

Why to Involve Teachers in the Process of Language Curriculum Development?

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ÖZET

Yabancı dil müfredat geliştirme sürecinin olmazsa olmazlarından biri temel paydaşlar olarak öğretmenlerin tüm basamaklarda etkin katılımının sağlanmasıdır. Öğretmenler aynı zamanda uygulayıcılar oldukları için kuramı uygulamaya dönüştüren kişilerdir ki bu da onların yabancı dil müfredat geliştirme sürecinin karar verme aşamasında olmalarını gerektirir. Bu çalışmanın amacı müfredat geliştirme sürecinde öğretmenlerin katkılarının önemini vurgulamak ve müfredat tasarlanırken her bir basamakta öğretmenlerin görev ve sorumluluklarının neler olduğunu tartışmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, öncelikle “müfredat” tanımları anlamları ayrıştırılarak açıklanacak, dil müfredatı tasarlanırken izlenen basamaklar sunulacak. Makale bir okul müfredatı çalışmalarında derse giren öğretmenden neler beklendiğine yönelik tartışma ile devam edecektir. Sonuç bölümünde öğretmenlerin neden dil müfredatı geliştirme sürecinde olması gerektiği gerekçelendirilecektir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Müfredat geliştirme, müfredat geliştirme sürecinde öğretmenin rolleri, müfredat geliştirmede paydaşlar, karar verme mekanizmaları, kurumsal yapı, yabancı dil öğretiminde işbirliği.*

ABSTRACT

One of the prerequisites of language curriculum development process is to enable the active participation of teachers as the primary stakeholders in all the stages. Being the practitioners, teachers are the ones who transmit theory into practice, which necessitates them to be in the decision-making process of language curriculum development. The aim of this study is to emphasize the prominence of the contribution of teachers to curriculum development process and discuss the roles and responsibilities of teachers in pertinent to each step while designing curriculum. To this end, first the definition of ‘curriculum’ will be clarified, differentiating its meaning, then the steps to be taken while designing language curriculum will be presented. The article will go on with the discussion of what is expected from classroom teachers in the studies of a school’s curriculum. In the concluding part, why to involve teachers in language curriculum development process will be justified.

Key words: *Curriculum development, teachers’ roles in curriculum development process, stakeholders in curriculum development, decision-making mechanisms, organizational structure, collaboration in language teaching.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language curriculum development process requires the participation of different stakeholders as teachers, students, administrators, curriculum managers, materials and test developers. All stakeholders with their diverse roles and perspectives add varied features to the process; teachers by being both the planner and doer provide the implementation of the process, so their views and work are to be taken into consideration during the whole stage. It is true that students are the reason for all the processes taken; Earle Chaffee and Sherr (1992:82) express that learners are the ones whose views should be taken in the process of curriculum implementation in order to investigate the gap between the published curriculum and the real curriculum which is “represented in students’ transcripts”; in this way, according to them, it might be possible to “track the ‘real’ curriculum on a flow chart” in order to determine what is needed for improvement in the process. However, without teachers’ help it is not ultimately possible to reveal students’ needs on the grounds that teachers are the ones who spend the most time with students. The success of the whole work of administrators, curriculum managers, materials and test developers also depends on teachers as they act as a bridge between what is planned and what will be obtained as a result of the implementation process.

In this article, the reasons behind involving teachers, who are primarily responsible for implementing the curriculum, in curriculum development process will be discussed. To this end, first what is meant by ‘curriculum’ and ‘curriculum development’ as terms will be clarified, especially in relation to teachers’ roles and responsibilities in actualizing what is stated in the definitions of ‘curriculum’ and ‘curriculum development’. Moving to the requirements for including teachers as stakeholders in curriculum development process will be the next step where these reasons are listed. Then, teachers’ roles and responsibilities as participants of this development process will be discussed in parallel with the related steps.

