



# A corpus-based study on the authenticity of dialogues in the B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks used in Turkey

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## Abstract

Because speaking appropriately and fluently is the ultimate goal in a foreign language learning process, the authenticity of dialogues in the ELT coursebooks becomes even more significant. However, it is rather doubtful whether the dialogues have the function of preparing students for the English language they are likely to encounter in daily life or not. For that reason, this study uses a corpus of ELT coursebooks to compare the language which the students encountered in school, so-called the term “school English” (Mindt, 1996, p. 232) with authentic English usage. The study investigates to what degree the items in the dialogues in the B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks correspond to authentic language use by means of corpus results and native speaker’s intuition. The *Spoken BNC2014* is used as a reference corpus and corpus data is analyzed through *Sketch Engine*, an online corpus tool. Content analysis method is used to analyze qualitative data obtained from native speaker comments. Corpus based research results indicate that the dialogues in the coursebooks underrepresent the functional categories with pragmatic functions suggested by O’Keeffe et al. (2007). In qualitative research, the native speaker revealed a lot of inauthentic and erroneous language use in dialogues in the coursebooks. At the end of the study, it was found that there is a discrepancy between ELT coursebooks language and authentic language use. Lastly, the study emphasizes the significance of corpus methods and native speaker supports to material development for coursebooks’ writers in the Ministry of National Education.

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## 1. Introduction

Corpus is described as “collections of texts (or parts of text) that are stored and accessed electronically” (Hunston, 2002, p. 2). It shows how a language works and how knowledge about a language is practiced in a real-life context. The enhanced

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computer usability has changed the analysis of the corpus from a topic for specialists to one that is accessible to all. Along with this growth in corpus studies, there is increasing concern over coursebooks analyses in terms of the quality of English language teaching (ELT) and the learning process in the world. McEnery and Wilson (2001) state the significance of corpus in the language learning process as follows: “Corpus examples are important in language learning as they expose students at an early stage in the learning process to the kinds of sentences and vocabulary which they will encounter in reading genuine texts in the language or in using the language in real communicative situations” (p. 120).

Language learning in Turkey is not at a desired level. Many reasons may lie beneath this problem and coursebooks, which are compulsorily used in Turkish public schools, may contribute to this failure. The failure of coursebooks to present how a language really works in daily life is widely discussed in the academic community. Crystal and Davy (1975) express their views on this issue as “the language presented to students in coursebooks is far away from that real, informal kind of English which is used very much more than any other during a normal speaking lifetime” (p. 2).

Because of its growing status as a lingua franca, the English language maintains its importance in the Turkish context as well and people all over the world are trying to learn effectively communicating in English. Thus, many countries have begun to give utmost importance in the teaching and learning of it in their national curriculums. Turkey is not an exception. English is the most preferred foreign language of nearly all students (98,4%) in Turkey (Genç, 1999). Most of the Turkish students have a desire to understand/speak English. But they cannot develop communicative competence at a desired level. Even though Turkish students receive approximately +1000 hours of English courses before graduating from high schools, they still have speaking and understanding problems in English (British Council & TEPAV, 2013). Turkey continuously ranks far behind on different studies measuring English language skills (British Council & TEPAV, 2015). The EF English Proficiency Index (henceforth EF EPI) is one of them. EF EPI rate countries by the average level of English language skills among those adults who have taken the EF exam. According to the EF EPI data of 2020, Turkey ranks at the 69th position out of 100 countries and has scored ‘low proficiency’ English level (EF EPI, 2020).

English is taught as a compulsory course at every educational level (primary, secondary, and higher) in Turkey. The Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) provides ELT coursebooks (also the other coursebooks) for free. Teachers have no alternatives to select appropriate coursebooks for their classes, they must use the coursebooks provided by MoNE. According to article 37 of the Official Journal of Turkey dated September 12, 2012, MoNE has forbidden teachers to purchase coursebooks and other educational tools that are not determined by the Ministry. Foreign language teachers usually follow the coursebooks strictly and try to complete

all activities in it. Therefore, coursebooks play a crucial role in English language instruction in Turkey.

