European Profiling Grid

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Eğitim hizmetlerinin kalitesini arttırmak için günümüzde eğiticilerin eğitimi giderek önem kazanmaktadır. Bu neden ile öğretmenlerin sahip oldukları vasıfların geliştirmesi ve böylece öğretim sürecinin daha etkin hale getirilmesi gerekmektedir. Bunun sağlamanın yollarından birisi öğretmenlerin kendi deneyimleri üzerinde düşünmelerini sağlayarak farkındalıklarını artırmak ve kendi yetkinliklerini değerlendirerek kişisel gelişimleri için yeni hedefler belirlemeleridir. Bu tür özdeğerlendirmenin kolay ve sistematik bir şekilde yapılmasını sağlamak amacıyla geliştirilen Dil Öğretmenleri için Avrupa Profil Tablosu, Avrupa Komisyonu tarafından desteklenen bir projenin ürünü olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Avrupa Profil Tablosu dil öğretmenlerinin temel yeterliliklerini Eğitim ve Vasıflar; Ana Öğretim Yeterliklerini; Destekleyici Yeterlilikler; Profesyonellik ana başlıkları altında değerlendirme aracıdır. Kriterler, yapabilirlik tanımları şeklinde ifade edilmiştir. Böylece özneliğin ve taraflılığın azaltılması sağlanmıştır. Hedef öğretmenlerin güçlü ve zayıf yanlarını görebilmelerini sağlayarak kişisel gelişimlerini katkıda bulunmaktır. Bu değerlendirme öğretmenin kendisi, eğitmenler ve akademik yöneticiler tarafından yapılabilmektedir. Amaç, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi süresince öğretmenlerin profesyonel gelişimlerini desteklemektir. Elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda hem bireysel hem de aynı kurumda çalışan dil öğretmenlerinin grup profili oluşturulur. Deneyimlerini, fikirlerini ve uygulamalarını paylaşacakları platformlar aracılığı ile gelişmelerini destekleyecek ortamlar oluşturulur. Bu çalışmanın amacı özellikle dil öğretmenleri için geliştirilmiş ve standartlaşmayı sağlayan Avrupa Profil Tablosunu uygulamalı bir şekilde tanıtmak; aynı zamanda kullanılan ölçek kriterlerini örnekler ile açıklamak; ve böylece öğretmen özerkliğine destekleyeceğine inanılan yeni bir aracın kullanmasını yaygınlaşmasına katkıda bulunmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Profil Tablosu:, özdeğerlendirme, yeterlilik, özerklik

INTRODUCTION

The terms teacher profiles, teacher training, advanced training and further education are becoming increasingly important in an age of educational reforms. The standardization processes in education, such as the standardization of the curricula and the Bologna process also require a standardization of the core competencies of teachers. Through these competencies, teachers can determine to what extent the teaching-learning process corresponds to the learners. The teacher with her competences is

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therefore still a key figure in learner-centered teaching and therefore, in recent years instruments have been developed that describe the competencies of teachers. This also includes the European Profile Grid (EPG) for language teachers. The focus on language teachers at the EPG sets it apart from other general instruments. Its parameters were compiled considering methodological principles of foreign language teaching, which is why it can also be viewed as a subject-specific evaluation tool. Standardization of competences in the field of foreign language teacher training is particularly important at the international level to ensure professionalization. The teaching of a foreign language takes place in most cases in a country remote from the target language country. For this reason, language teachers not only have the task of teaching language modules, but also have the responsibility to teach language actions in the foreign language. Therefore, the core competencies are composed differently for language teachers.

The EPG takes this aspect into account by analyzing the central competencies of language teachers in various development phases under subject-specific interpretations. As mentioned earlier, the quality of educational performance is closely related to the competences of the teacher. For this reason, the competencies of teachers should be developed to make the teaching process more effective. One way to achieve this is to raise teachers' awareness by thinking about their own experiences and setting new goals for their personal development, i.e. ultimately evaluate their own competencies. With a simple and systematic self-assessment and external assessment, the EPG enables you to create an individual teacher profile. Vacancies in core competencies can be found with the EPG. Determining what competence has to be developed gives the teacher the necessary clue for further and advanced training. The EPG is the result of a project supported by the European Commission. The teaching skills in development phases are assessed under the following categories: training and qualifications, key teaching competences, enabling competences and professionalization. The criteria are expressed in the form of optional descriptions. This ensures an objective assessment without bias. Recognizing their strengths and weaknesses enables language teachers to develop personally, because reflecting on their own competencies in certain areas of language teaching can help to identify goals for personal development. This assessment can be used both as a self-assessment and as an external assessment, e.g. be carried out by colleagues, managers or trainers or trainers. The aim is to support the professional development of teachers. Using the same grid, not only individual but also group profile can be observed. Platforms are created on which language teachers exchange their experiences, ideas and practices and thus promote their development.

