading skills.

Considering 2001-2010 Singapore's English Curriculum, it is seen that acquisition variable of reading-writing during the process are consistent with association of reading-writing with life, developing vocabulary in the reading-writing process, sub-variables of performing reading-writing process in the context of interaction and the recommendations related to PISA reading skills.

The 15-year-old students selected from the sample of Turkey for PISA in 2015, are the children who learn the first reading-writing in 2005 Turkey's Turkish Curriculum and the 15-year-old students selected from the sample of Singapore are the children who learn the first reading-writing in 2001 Singapore's English Curriculum.

REFERENCES

- Beck, R. H., Walter, W. C., Kearney, N. C. (1960). *Curriculum in the modern elementary school*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Cheek, E. H., Filippo, R. F., Lindsley, J. D. (1989). *Reading for success in elementary schools*. Fort Worth, Orlando: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Çebi, A. (2011). Tarihsel bağlamıyla Türkiye'de ilk okuma-yazma öğretimi sorunsalı. S. Sever ve diğerleri (Yay. haz.). *Cahit Kavcar Türkçe eğitimi çalıştayı* içinde (ss. 439-458). Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Çebi, A. ve Karaçuha, E. A. (2015). Türkiye ile ABD Kaliforniya Eyaleti anadili eğitim izlencelerinde ilk okuma ve yazma öğretimi. *International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching*, UDES 2015, Special issue: 28-46.
- Çebi, A. ve Karaçuha, E. A. (2016). Türkiye ile ABD Teksas Eyaleti anadili eğitim izlencelerinde ilk okuma ve yazma öğretimi. in Kuram ve uygulama bağlamında Türkçe öğretimi. S. Dilidüzgün (ed.). Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- D'arcy, P. (1973). *Reading for meaning: Learning to read* (Vol. 1). London: Hutchinson Educational Ltd.
- Dehaene, S. (2009). *Reading in the brain*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Durkin, D. (1989). *Teaching them the read* (Fifth edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- EARGED (2010). PISA 2009 ulusal ön raporu. Ankara: MEB Eğitim Araştırma ve Geliştirme Dairesi Başkanlığı.
- Glezer, L. S., Kim, J., Rule, Josh, J., Jiang, X., and Riesenhuber, M. (2015). Adding words to the brain's visual dictionary: Novel word learning selectively sharpens orthographic representations in the VWFA. *The Journal of Neuroscience*. 35 (12): 4965-4972.
- Heilman, A. W., Blair, T. R., Rupley, H. (1990). *Principles and practices of teaching reading* (Seventh edition). Columbus: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Herrick, V. E., Goodlad, J. I., Estvan, F. J., Eberman, P. W. (1962). *The elementary school*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Kim, J. S. (2008). Research and the reading wars, *Phi Delta Kappan*. 89 (5): 372-375.
- Koh, A. (2004). Singapore education in "New Times": Global / local imperatives. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. 25(3): 335-349.
- MEB (1982). *Temeleğitim okulları Türkçe eğitim programı*. İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi.
- MEB (2005). *İlköğretim Türkçe dersi öğretim programı ve kılavuzu (1-5. sınıflar)*. Ankara: Devlet Kitapları Müdürlüğü Basımevi.
- MEB (2015). *Türkçe dersi (1-8. sınıflar) öğretim programı*. Ankara: Devlet Kitapları Müdürlüğü Basımevi.
- Meriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A Guide to design and implementation*. Third edition. San Fransisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- MOE [Ministry of Education] (1991). Primary education improvement report. Singapore: Report of the National Commission. See: www.moe.gov.sg/assets/uploads/files/2049_English.pdf
- MOE (2014). Information sheet of 21st century competencies. <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education/education-system/21st-century-competencies>
- OECD (2010). PISA 2009 results: Executive summary. <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/46619703.pdf>
- OECD (2016). Country note: Singapore /PISA 2015 high performers. Paris: OECD publishing. See: <https://www.oecd.org/countries/singapore/46581101.pdf>
- Pak Tee Ng (2008). The phases and paradoxes of educational quality assurance: The case of the Singapore education system. *Quality Assurance in Education*. 16 (2): 112-125.
- Piaget, J. (1960). *The child's conception of the world*. Translated from the French by J. and A. Tomlinson. Littlefield, NJ: Adams & Co.
- Piaget, J. (1970). *Science of education and the psychology of the child*, Translated from the French by D. Coltman. New York: Orion Press.

- Piaget, J. (1972). *Judgment and reasoning in the child*. Translated from the French by M. Warden. Littlefield, NJ: Adams & Co.
- Piaget, J. (1978). *The language and thought of the child*, Translated from the French by M. and R. Gabain, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Shapiro, J. and Riley, J. (1989). Ending the great debate in reading instruction. *Reading Horizons*. 30 (1): 67-78.
- Wee, H. T. and Chong, K.C. (1990). 25 years of school management. in J. Yip and W. K. Sim (Eds.). *Evolution of educational excellence: 25 years of education in Republic of Singapore*. Singapore: Longman. pp. 31-58.