Because English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) in Turkey, students are exposed to the foreign language in a very limited way outside the classroom and have nearly no chance to practice their English-speaking ability in daily life. The language learning process of Turkish students is restricted to classroom practice based on coursebook-centered activities. For that reason, ELT coursebooks have become even more important in the Turkish context. Numerous studies have shown that most of the EFL teachers in Turkey are not satisfied with the representation of the real and authentic language in coursebooks (Tekir & Arıkan, 2007; Uztosun, 2018; Dülger, 2016). O’Keeffe et al. (2007) agree on this idea by stating that the language taught in the classroom mostly depends on the writers' intuition on how to use that language rather than the actual use of that language. Therefore, it may be claimed that the language used in coursebooks is far from authenticity and accuracy.

Dialogues are one of the most effective means to represent students' real authentic communicative use of language. Thus, especially in foreign language contexts such as Turkey, where students have very limited exposure to target language use outside the classrooms, dialogues within the coursebooks help them gain effective authentic communication skills. As the aim of the language teaching process is expected from students to use the knowledge, they have learned in their coursebooks in daily communication, it is crucial that the dialogues reflecting the daily speaking language ensure authenticity and accuracy. But the coursebooks rarely go beyond offering fixed dialogues. The dialogues in the coursebooks are usually performed to reinforce a language structure, a grammar rule, pronunciation, or new vocabularies. Indeed, dialogues in the coursebooks should have used to teach how to manage a conversation in that language, “but the purpose was not to teach the rules of communication, appropriateness and, use: the focus was nearly always a structural one...” (McDonough & Shaw, 2012, p. 169). Fixed dialogues that have structural language teaching purposes can not offer authentic language. Using an inauthentic language may lead to problems in a genuine interaction between ‘real’ people that occurred in an everyday conversation. For that reason dialogues in the coursebooks should not be too formal, they should represent the everyday speech of that language. “Instead of isolated and decontextualized competencies, interaction-oriented tasks allow learners to embrace the tasks because of their meaning and usefulness” (Jacomard & Kuuse, 2016, p. 26).

Despite the growing interest of the corpora in the field of language teaching, the effect of corpora on research studies about coursebooks may remain comparatively limited and some corpus-based studies have been conducted for coursebooks are especially in the vocabulary and grammar teaching functions of coursebooks in Turkey (e.g., Baydal, 2016; Peksoy, 2013; Kartal, 2018). But there is not enough study about the authenticity of dialogues in the ELT coursebooks in a real language context. To this

end, this study set out with the aim of assessing the authenticity of dialogues in B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks in Turkey.

## 2. Research Questions

This study aims to investigate whether B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks in Turkey provide authentic dialogues comparing with the Spoken BNC2014 corpus and whether they represent the functional categories with pragmatic functions of spoken discourse, such as discourse markers, face and politeness, vagueness and approximation, and conversational routines suggested by O’Keeffe et al. (2007).

In line with this aim, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. Are there any significant differences between the dialogues in the coursebooks and the Spoken BNC2014 in terms of authenticity according to pragmatic functions of spoken discourse suggested by O’Keeffe et al. (2007) (i) discourse markers, (ii) face and politeness, (iii) vagueness and approximation, and (iv) conversational routines?
2. What are native speaker’s comments about the authenticity of dialogues in B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks?

## 3. Method

The study is a descriptive, corpus-based study which analyses the authenticity of dialogues in three B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks (Ortaöğretim İngilizce 10 Ders Kitabı, Silver Lining 11 Student’s Book, and Count Me In 12 Student’s Book) used in the 2019-2020 academic year and suggested by MoNE.

The study adopts a mixed methods research design, in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed. Mixed method involves combining or integration of qualitative and quantitative research, and data in a research study (Creswell, 2003). It is believed that this methodological diversity will contribute to the validity of the results.