The aim of this study is to introduce the EPG, which was specially developed for language teachers and offers standardization, to contribute to the widespread use of a new instrument. The individual categories and development phases are to be examined under the foreign language competence standard in order to show the profile of language teachers. Furthermore, this work deals with the final part of the question, what significance does the EPG have for language teachers and language institutions in Turkey? The form of self and external assessment should be focused on.

METHOD

In the present work the content analysis is used as an evaluation method. The empirical method serves for the systematic, inter-subjective and comprehensible description of content and formal characteristics (Früh, 1998). The European Profile Grid for Language Teachers is examined under foreign language teaching competence standards. The structure of the grid allows teachers to assess themselves or being assessed by a second party. Thus, they can analyze their own individual development phases.

TEACHER VARIABLES

For several decades now, the focus of foreign language research has been on learners and learner-centered teaching. In his study, for example, Roche (2005, p. 33) focuses on some learner variables regarding their influence on their success. It is a fact, however, that "many processes of foreign language learning cannot ultimately be grasped [...] without an appropriate consideration of the foreign language teacher [...]" (König, 2014 p.4). Thus, the teacher profile, which includes all factors of the teacher personality, plays an important role in teaching. These factors can be summarized under the term teacher variables. These variables consist of exogenous factors and endogenous factors. While exogenous factors consist of collective aspects of the environment such as values, norms and habits, endogenous factors include individual teacher personality (2005). They form the biography of language teaching. The living environment has a great influence on the teaching ability and willingness of language teachers. If they are held in high esteem in their society, the greater the willingness and ability to teach and vice versa. Roche (2005) refers to the infiltration of solidified routines in language acquisition as 'fossilization'. This phenomenon can also be observed in language teachers. By losing their urge to discover foreign language teaching skills and methodological innovations, they fall into old habits. The following list including the individual characteristics of learners, their learning aptitude and willingness to learn (Roche 2005, p. 33) is adapted and further developed so that profiles for teachers can be created:

➢ Goal orientation, achievement motives, future prospects, independence, ideas about one's own self-realization as a teacher (self-competence)
➢ Vitality
➢ Acceptance of openness towards innovative methods (tolerance of ambiguity and willingness to take risks)
➢ Fear
➢ Extroversion/Introversion
➢ Dependence on a rule orientation
➢ Reflexivity and impulsiveness
➢ Absorption capacity from the environment
➢ Ability to teach analytically and holistically (holistic), retentiveness
➢ Empathy (ability to feel with others)
➢ Social attitudes towards people of one's own and foreign cultures, xenophobia or xenophobia
➢ Integrative motivation to adapt to a foreign culture
➢ Settings for learning in general
➢ Preferences for the characteristics of certain recording channels (visual, analytical, haptic type and similar)
➢ Attitudes towards teaching and learners
➢ Ability and readiness for critical thinking and self-reflection (critical competence)
➢ Attitudes towards the foreign language and its teaching
➢ Emotion, moods, temperament (affective factors)

Other factors that influence the teacher personality and thus the language teaching are, on the one hand, the teaching tradition, life experience and age on the other. The term teaching tradition is used to describe culture-specific and individual preferences that influence teaching behavior. The understanding of education in a society, which is formed by country-specific educational policies, determines both learning and teaching behavior. Life experience and age can have both negative and positive effects on teaching behavior. For example, the accumulation of knowledge and the automation of teaching strategies, as well as routine can simplify language teaching whereas these automations and routines can lead to a lack of acceptance and openness towards innovative methods.

This openness is needed, however, because "teaching a foreign language [means] a lifelong and challenging learning process for teachers in their diverse contexts" (Ende & Mohr, 2019, p.166). The promotion of the professionalization of language teachers and their competences, through further education and training events, is therefore indispensable. To identify competence deficits, an instrument such as the European Profile Grid for Language Teachers is needed, which is described in more detail in the following section.