2. TEACHERS AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN LANGUAGE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

2.1 Defining Key Terms of Curriculum Development Process

Before identifying the roles and responsibilities of teachers, what is meant by ‘curriculum’ and ‘developing curriculum’ will be considered in relation to teachers’ places in them. According to Bobbitt (1924), ‘curriculum’ may be defined in two ways; “it is the range of experiences, both indirect and direct, concerned in unfolding the abilities of the individual, or it is a series of consciously directed training experiences that the schools use for completing and perfecting the individual”. Taba (1962) defines ‘curriculum’ as “all of the learning of students which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals”. To Tyler (1957), it is “all of the experiences that individual learners have in a program of education whose purpose is to achieve broad goals and related specific objectives, which is planned in terms of a framework of theory and research or past or present professional practices” (Bobbitt, 1924; Taba, 1962; Tyler, 1957 cited in Wiles & Bondi, 2007:2,3). What is common in these three fundamental definitions of curriculum is that curriculum is “planned” and is the whole of “experiences”.

The definitions for 'curriculum development' also vary, especially depending on the period they are being defined. Johnson describes it as "all the relevant decision-making processes of all the participants" (Johnson, 1989:1, cited in Segovia & Hardison, 2009:154). Graves (2008:147) describes it as "the processes and products of planning, teaching and evaluating a course of study or related courses". Nunan (1988:10) describes it as "the systematic attempt by educationalists and teachers to specify and study planned intervention into the educational enterprise".

To continue with the procedure followed in developing curriculum, it is seen that throughout its history, starting with Franklin Bobbitt's Curriculum, 'curriculum development process' has been enriched. Tyler came up with four basic steps: aims and objectives, content, organization and evaluation (Tyler, 1949, cited in Richards, 2001). Taba in 1962 came up with the following system of curriculum development:

1. Diagnosis of needs
2. Formulation of objectives
3. Selection of content
4. Organization of content
5. Selection of learning experiences
6. Organization of learning experiences
7. Determination of what to evaluate and means of doing it

(Taba, 1962: 12, cited in Ibid., p.8)

Taba's model launches with the identification of 'needs', which will be leading in setting objectives. Besides, how the evaluation will take place is to be determined and included in the plan proposed for curriculum development. Moving on chronologically, it is seen that Nunan (1988) in his "learner-centered curriculum" contributes to the field by adding innovative touches to the curriculum development process:

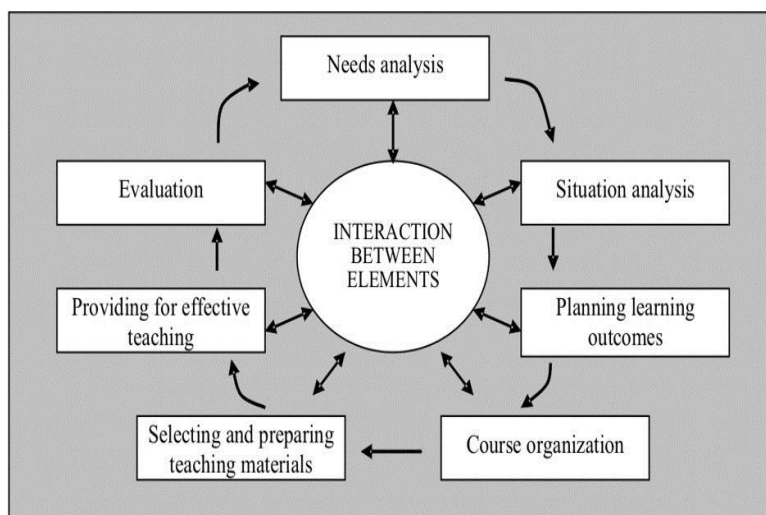
1. Pre-course planning procedure (Needs analysis, grouping learners)
2. Planning content (Setting objectives and planning and grading the content)
3. Methodology (Selection of the method)
4. Material design
5. Evaluation

What is new in Nunan's model is that the process of collecting information about learners is carried out both by advisors before the courses start and via the interaction of students and teachers within the process; however, in traditional models, objectives are set before the courses start and teachers and learners get to know each other. In a learner-centered curriculum there is also an on-going evaluation process which lets teachers make a revision and/or a change when necessary. Moreover, in traditional planning models evaluation takes place only when the course has finished whereas in a learner-centered one, as Nunan (1988) also says, evaluation takes place at the

every stage of the learning process; in addition, learners share the responsibility of the teacher by getting involved in this process.