The coursebooks were converted to word format, all contents except dialogues were omitted and the dialogues both written and spoken in the recorded texts/videos were transcribed for analysis. The quantitative data were collected via corpus analysis of the dialogues in the coursebooks comparing with the Spoken BNC2014. The gathered data were analyzed through the corpus-analytic program *Sketch Engine*.

The qualitative data on the authenticity and clarity of the dialogues in the coursebooks were obtained via interviews with a British female native speaker of English with a bachelor’s degree and it was analyzed through content analysis method.

The interview was composed of two sections. The first part dealt with participant's demographic information (age, sex, educational background, and occupation). The second section investigated native speaker's detailed analysis of the authenticity of the dialogues in B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks. The interview with the native speaker was conducted online because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. In the interview, the native speaker is supposed to underline the problematic parts of the dialogues in terms of authenticity. The native speaker suggested a more correct, authentic, and natural way of the problematic usage of the English language in the dialogues.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. The Findings of the Quantitative Data

The first research question asks whether there are any significant differences between the dialogues in the coursebooks and the Spoken BNC2014 in terms of authenticity according to pragmatic functions of spoken discourse suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) (i) discourse markers, (ii) face and politeness, (iii) vagueness and approximation, and (iv) conversational routines.

The following Figure 1 demonstrates a significant difference between frequency distribution of items used in spoken language suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) in B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks and the Spoken BNC2014.

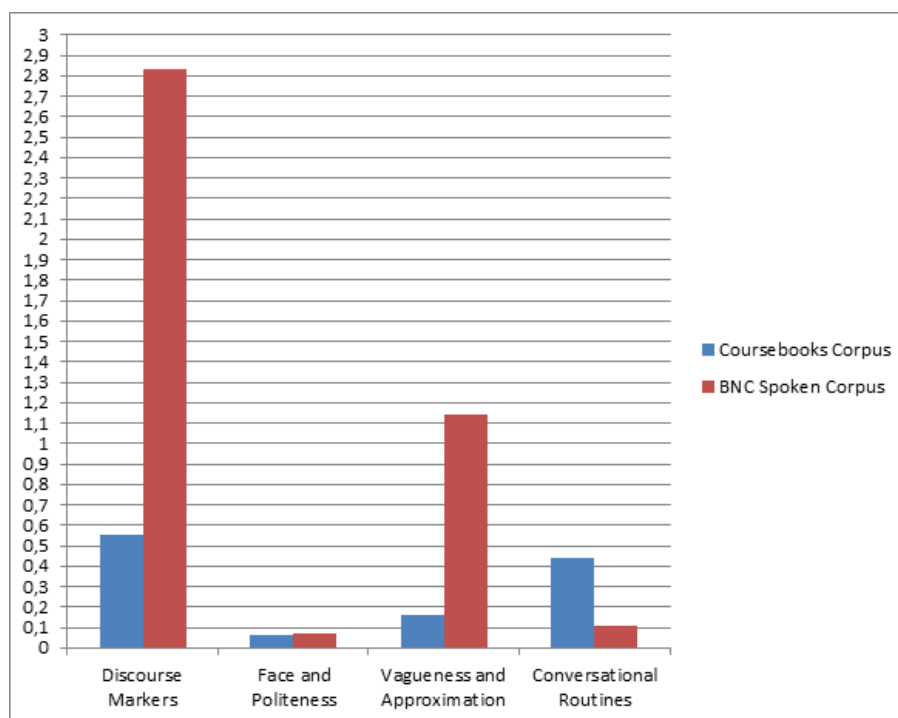


Figure 1. Overall frequency distribution of functional categories with pragmatic functions in both corpora

As can be seen from the figure above, there is a significant difference in the overall usage of the items suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) between coursebooks corpus and the Spoken BNC2014. Discourse markers are unusually underused in dialogues in the coursebooks with a relative frequency of 0,55% though a relative frequency of 2,83% in the Spoken BNC2014.

No significant difference on the items that have face and politeness functions was found between the coursebooks corpus and the Spoken BNC2014. While the coursebooks corpus has 0,06% relative frequency, the Spoken BNC2014 has 0,07% relative frequency. However, this overuse is too slight in percentage. The reason for this result may be that the native speakers do not use face and politeness expressions frequently in their daily life.