THE EUROPEAN PROFILE GRID FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS

The world is constantly changing. This change must be countered with innovations and reforms. They cover all areas of life. The individual parameters shift in line with the change. This change also took place in the education system- frontal teaching replaced by interactive learning and practice orientation instead of dry theory teaching. Teacher-centered teaching recedes into the background. The aim of modern teaching is to be learner-centered, i.e. the autonomy of the learner should be guaranteed. For this reason, research has focused more on the learner personality. As a result of the reforms, the teacher personality and teaching skills are being included more in the didactic discussion, because "despite all the media used in foreign language teaching today, the teacher remains the decisive representative of the foreign language for the student and thus influences the student's attitude towards the foreign language. (Schiffler, 2012, p. 17) There is, thus, a correlation between teaching skills and the effectiveness of teaching.

The European Profile Grid for Language Teachers for Language Teachers was developed to assess central foreign language teaching skills over six development phases. The foreign language being taught plays no role here, because the aim of the EPG is to support language teachers in their professional development (North et. al. 2013, p. 3). The assessment of teaching competences can take place in the form of self-assessment as well as in the form of foreign language assessment. The pilot profile grid was carried out as a project by national and international educational institutions in the years 2011-2013 with the support of the European Commission. By answering the 'can-do' questions, language teachers are able to identify weaknesses and strengths through their own teaching skills. The criteria of the can-do descriptions guarantee objectivity, because in most cases it is difficult for many individuals to judge self-critically, i.e. to name their own deficits. The EPG helps language teachers to identify their own competence progression. It thus serves for personal and professional development. The EPG is based on a total of eight principles and assumptions, which are paraphrased here.

- ➢ The principle of competence orientation
  Through can-do descriptions, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, existing competences of language teachers can be made visible in certain developmental phases.
- ➢ The incremental character of the descriptors
  There are a total of six development phases, which are grouped to three major phases. They again relate to the language teachers' professional practice categories: Training & Qualifications, Key Teaching Competences, Enabling Competences and Professionalization. Thirteen sub-categories are assigned to these four categories. Each phase presupposes the previous one and builds on it.
- ➢ The principle of self-assessment and external assessment
  The EPG's criteria grid makes it possible to carry out self-assessments more easily and systematically. Likewise, external assessments can also be used to identify training needs.
- ➢ The principle of reflection

Reflections on self- or external assessments can help to identify possible further training needs, so that they can be met by appropriate training or further education events.

➢ The principle of multilingualism

Language and culture are in a complementary relationship. They develop together during socialization and shape human existence. Due to this predominant complementary relationship, the acquisition of a second or foreign language enables the insight into further cultural dimensions, which are initially inconspicuous to humans. For this reason, every language teacher also needs intercultural teaching skills.

➢ The need for common European standards for language teaching

The EPG helps with standardization and professionalization

➢ The need for continuous professional development

Lifelong learning requires a continuous development of the teacher. To ensure quality assurance in teaching, it is necessary to adapt to reforms and innovations. This can be ensured by further education or training events according to individual competence requirements.

➢ The open character of the profile grid

The EPG is used for orientation and to determine competence needs. It does not serve for grading or criticism. It is rather a signpost for those who want to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses to be able to start in the right place.

RESULTS OF THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

In the following tables, the individual categories and developmental phases under the foreign language teaching competence standard will be examined in order to define the profile of language teachers as understood by the EPG. At this point it should be mentioned that the individual development phases are summarized in terms of content to determine the range of measures and indicators.

Table 1: *The profile grid for self-assessment or assessment by others: qualification/experience (cf. North et. al. 2013, p. 6)*

		Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2
Training & Qualifications	**Language proficiency**	In can-do statements, the language teacher is given identification possibilities regarding their language knowledge and language skills. Language teachers have opportunity to assess their competence by passing university degrees, language tests and language certificates starting at B2 to C2 levels.					
	Education/Training	Certificates and university degrees allow language teachers to determine what stage of training or qualification they are in.					
	Assessed teaching	From feedback from colleagues, observations of individual teaching units, passed teaching experiments to documented teaching units, language teachers can determine their competence at the appropriate stage of development.					
	Teaching experience	Proof of teaching experience is provided by the teaching units carried out to date at the individual levels under different teaching and learning contexts.					

Table 2: *The profile grid for self- or external assessment: central teaching competencies (cf. North et al. 2013, p. 6)*

		Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2
Key teaching skills	Methodology	The level of knowledge of language acquisition theories, teaching methods and techniques and the right choice; development of learning materials determines the developmental phase in which language teachers find themselves.					
	Lesson and course planning	The extent to which language teachers can create lesson plans, link lessons, adapt curricula to learning needs and carry out course and lesson planning determines the development phase in which language teachers find themselves.					
	Interaction management and monitoring	The control of interactions is measured by criteria such as simple guidance, switching between social forms, task-oriented action, and internally differentiated work.					
	Assessment	The development phase of the evaluation competence is based on the criteria: Learning objectives monitoring, learning progress tests, feedback on identified weaknesses and strengths, coordination and development of placement tests, examiner training according to the CEFR.					