In line with the emergence of new theories and innovative approaches in the field, what is understood by “planning, teaching and evaluating” has continued to change or expand. As seen in Figure 1, which depicts the language curriculum development model proposed by Richards (2001), more steps are added to the process, and in today’s curriculum development system all the steps to be taken should be integrated.

Figure 1: Richards’s (2001) view of curriculum development as drawn by Storey (2007)



Although the cycle is similar to the one followed in a ‘learner-centered curriculum’, Richards in his model adds new perspectives and steps into the process. First of all, in addition to needs analysis, situation analysis is required to be carried out before planning goals and learning outcomes of the program. After the goals and outcomes are determined and the syllabus is designed, the ways of improving teaching are investigated. Here it is essential to take into consideration institutional, teacher, teaching and learner factors; for instance, as part of analyzing institutional factors in the process of language curriculum development, institutions should consider whether they are physically equipped to be able to implement that curriculum, whether the teachers working in that institutions are professionally well developed to be able to realize the planned curriculum. The next step to be devised is selecting and /or preparing the materials; as the last step, curriculum is evaluated; however, it should be highlighted that curriculum is not only evaluated at the end of the process; evaluation is continually made within the process with the integration of other steps. Actually, all the steps in Richards’ model are to be considered in an integrated way.

Being the ones who will transmit what is planned to teaching, teachers are the foremost stakeholders of this curriculum development process. Johnson’s definition lets us draw a conclusion that teachers are one of the leading participants who can contribute to “decision-making processes” (Johnson, 1989:1, cited in Segovia & Hardison, 2009:154). In reference to Graves’s (2008:147) description, it can be concluded that teachers are the ones who will determine and implement “the processes and products of planning, teaching and evaluating a course of study or related courses”. Nunan (1988:10) names teachers as curriculum planners who will “specify and study planned intervention into the educational enterprise”. Therefore, it is indispensable to involve teachers

-the head actors- in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating teaching as well as the other stakeholders -directors, students, scholars, professionals, etc.- that should be in the designing process. Moreover, in parallel with what Richards titles as “providing for effective teaching”, the institution is responsible for providing the necessary training for teachers in order that they can plan and implement the new curriculum; otherwise, teachers will not be able to raise awareness of the related curricular innovation.

2.2 The Reasons for the Active Involvement of Teachers in Language Curriculum Development Process

What is a must if an institution wants to come up with a commonly praised and obviously successful curriculum is making teachers be actively involved in every step of curriculum development process. Among the numerous reasons for this requirement, the following ones can be counted to emphasize the prominent role of teachers in language curriculum development process.

As an organizational structure, organic systems are more desirable in today’s educational system (Richards, 2001; Rowan, 1998; Tosi & Hammer, 1985); in terms of making curricular decisions, organic systems necessitate ‘shared decision-making mechanism’ to be adopted as a principal. Teachers, who transfer the decisions to the aspect of students putting theory into practice, must be within the decision-making team. Teachers having the knowledge and class experience must contribute to the process by conveying their ideas and transmitting know-how; they must be in the planning stage of what they are going to implement. Teachers and students have their own “perceptions of problems and issues in their classrooms, schools, and professional lives” and thus “teachers have a right to have their voices heard in creating the curriculum” (Beane & Apple, 2007:20).