There is a significant difference in the expressions that have vagueness and approximation functions between coursebooks corpus and the Spoken BNC2014. Vagueness and approximation items are also underused in the coursebooks with a relative frequency of 0,16% compared to the Spoken BNC2014 with a relative frequency of 1,14%.

What is interesting is the overused frequency distribution of conversational routines expressions in the coursebooks corpus. While the coursebooks corpus has a 0,44% relative frequency, the Spoken BNC2014 has a 0,11% relative frequency. The reasons for this result are not yet wholly understood. The unexpectedly high level of the overall relative frequency of conversational routines in the coursebooks might be explained by the fact that the material writers give extra importance to some conversational routine items in dialogues in the coursebooks. For instance, almost all the dialogues have a greeting, leave-taking, and thanking expressions in the ELT coursebooks. This might have increased the overall frequency of the conversational expressions in the coursebook corpus.

In the light of the above, it can be inferred that discourse markers and vagueness and approximation items have probably been underestimated in the B1-B2 levels coursebooks used in teaching English process in Turkey, and there is an over emphasis to conversational routines in the coursebooks.

The following Table 1 reveals the comparison of the discourse markers item frequency in both corpora. The Table shows the frequency and relative frequency of each item.

Table 1. Comparison of the discourse markers items frequency in both corpora

COURSEBOOKS CORPUS				SPOKEN BNC2014		LL RATIO	O/U- USE
NO	DISCOURSE MARKER	FREQUENCY	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (%)	FREQUENCY	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (%)		
1	at the end of the day	1	0,01	154	0	+1,11	Overuse
2	if you see what i mean	0	0	42	0	-0,15	Underuse
3	do you know what i mean	0	0	629	0,01	-2,28	Underuse
4	you know what i mean	0	0	663	0,01	-2,4	Underuse
5	but i mean	0	0	1218	0,01	-4,41	Underuse
6	Anyway	4	0,02	6596	0,06	-7,15	Underuse
7	i mean	7	0,04	18441	0,18	-30,96	Underuse
8	and then	5	0,03	26079	0,25	-62,07	Underuse
9	Right	5	0,03	26694	0,25	-64,06	Underuse
10	you know	13	0,07	41724	0,4	-79,47	Underuse
11	Well	31	0,16	71471	0,68	-108,43	Underuse
12	So	39	0,2	103445	0,99	-174,53	Underuse
Total		105	0,55	297156	2,83	-535,91	Underuse

As Table 1 demonstrates, 12 items are analyzed in this category. The item *-at the end of the day-* is overused with an LL ratio +1.11 in coursebooks corpus by comparison with the Spoken BNC2014. However, coursebooks corpus are found to underuse the other 11 items - *if you see what i mean, do you know what i mean, you know what i mean, but i mean, anyway, i mean, and then, right, you know, well, so-* with an LL ratio ranging from -0.15 to -174.53 by comparison with the Spoken BNC2014. Of these 12 items in this category, *-if you see what i mean, do you know what i mean, you know what i mean, but i mean-* are not used in dialogues in the coursebooks.

The following Table 2 reveals the face and politeness items suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) in both corpora.

Table 2. Comparison of face and politeness items frequency in both corpora

		COURSEBOOKS CORPUS		SPOKEN BNC2014		LL RATIO	O/U- USE
NO	FACE AND POLITENESS	FREQUENCY	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (%)	FREQUENCY	RELATIVE FREQUENCY (%)		
1	what do you think	4	0,02	496	0	+5.72	Overused
2	do you want	5	0,03	2538	0,02	+0.03	Overused
3	I was going to say	0	0	193	0	-0,7	Underused
4	do you want me to	0	0	382	0	-1,38	Underused
5	I don't know if	1	0,01	1586	0,02	-1,64	Underused
6	do you think	1	0,01	1684	0,02	-1,87	Underused
7	I don't know whether	0	0	527	0,01	-1,91	Underused
Total		11	0,06	7406	0,07	-7,5	Underused