Table 3: *The profile grid for self- or external assessment: Overarching competences (cf. North et al. 2013, p. 7)*

		Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2
Enabling competences	Intercultural competence	The understanding of the mutual relationship between language and culture, the knowledge of stereotypes and the handling of cultural misunderstandings determine the development phase.					
	Language awareness	The use of correct language forms and language usage in the context of levels A1-C2 provides information about the individual level of development.					
	Digital media	The ability to use digital media, set online tasks and independently create Moodle platforms are criteria that determine the development phase.					

Table 4: *The profile grid for self- or external assessment: professionalization (cf. North et. al. 2013, p. 7)*

		Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2
Professionaliza-tion	Professional conduct	The extent to which language teachers are prepared to develop professionally is determined by the development phase.					
	Administration	The willingness and ability to coordinate administrative tasks, such as organizing teacher conferences or course evaluations, provide information about the development phase.					

Teaching skills and qualifications increase gradually in the various stages of development, i.e. from inexperienced to professional language teachers or trainers. A teacher profile is created by determining the capability descriptions for each category and development phase. The profile can be displayed graphically in a diagram which can also demonstrate further development or progression. An interactive version in nine languages, the EPG-Digital, gives the possibility to save data about the individual teacher profile and can be accessed at any time. Due to its easy handling and language selection, the EPG contributes greatly to the standardization and professionalization of language teachers.

Developing the quality of education mostly depends on developing the quality of teachers. Therefore, it is very essential to determine teacher competences as well as the extent teachers possess these competences and to provide teachers opportunities for self-development. In that sense, the EPG is the key to help language teachers see their strengths and weaknesses and thus support their professional development. It aims to increase the quality and efficiency of both pre-service and in-service education and professional development. It allows language teachers to figure out their current professional development phase and raises awareness on their potential development. In short, it serves as a needs analysis to plan some in-service training programs.

CONCLUDING REMARK

After an extensive content analysis of the EPG, it can be considered that this instrument is suitable for determining the competency needs of language teachers. When designing the profile grid, foreign language competencies were taken into account, which is why the EPG can also be viewed as a subject-specific instrument. It does not matter which foreign language is taught. The EPG can be carried out in nine languages and is gaining importance at an international level. Any language barriers are thus removed. Through the own or third-party evaluation of teaching skills, language teachers gain their own profile. They can understand their current status in the professional development phase and recognize their skills need development. By answering optional descriptions, a neutral assessment is ensured because they are not critical. This uncritical way of self-assessment is important for the Turkish language teachers because self-criticism is very rarely practiced due to the culture-specific background and the external criticism is mostly not constructive. This tool enables Turkish language teachers to create their own profile in accordance with European standards.

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Extended Abstract: The terms teacher profiles, teacher training, advanced training and further education are becoming increasingly important in an age of educational reforms. The standardization processes in education, such as the standardization of the curricula and the Bologna process also require a standardization of the core competencies of teachers. Through these competences, teachers can determine to what extent the teaching-learning process corresponds to the learners. The teacher with her competences is therefore still a key figure in learner-centered teaching and therefore, in recent years instruments have been developed that describe the competencies of teachers. This also includes the European Profile Grid (EPG) for language teachers. The focus on language teachers at the EPG sets them apart from other general instruments. Their parameters were compiled considering methodological principles of foreign language teaching, which is why it can also be viewed as a subject-specific evaluation tool. Standardization of competences in the field of foreign language teacher training is particularly important at the international level in to ensure professionalization. The teaching of a foreign language takes place in most cases in a country remote from the target language country. For this reason, language teachers not only have the task of teaching language modules, but also have the responsibility to teach language actions in the foreign language. Therefore, the core competencies are composed differently for language teachers.

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The aim of this study is to present an example of the EPG, which was specially developed for language teachers and offers standardization, to contribute to the widespread use of a new instrument. The individual categories and development phases are to be examined under the foreign language competence standard to show the profile of language teachers. Furthermore, this work deals with the final part of the question, what significance does the EPG have for language teachers and language institutions in Turkey? The form of self and external assessment should be focused on.

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Key Words: *European Profiling Grid, self-assessment, competence, autonomy*