The other point to be highlighted is that teachers are the ones who have been acquainted with both the prevalent school culture and the physical conditions of that school and thus able to analyze whether the related innovation to the curriculum will work in their institution or not. Teachers share and experience the school culture, and they have the power to change the prevailing system into the desired new one; if one can do it, it is the teachers because if the change is not approved and adapted by the teachers, it does not last long. According to Kosunen and Huusko, teachers and “the educational dialogues” among them direct the curriculum process; what tasks will be done in the school, new teaching and learning ways, “teachership” are all through the involvement of teacher community (Kosunen & Huusko, 2002: 238). Knowing the local conditions, basically their school itself, teachers are more likely to find out what can be done in that local context.

Teachers are the ones who can detect and compensate the problems and deficiencies in a curriculum (Richards, 2001); this provides “a backwash possible from the classroom to the curriculum” (Candlin & Rodgers, 1985:104), which makes teachers come up with constructive ideas in designing and revising a curriculum. What is more, they can contribute to the emergence of curriculum development models; to give an example, that the specialists in the field come up with different kinds of curricula: “planned and unplanned (the hidden curriculum)” is the result of the feedback provided after teachers’ and administrators’ recognition of the differences among learners (Wiles & Bondi, 2007:3).

To obtain success in implementing curriculum depends on teachers’ knowledge, awareness and active participation during the whole process; new curriculum models, especially, necessitate it (Ricento &

Hornberger, 1996). In product-oriented curricula -for example- “learning is hindered by the fact that the needs and priorities of learners and the teacher are usually hidden from each other, and often in conflict” (Wette, 2011: 137). In such a model of curriculum, teachers are seen as the “authority source and manager of a controlled, authoritarian environment” whereas in process-oriented curricula “teachers have considerable curriculum-making freedom and flexibility” via “shared decision making with learners” (Ibid. pp.136-137). Therefore, for example, while product-oriented curricula necessitate teachers to know and control every teaching activity, in process-oriented curricula teachers and students need to join the process, which requires teachers’ awareness and active participation in each step of the process.

Teachers’ working in a team to design a curriculum enables them to collaborate steadily; collaboration – as a result of globalization- is one of the key points emphasized in the 21st century education and thus highly prioritized in language teaching methodology as well. There are various ways of setting up a teachers’ group to collaborate actively and productively. One way of doing this is to constitute Critical Friends Group (CFG), which means colleagues from the same institution work to help each other (Vo & Nguyen, 2010). This enables teachers to develop themselves professionally, their schools, students’ performance, creating effective school atmosphere and providing them to learn to work in teams. Another example emphasizing the power of working collaboratively rather than individually is Kosunen and Huusko’s (2002) study; they revealed the difference between the teachers’ being involved in curriculum development studies individually and teachers’ participating in the same process working together with the other teachers.

Table 1: Teacher community v teacher isolation as put forward by Kosunen and Huusko (2002: 237)

Teacher community in the school's curriculum process	Teacher isolation in the school's curriculum process
The community has the ability to analyze itself and to conduct open, reflective discussions	Openness and reflectivity do not reach the entire community; there is little professional dialogue
The community is willing to develop its culture of practice in order to improve its basic task	Teachers create their own curriculum without input from others
The community is able to work interactively-all members actively participate in the planning process with a critical perspective	Interaction is limited

As seen in the table, differentiating the impact of working individually and collaboratively, working together has more gains to curriculum development process. The study showed that the commitment of teacher community outweighed the commitment of individual teachers; as “the level of commitment to the curriculum process of individual teachers was very inconsistent and fragmented” whereas groups focused more on the process. One more gain reported by the teacher community was that they had opportunities “for their own pedagogic development and reflectivity” (Ibid., p.240).