As can be seen from the Table 2, 7 different items are analyzed in the face and politeness category. Of these 7 items *-what do you think, do you want-* are overused in coursebooks corpora with an LL ratio ranging from +5.72 to +0.03 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. The items *-I was going to say, do you want me to, I don't know if, do you think, I don't know whether-* are underused with an LL ratio ranging from -0.70 to -1.91 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. Of these 7 items in this category, *-I was going to say, do you want me to, I don't know whether-* are not used in dialogues in the coursebooks. Although face and politeness items are overused in the Spoken BNC2014, this difference in the use of face and politeness items between the two corpora is not likely to be significant.

Table 3 summarizes the data on the frequency of vagueness and approximation items suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007).



Table 3. Comparison of vagueness and approximation items frequency in both corpora

		COURSEBOOKS CORPUS		SPOKEN BNC2014		LL RAT IO	O/U- USE
NO	VAGUENESS AND APPROXIMA TION	FREQUE NCY	RELATIV E FREQUE NCY (%)	FREQUE NCY	RELATIV E FREQUE NCY (%)		
1	a couple of	4	0,02	2282	0,02	-0,01	Under use
2	(and) all this/that sort of thing	0	0	72	0	-0,26	Under use
3	(and) this that and the other	0	0	82	0	-0,3	Under use
4	all the rest of it	0	0	131	0	-0,47	Under use
5	and things like that	0	0	418	0	-1,51	Under use
6	or something like that	0	0	716	0,01	-2,6	Under use
7	Pretty	1	0,01	4288	0,04	-9,44	Under use
8	Basically	0	0	3455	0,03	- 12,52	Under use
9	Whatever	0	0	4808	0,05	- 17,43	Under use
10	Quite	4	0,02	17455	0,17	- 38,73	Under use
11	Just	21	0,11	85491	0,81	- 183,9 6	Under use
Tot al		30	0,16	119198	1,14	- 267,2 3	Under use

Table 3 demonstrates the data of 11 items in Vagueness and approximation category. The items *-a couple of, (and) all this/that sort of thing, (and) this that and the other, all the rest of it, and things like that, or something like that, pretty, basically, whatever, quite, just-* are underused with an LL ratio ranging from -0.01 to -183.96 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. Of these 11 items in this category, *-(and) all this/that sort of thing, (and) this that and the other, all the rest of it, and things like that, or something like that, basically, whatever-* are not used in dialogues in the coursebooks. Thus, it can be claimed that vagueness and approximation items are underused in the coursebook corpus.

Table 4 compares the occurrences of conversational routine items suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) in both corpora.

Table 4. Comparison of conversational routines items frequency in both corpora

	N O	CONVERSATIO NAL ROUTINES	COURSEBOOKS CORPUS		SPOKEN BNC2014		LL RATI O	O/U- USE
			FREQUEN CY	RELATIV E FREQUEN CY (%)	FREQUEN CY	RELATIV E FREQUEN CY (%)		
<b>Greeting</b>	1	Hello	9	0,05	1389	0,01	+9.93	Overus e
	2	Hey	7	0,04	930	0,01	+9.27	Overus e
	3	how are you	3	0,02	410	0	+3.84	Overus e
	4	hi there	0	0	16	0	-0,06	Underu se
	5	Hiya	0	0	69	0	-0,25	Underu se
<b>Leave- taking</b>	1	See you later	1	0,01	91	0	+1.93	Overus e
<b>Expressiv es</b>	1	Welcome	22	0,12	351	0	+111. 87	Overus e
	2	thank you very much	16	0,08	367	0	+70.4 4	Overus e
	3	thank you ever so much	0	0	5	0	-0,02	Underu se
	4	thank goodness for that	0	0	6	0	-0,02	Underu se
	5	thanks for your (help)	0	0	6	0	-0,02	Underu se
	6	thank god for that	0	0	18	0	-0,07	Underu se
<b>Commissi ves</b>	1	Would you like to	11	0,06	205	0	+52.7 2	Overus e
	2	I'd love to	3	0,02	296	0	+5.38	Overus e
	3	that would be (lovely)	3	0,02	1470	0,01	+0.04	Overus e
	4	do you want	5	0,03	2671	0,03	+0.01	Overus e
	5	that's a nice idea	0	0	0	0	+0.00	Overus e
	6	do you want some	0	0	300	0	-1,09	Underu se
<b>Directives</b>	1	have you got	4	0,02	1318	0,01	+0.90	Overus e
	2	would you be willing to	0	0	0	0	+0.00	Overus e
	3	how would you feel about	0	0	4	0	-0,01	Underu se
	4	you'd be better off	0	0	8	0	-0,03	Underu se
	5	you're supposed to	0	0	11	0	-0,04	Underu se
	6	you'll have to	0	0	395	0	-1,43	Underu se
	7	you've got to	0	0	1298	0,01	-4,7	Underu se
Total			84	0,44	11634	0,11	+105, 94	Overus e

As can be seen from the above Table 4, conversational routines are subcategorized by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) as *Greeting*, *Leave-taking*, *Expressives*, *Commissives*, *Directives*.

In *Greeting* subcategory, the items *-hello, hey, how are you-* are overused with an LL ratio ranging from +9.93 to +3.84 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. The items *-hi there, hiya-* are underused with an LL ratio ranging from -0.06 to -0.25 compared to the Spoken BNC2014.

The item *hey* is used 7 times, *hello* is used 9 times, *how are you* is used 3 times in dialogues in the coursebooks. The item *hiya* and *hi there* do not occur in the dialogues. To see if there are other items to indicate greetings in the dialogues, the dialogues are reanalyzed. Other greetings items are as follows: *hi* with 13 occurrences, *nice to see you* with 1 occurrence, *good morning* with 6 occurrences, *how are you doing* with 1 occurrence and *good afternoon* with 12 occurrences.

In *Leave-taking* subcategory, the item *-See you later-* is overused with an LL ratio +1.93.

As can be seen from the table, the leave-taking item *see you later* suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) does not occur in dialogues in the coursebooks. To see the other leave-taking items, the dialogues are reanalyzed. Instead of the suggestion *see you later*, *bye* is used 8 times, *goodbye* is used 3 times, *take care* is used 2 times, *see you* is used 3 times, *have a nice day* is used 3 times, *see you later* is used 1 time, *see you again* is used 2 times, *i hope to see you later* is used 1 time.

In *Expressives* subcategory, the items *-welcome, thank you very much-* are overused with an LL ratio ranging from +111.87 to +70.44 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. The items *-thank you ever so much, thank goodness for that, thanks for your (help), thank god for that-* are underused with an LL ratio ranging from -0.02 to -0.07 compared to the Spoken BNC2014.

Expressions of thanking such as *thank god for that, thank goodness for that, thank you ever so much*, and *thanks for your (help)* do not occur in coursebooks corpus. To identify which expressions are used to say thanks, we reanalyzed all the dialogues in depth. The results obtained from this analysis show that *thank you very/so much* are used 17 times, *thank you* is used 25 times, *thanks* is used 14 times. Within the occurrences, *thanks a lot, thank you in advance*, and *thank you very much indeed* are observed as an alternative way of thanking. The results display that the conversational routine items aim to express thanking are underrepresented in dialogues in the coursebooks. The variety of expressions to say thanks is limited in coursebooks' dialogues.

In *Commissives* subcategory, *-Would you like to, I'd love to, that would be (lovely), do you want, that's a nice idea-* are overused with an LL ratio ranging from +52.72 to +0.00 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. The item *-do you want some-* is underused with an LL ratio -1.09.

As can be seen from the table, commissive items that have functions such as promising, offering, inviting are not presented enough in dialogues in the coursebooks. *Would you like to* occurs in 11 times, *do you want* occurs in 5 times, *I'd love to* occurs 3 times, *(that) would be (lovely)* occurs in 4 times, *do you want some* do not occur in dialogues in the coursebooks.