While the immediate benefits of collaboration can be listed as the commitment of teachers to the process, attaining more success in designing the curriculum and the opportunity of developing critical perspective, teachers’ working together also enables their learning from one another, improving their practical knowledge and

encouraging them to be a scholar throughout the process. The results of Kosunen and Huusko's study indicate that experienced teachers can make use of their practical knowledge more in their teaching; understanding what is written in the curriculum better they are more able to transmit it into practice (Ibid., p.237). Thus, novice teachers' working together with the experienced ones will help them to have a kind of in-service training. Teachers continue their professional development with the help of being involved in the decisions made regarding theoretical underground. While converting theory into practice especially in the beginning of the curricular decisions, in the evaluation stage through reflection it is most likely to contribute to theory from the outcome of practice. One more important point to be noted is that teachers need support from teacher educators in the process of curricular innovation; they need to work together with them to envisage and overcome the difficulties they might face (Richards, 2001).

The studies carried out by European Union to provide and sustain quality and standards point out the essential role of teachers' participation in curriculum development as well. In Leuven Communiqué (2009), it is stated that all higher education institutions need to make "ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes". In Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2009), it is emphasized that there is a requirement for the institutions to "have a policy and procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programs", including "the roles for all the stakeholders in the program", which signifies that the decisions made in Bologna Process also verify that teachers must be in the process of developing their programs.

All in all, teachers by being the most powerful stakeholder in the process of curriculum development enable to realize the curriculum in every angle. In the planning stage, they shape the curriculum; in the implementation process, they make the abstract into real by transmitting the planned to the actualized; in the evaluation stage, they are lucky to see both their perceptions and the students'. This last stage also shapes the possible future curriculum planning because with the help of this double reflection they will contribute to developing the best possible curriculum in the following step.

2.3 The Processes and Teachers' Roles in Language Curriculum Development

Before discussing the roles and responsibilities of a teacher as a stakeholder in language curriculum development process, what is meant by 'a stakeholder' had better be defined. Richards refers to Connely and Candinin (1988, 124, cited in Richards, 2001:56-57) who define a stakeholder as "a person or group of persons with a right to comment on, and have input into, the curriculum process offered in schools". Different stakeholder groups contribute differently to the process via their varying roles and responsibilities. Having discussed in what ways teachers have a right to comment on, here we will focus on the possible input that teachers can provide for the process; to put it differently, what is expected from teachers in this language curriculum development process can be discussed in reference to the each step separately.

To start with the needs analysis process, different stakeholders might come up with different opinions about the needs; therefore, it is crucial for teachers, learners, employers, program developers, material and textbook writers, administrators, consultants, and academics to be in the process, which results in their making changes-if necessary- in their local contexts. The way of conducting needs analysis depends on the type of procedure selected. Richards (2001) advises a triangular approach, which means collecting information from two or more

sources. He lists the procedures for collecting information as follows: questionnaires, self-rating, interviews, meetings, observation, collecting learner language samples, task analysis, case studies, and analysis of available information. Teachers by being able to reach the previous students and working with a new group can easily collect information from both groups, which will help to gather data in order to set reasonable objectives.

In the situation analysis, considering the teacher factor is one of the elements to be analyzed; teachers' quality and educational background is important as teachers are the ones to make the application of innovations easier or harder in line with their teaching beliefs and habits. Teachers' knowledge and awareness will provide to initiate and continue the process of language curriculum development successfully; to reach the desired outcome, active participation of teachers during the whole process is what is expected from them.

In the phase of planning learning outcomes, teachers play a key role as there is a need for combining their theoretical knowledge and experiential knowledge; that is, being able to write down a learning outcome requires the field knowledge while finding out whether that learning outcome is sensible to realize with that group of students depends on teachers' previous experience.

Like many other steps, organizing a course necessitates teachers' theoretical knowledge in the field and feedback got as a result of the past experiences. A course is organized based on the principal adopted; it might be 'topic-based', 'skill-based', 'content-based', and so on. Therefore, teachers need to be within the process of organizing it, keeping in mind the target of students and their needs.

During the textbook selection and preparation process, teachers should be active in the process of choosing the textbook and in the following process there is a need to implement the textbook into the curriculum in the right way, "providing our own individual touches" and using books as a guide (Davis & Osborn, 2003:70). Having known the target group studying at that institution, teachers know which material best works with that group; they can determine what supplementary materials are needed, and they are the ones to prepare them.

Teachers also contribute to evaluation process by reflecting their own experiences with regard to their local classroom context and as a result of the collaboration with other teachers throughout the period they have implemented the curriculum. Different participants contribute to different types of evaluation. For example, 'formative evaluation' is carried out mostly by teachers whereas students can make 'summative evaluation'. The purpose of formative evaluation is to find out what is working well and what is not in the program; it focuses on ongoing development and improvement of a program. There is also 'illuminative evaluation' which tries to find out how different aspects of the program work or how they are being implemented. As a result of this kind of evaluation, it does not have to be a change in the course; Richards (2001) exemplifies 'illuminative evaluation' referring to classroom action research. This is also part of teachers' job to carry out such research and come up with effective outcomes depending on their experiences. Although it is mostly via students' performance that reveals 'summative evaluation', teachers also play a role here by expressing the effectiveness and acceptability of a program, asking how far the objectives have been achieved and so on (Richards, 2001).

In addition to the roles teachers play in carrying out each step separately, teachers go on evaluating the effectiveness of each step in an integrated way during the whole process. They can determine whether there is a need for revision during the implementation process as well as actively taking part in the evaluation at the end of the whole process.

3. CONCLUSION

In order to develop a sound curriculum, teachers are the primary stakeholders to be involved in language curriculum development process. On the whole, actually, organic systems, which are more desirable as an organizational structure, require participatory decision-making mechanism which plays a key role in adopting and implementing innovations. In reference to Johnson's definition for 'curriculum' as "all the relevant decision-making processes of all the participants" (Johnson, 1989:1, cited in Segovia & Hardison, 2009:154), it can be concluded that teachers as the participants of teaching-learning process are among the ones who must be in decision-making process. According to Johnson, "policy, pragmatic considerations, and participants and their interaction" are the key issues to be dealt with in the process; the participants are to "reconcile policy and pragmatics". Segovia and Hardison carried out a study to investigate the implementation of a new policy in the new curriculum and they ended up with the result that there were some areas in which the curriculum was not coherent; one of their reasons for this deficiency was that teachers were "an untapped resource in the decision-making process" (Segovia & Hardison, 2009:154) despite their having played a major role in the related curricular reform.

There are also several requirements that must be met if the overall goal is to carry an institution to success. Especially when a new policy is adopted, teacher training should be the first thing to be done (Graves, 2008) to raise full awareness in teachers as they are the ones who will implement it and inform students about it. Teachers "should be able to explain what their innovations are, who they are for, and why they are being carried out" (White, 1995:144, cited in Hadley, 1999:97) as they are the practitioners. Even the novice teachers should be included in the process and learn all the stages in the process of teaching. However, according to Graff, they may not be ready to deal with the "complexities of planning curriculum" and feel "lost at sea" (Kaufman et. al., 2002, cited in Graff, 2011:151). In general, teachers must be trained and qualified; they should also be trained according to their performance (Richwine & Biggs, 2012). However, it is also the institution's responsibility to provide training for the inexperienced teachers in that institution. By referring to Robert's list, Richards (2001) lists some of the core components a skilled teacher should have: a practical knowledge, content knowledge, contextual knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, personal knowledge and reflective knowledge. Novice teachers should be able to improve all these necessary skills by continuing their professional development with an individual enterprise, via the power of collegial support, and through the opportunities provided by the institution.