In *Directives* subcategory, *-have you got, would you be willing to-* are overused with an LL ratio ranging from +0.90 to +0.00 compared to the Spoken BNC2014. The items *-how would you feel about, you'd be better off, you're supposed to, you'll have to, you've got to-* are underused with an LL ratio ranging from -0.01 to -4.70 compared to the Spoken BNC2014.

Suggested directive items such as *How would you feel about, would you be willing to, you've got to, you're supposed to, you'll have to, and you'd be better off* do not occur in the dialogues. *Have you got* occurs 4 times in the dialogues.

While the other three categories suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007) are underused in the coursebooks, frequency distribution of conversational routines expressions in the coursebooks corpus is overused.

#### 4.2. The Findings of the Qualitative Data

The second research question investigates native speaker's comments about the authenticity of dialogues in B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks.

In line with this, a native speaker evaluates the authenticity level of dialogues in the B1-B2 levels English coursebooks and makes some suggestions. The followings are some examples from the suggestions of the native speaker:

**Mrs Gibson:** Is it all clear now? Are there any questions?

**(NS):** *'Is it all clear now?' is a wrong usage. Instead, 'Is it crystal-clear now?' is suggested.* [Incorrect word choice in terms of authenticity]

**Beckett:** No. Everybody must have understood.

...

**Mrs Gibson:** It's the story of Jack Wright, a talented cyclist. One day, he receives an invitation to compete in one of the top cycling events in the world. He is thrilled. However, on the big day, when Jack is about to reach the finishing line, one of his rivals causes him to fall off his bike on purpose. The winner gets the cup but he can't sleep that night because a guilty conscience needs no accuser. The next day, he sends the cup with an apology note to Jack, the real winner.

**(NS):** *'compete in' is a wrong usage. We say 'compete with'.* [Incorrect grammatical usage of English]

(from *Silver Lining* 11 p. 80 Track 37)

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...

**Presenter :** Which game is unforgettable for you?

**Bryant :** Each game was important of course, but in 2006 while we were playing against Toronto Raptors, I carried the ball and scored 28 of 46 shots. That was my highest score in agame. And it was the first and only game my grandmother watched live.

**(NS):** ‘of’ is wrong usage here. Instead we say: ‘I carried the ball and scored 28 out of 46 shots.’ [Incorrect grammatical usage of English]

(from *Silver Lining 11* p. 99 Track 46)

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**Jane:** Hey, Steve! How’s it going?

**(NS):** ‘And you?’ could be used but we native speakers say ‘What about you?’

**Steve:** Hey, Jane! Not bad. Thanks. And you?

[Uncommon usage of English/The speech patterns of non-native speakers of English]

...

**Jane:** What’s your favorite pastime?

**(NS):** ‘pastime’ could lead to misunderstanding, it is not reliable and suitable for the sentence. ‘What are you interested in? / What are you keen on?’ is suggested. [Ambiguous usage of language that is not clear and easy to understand]

**Steve:** Basketball. I’m crazy about it. I usually play basketball with some classmates after school.

(from *Ortaöğretim İngilizce 10* p. 10 Video 1.1)

After the interview, the native speaker’s comments are analyzed in depth and categorized. Table 5 summarizes the themes that emerge from the native speaker’s interview data.

Table 5. Summary of themes revealing native speaker's opinions about the authenticity of dialogues in the coursebooks

NO	THEMES
1	Uncommon usage of English/the speech patterns of non-native speakers of English
2	Incorrect grammatical usage of English
3	Incorrect word choice in terms of authenticity
4	Ambiguous usage of language that is not clear and easy to understand
5	Sentences/Expressions not suitable for the level of the students

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

The study investigates the authenticity of the written and spoken dialogues in the B1-B2 levels ELT coursebooks used in Turkey by using a corpus analysis approach. To this end, the Spoken BNC2014 is used as the reference corpus. The online corpus tool, *Sketch Engine*, is used to analyze the data.