Another noteworthy point to be considered is that teachers need to utilize from research findings to make the most of their teaching in parallel with the developments in the field. Teachers should be in action by raising their collective voices and be a scholar by being part of the research cycle. Teachers should join a community of teachers and learners so as to carry out their intellectual works and make the voice of practitioners public. This is necessary both as part of collaboration and to contribute to theory-practice cycle. Reflection and skepticism in teaching is inevitable as teaching should be organic like humans and languages on accounts of the fact that they are evolving; best practice should always guide us, but it should not be forgotten that each moment brings a different mix of needs and situations that force us to reflect and question (Thomas, 2003). Fenton-Smith and

Stillwell (2011:252) indicate that the way of bridging the gap between theory and practice in ELT is to make it “collaborative, sustained, organized, local, useful, convenient, accessible, and time efficient”; these can all be achieved during the curriculum development studies.

The studies of EU, namely the steps taken in Bologna Process, require “full participation of students and staff ... stimulating research and innovation” as well (Leuven Communique, 2009). What is also highlighted in Leuven Communique is that European higher education has to keep up with globalization and technological developments with new providers, new learners and new types of learning. In this sense, teachers must also be aware of what globalization requires, what these technological developments are and how they can be implemented into curriculum, which can be realized through being active and eager in participating in professional development activities.

Teachers -through the various evaluation they carry out- contribute to solving problems as a result of the feedback they give. This also helps to create a positive atmosphere among staff (Richards, 2001) on the grounds that successful implementation gives rise to teachers’ happiness and job satisfaction.

Teachers, working with other stakeholders such as curriculum and material developers, teacher educators and program administrators, students, are more likely to come up with the most appropriate syllabus. Teachers’ experiential knowledge, wisdom in combining theory and practice enable to shape the teaching/learning process in the most effective way. The integration of the all the stakeholders’ views are also important; moreover, they should support one another. School administrators had better be aware of the active teachers and encourage their productivity within the process. The scholar teachers should also play a leading role in implementing the written curriculum into the actualized one; they can support the process by showing the power of working collaboratively.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Yabancı dil müfredat geliştirme sürecinde başarıya ulaşabilmenin yolu, öğretmenleri sürecin her aşamasına dahil etmekten geçmektedir. Kuramı uygulamaya aktaran, uygulamadan yeni kuramların ortaya çıkmasını sağlayan kurama da uygulamaya da hakim olan öğretmenlerdir. En yeni yaklaşımların ışığında yabancı dil müfredat geliştirme sürecinde yer alan basamaklar, gereksinim çözümlemesi, durum analizi, öğrenme çıktılarının planlanması, dersin planlanması, ders malzemelerinin seçilmesi ve hazırlanması, öğretimi etkili kılabilmek için gerekli unsurların gerçekleştirilmesi ve değerlendirme birbirleri ile etkileşim içinde ve süreç boyunca güncellenen, değerlendirilen basamaklardır (Richards, 2001). Bu basamakların her birinde öğretmenler etkin olarak yer almalı ki müfredat hedeflenen çerçevede oluşturulabilsin, ortaya çıkan müfredat sağlıklı bir şekilde uygulamaya konulabilsin. Başarıya ulaşamayan müfredatların en önemli sorunlarından biri öğretmeni gerek karar verme aşamasında, gerek oluşturma ve planlama aşamasında yeterince dahil etmemekten ve uygulanacak müfredata hakim olmasını sağlamak için gerekli eğitimleri sunmamaktan kaynaklanmaktadır (Segovia & Hardison, 2009). Öğretmenin katılımının ne denli önemli olduğunu aşağıda açıklanan nedenlerle temellendirebiliriz:

1. Günümüzün eğitim sisteminde organik yapıya sahip kurumlar tercih edilmektedir; çünkü organik yapı ortak karar verme mekanizmasına olanak sağlar. Öğretmenler kuramı sınıfa -uygulamaya- taşıyan kişiler oldukları için, uygulamanın sağlıklı olabilmesi için öğretmenlerin müfredata dair alınan kararlarda etkin rol almaları gerekmektedir.
2. Öğretmenler, kurumun hem yapısını hem de fiziksel koşullarını bilen ve tecrübe etmiş kişiler oldukları için müfredata dair planlanan değişiklik ve yeniliğin ne ölçüde gerçekleştirilebilir olduğunu öngörebilirler. Buna paralel olarak, müfredatı uygulamada başarılı olabilmek için kurumda yapılması gerekli ön hazırlıkların neler olduğunu tespit edebilir ve gerekli koşulların sağlanmasında rol alabilirler.
3. Sınıftaki uygulamalardan alınan geribildirim sayesinde müfredat geliştirme alanına katkı sağlanabilir; böylece ilgili alanda kuramın gelişmesine katkıda bulunulmuş olur. Öğretmenler hem öncesinde kuramı bilen ve uygulamaya aktaran hem de uygulamadan edinilen geribildirimleri kuramı mükemmelleştirmede kullanabilecek kişilerdir.
4. Müfredat sürecinin sağlıklı bir şekilde sürdürülebilmesi öğretmenlerin farkındalık düzeylerinin artırılması ve etkin katılımlarının sağlanması yönünde önemli adımlar atılmasına bağlıdır. Özellikle yeni müfredat modelleri, geleneksel sonuç odaklı müfredat modellerinin gerektirdiğinden daha çok öğretmenin katılımını gerektirmektedir. Süreç-odaklı müfredat, öğretmenlerin süreç içinde etkin olarak rol almasını gerektirmektedir ki uygulamada herhangi bir değişiklik yapılması gerektiğinde gereken yapılabilsin.
5. 21. Yüzyılda küreselleşmenin yaygınlaşmasına paralel olarak, “işbirlikli öğrenmenin” getirileri vurgulanmaya ve eğitimin birçok alanında katkıları ön plana çıkarılmaya başlanmıştır. Müfredatın tüm aşamalarında öğretmenler “işbirliği” içinde çalışarak ve bu sayede birbirlerinden de öğrenerek mesleki gelişimlerine de katkıda bulunurlar.
6. Müfredat geliştirme hedef alınarak yapılan takım çalışmaları sayesinde, öğretmenler bir yandan eleştirel düşünce yetilerinin gelişmesine katkıda bulunurken diğer yandan genel olarak mesleki gelişimlerine

yönelik düzenli çalışmalar yapmaya başlayarak aslında akademisyen kimliklerini de ortaya koymaktadırlar. Burada vurgulanması gereken diğer bir nokta da öğretmenlerin, öğretmen yetiştiren akademisyen grupla da birlikte çalışmalarının gerekliliğidir; bu sayede öğretmenler yeni müfredatın uygulamasında karşılaşılabilecekleri herhangi bir problemi öngörebilir ve büyük olasılıkla bunun çözümüne yönelik hazırlıklı olurlar.

7. Avrupa Birliği tarafından yükseköğretimde kaliteyi arttırmaya yönelik düzenlenen komisyonların odak noktalarından biri de bir program oluştururken tüm paydaşların süreçte etkin olarak rol almasının gerekliliğidir (*Leuven Communiqué*, 2009). Öğretmenler gerek alan bilgileri gerekse tecrübeleri ile bu sürece katkıda bulunması bir anlamda zorunlu olan paydaş grubu içerisinde yer almaktadırlar.

Bu sebeplerle öğretmenler, yabancı dil müfredat geliştirme sürecinde olması gereken en güçlü paydaşlardan biridir. Teori ve uygulamayı birbirine bağlayan, köprü görevi gören kişiler olmaları nedeniyle müfredatın planlama aşamasından başlayarak her aşamasında mutlaka yer almalıdırlar. Kurumlara düşen görev, öğretmenlere gerekli hizmet-içi eğitimleri sunmak, geliştirilen ve uygulanan müfredata dair farkındalığı arttırmak adına gerekli ortamı oluşturarak düzenli olarak değerlendirme yapılabilmesine olanak sağlamaktır.