The authenticity level of the dialogues is determined by using the functional categories with pragmatic functions of spoken discourse, such as discourse markers, face and politeness, vagueness and approximation and conversational routines suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007). The results suggested that dialogues in the coursebooks underrepresented the functional categories with pragmatic functions suggested by O'Keeffe et al. (2007). However, the coursebooks do not totally exclude those functions. Conversational routines items are represented in the dialogues more rather than the other categories.

The comparison of both corpora presented a restricted range of discourse markers in the coursebooks. Fung and Carter (2007) remark that the use of restricted range of discourse markers reflect an unnatural linguistic input for ESL learners and it may be the result of

a traditional grammar-centered methodology rather than a pragmatic use in spoken language.

The second equally important finding of the study is derived from native speaker evaluations. When the native speaker corrections and suggestions are analyzed the preceding themes are identified: *Uncommon usage of English/the speech patterns of non-native speakers of English*, *Incorrect grammatical usage of English*, *Incorrect word choice in terms of authenticity*, and *Ambiguous usage of language that is not clear and easy to understand*. Lastly, the native speaker makes corrections in just a few sentences because of *Sentences/Expressions not suitable for the level of the students*.

In conclusion, the interview with a British native speaker reveals that the most common factor that decreases the authenticity level in dialogues is the uncommon English use and non-native speakers' speech patterns. This finding corroborates the ideas of Çakır (2010) who concluded that the coursebooks are "... unable to present the authentic language in natural contexts, which unfortunately leads to teach a pure language abstaining from the original usage" (p. 182). Apart from this, there are a considerable amount of problems with grammar use, word choice, and ambiguous expressions that should be corrected in the dialogues. The interview with the native speaker of English indicates that besides the authenticity of the language in dialogues, there are also problems with the accuracy of the language presented in dialogues in the coursebooks.

The present study has important implications for the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), coursebook writers, teachers, and language learners to solve the authenticity problems of the language used in ELT coursebooks.

First of all, the study reveals that ELT coursebooks have problems with accuracy and correctness as well as authenticity. The Board of National Education is in charge of developing educational plans and programs and educational materials directly affiliated to the MoNE. Coursebooks are evaluated by the Board of National Education to see whether they meet specified evaluation criteria of MoNE. The review team of the MoNE can benefit from spoken language elements emerged from the corpus data and native speakers' comments in order to make the language presented in ELT coursebooks more authentic and natural.

Moreover, ELT coursebooks are prepared by either an expert committee of the MoNE or the private publishing houses. Books that are prepared by authors are reviewed and the necessary procedures are followed before submitting the book to the Board of Education. It can be inferred from the findings of the current study that English language teaching materials used in Turkish high schools are prepared by the writers' intuition and unable



to present authentic language use. The deficiencies of coursebooks on reflecting real language use can give the material writers an insight to revise the contents of ELT coursebooks used in Turkish context. The coursebooks need some changes and improvements regarding the spoken language elements. Corpus reference helps material writers go beyond intuitive selections of language use and helps present authentic spoken discourse in ELT coursebooks.

Furthermore, the discrepancy between the coursebook language and authentic language use has also some implications for teachers and language learners. Teachers should be aware of the deficiencies and possible mistakes in ELT coursebooks and should be flexible to use the contents in coursebooks. They should not refrain from suggesting more authentic and natural language use and material adaptation in their language teaching process. Teachers also should try to create an unthreatening and natural atmosphere to listen and practice spoken language in dialogues in the coursebooks. In this way, the students feel that they learn English for the real world of communication. Because "... it is clearly important that learners are exposed to the interactional nature of everyday conversation (quite distinct from fixed 'dialogues' to be read aloud). This is rather more difficult to construct in the classroom environment, except artificially" (McDonough, Shaw, & Masuhara, 2013, p. 152). The present study also reveals that language learners encounter a very restricted number of spoken language items in their learning process. For that reason, they are unfamiliar with the linguistic features of spoken language. Presenting inauthentic language use in coursebooks may lead to students both lack of interest and feeling of inadequacy in English language. Language learners can use corpus programs to discover the spoken elements of language to have a more authentic and natural conversation in English.

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