

Geliş Tarihi / Received Date
30.03.2034

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted Date
10.04.2023

Foreign Language Teaching in Secondary Schools in Germany and Turkey: A Comparative Study

Almanya ve Türkiye'de Ortaokullarda Yabancı Dil Öğretimi: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma

Ceyda YALÇIN¹
Çağlar DEMİR²

Abstract

It is known that foreign language teaching has become an increasingly important element with the globalizing world. While some countries have reached a higher level in foreign language teaching, some cannot reach the level of success they want. Understanding the foreign language teaching quality of countries is possible by knowing how they shape their education systems. In this study, the secondary school foreign language education systems of Germany and Turkey were examined comparatively. In doing so, education policy, foreign languages taught, curriculum, weekly foreign language course hours, teaching methods and teaching materials were discussed. In this study, the secondary school foreign language education systems of Germany and Turkey were examined comparatively. While doing this, education policy, foreign languages taught, curriculum, weekly foreign language course hours, teaching methods and teaching materials were discussed. The aim is to reveal differences and similarities by comparing education systems and to determine which factors make these schools successful in foreign language education. The aim is to reveal differences and similarities by comparing education systems and to determine which factors make these schools successful in foreign language education. Document analysis method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. Literature review, documentation and text analysis were used to collect data. According to the findings of the study, both Germany and Turkey have adopted the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, English as the first foreign language has an important place in the curriculum and the lessons consist of current issues about life. When it comes to differences, it was determined that the curriculum in Germany changed from state to state, more time was allocated to foreign language course hours than in Turkey, and it is richer than the curriculum in

¹ Sorumlu Yazar; Dr., Kayseri/TÜRKİYE, E-mail: ceydayalcin55@gmail.com ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4530-2830

² Dr., Balıkesir Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Yabancı Diller Bölümü, E-mail: erkandemir508@hotmail.com, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3447-9596



Turkey in terms of teaching materials. In addition, with both countries emphasis on communicative approach and communicative skills, it has been determined that the grammar translation method is still applied in schools in Turkey, while Germany has made more progress in foreign language teaching by adopting an action-oriented approach and communicative skills.

Keywords: Foreign Language Teaching, Secondary School, Germany, Turkey, Education System.

Öz

Yabancı dil öğretiminin küreselleşen dünyayla birlikte giderek daha önemli bir unsur haline geldiği bilinmektedir. Bazı ülkeler yabancı dil öğretiminde daha ileri bir seviyeye ulaşmışken, bazıları istediği başarı seviyesine ulaşamamaktadır. Ülkelerin yabancı dil öğretim kalitesini anlamak, eğitim sistemlerini nasıl şekillendirdiklerini bilmekle mümkündür. Bu çalışmada Almanya'nın ve Türkiye'nin ortaokul yabancı dil eğitim sistemleri karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmiştir. Bunu yaparken eğitim politikası, öğretilen yabancı diller, müfredat, haftalık yabancı dil ders saatleri, öğretim metotları ve öğretim materyalleri ele alınmıştır. Amaç eğitim sistemlerini karşılaştırarak farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri ortaya çıkarmak ve bu okulları yabancı dil eğitiminde hangi faktörlerin başarılı kıldığını belirleyebilmektir. Çalışmada nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında literatür taraması, dokümantasyon ve metin incelemesi yapılmıştır. Çalışmada elde edilen bulgulara göre, iki ülkenin ortaokul yabancı dil eğitim sistemindeki benzer noktalara bakıldığında, hem Almanya'nın hem Türkiye'nin Diller için Ortak Avrupa Referans Çerçevesini benimsediği, birinci yabancı dil olarak İngilizcenin müfredatta önemli bir yer tuttuğu ve derslerin hayata dair güncel konulardan oluştuğu tespit edilmiştir. Farklılıklara gelindiğinde Almanya'da müfredatın eyaletten eyalete değiştiği, yabancı dil ders saatlerine Türkiye'den daha fazla zaman ayrıldığı ve öğretim materyallerinin Türkiye'ye göre daha zengin olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca her iki ülkenin iletişimsel yaklaşıma ve iletişimsel becerilere önem vermesiyle birlikte, Türkiye'deki okullarda dilbilgisi çeviri yönteminin hala uygulandığı, Almanya'nın ise eylem odaklı yaklaşımı ve iletişimsel becerileri benimseyerek yabancı dil öğretiminde daha fazla ilerleme kaydettiği saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı Dil Öğretimi, Ortaokul, Almanya, Türkiye, Eğitim Sistemi.

Introduction

Many factors play a role in shaping the education systems in Germany and Turkey. One of these factors is the management styles of the countries. Since the Federal Republic of Germany (Ehmke, 2006) consists of 16 states, there are 16 separate Ministries of Education. Individual states are authorized for schools and education. Despite the differences between the states, there is a basic consensus and a holistic basic structure in the education system. On the other hand, there is only one ministry responsible for education in Turkey.

In Germany, after four years of primary school education, students are directed to three different types of secondary schools according to their achievement: Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium (Krause-Ono, 2008: 1). Transitions to these schools are made at the end of the 4th year of secondary school, during the orientation phase of the 5th and 6th years, or at the end of the 6th year. In the 4th grade, the parents of the students are informed about the secondary level I schools. Parents and class teachers decide together about which of these schools students will attend (MEB, 2020: 23). In this

sense, the system in Germany differs from the system in Turkey. Because in Turkish public schools, there is only one type of secondary school, except for Imam-Hatip Secondary Schools.

In Germany, after primary school, the most successful students are admitted to Gymnasium, the lower level students to Haupschule and the middle level students to Realschule (Krause-Ono, 2008: 1). Realschule prepares moderately successful students for a more qualified vocational education (MEB, 2020: 23). Since Germany has a federal system of government, each state has its own education and syllabus. This is why, the secondary schools (Realschulen) across the states can sometimes have different characteristics, but in essence, they all have the same structure. Realschule type schools offer students a 6-year education. This education (KMK, 2019) covers the period from grade 5 to grade 10. During the training period, students receive extended general education that enables them to continue their vocational and qualification training.

In Turkey, with the new law adopted in 2012, compulsory education was increased to 12 years and the new 4+4+4 Education System was adopted. In this system of primary school, secondary school and high schools, secondary school education covers the time after the first four years, i.e. from Grade 5 to Grade 8. The system in public secondary schools in Turkey is the same across the country (Akbaşlı & Üredi, 2014).

This study focuses on Realschule, which can be considered as the closest to secondary schools in Turkey, and foreign language teaching in these schools. Because Realschule (Koçak & Çobanoğulları, 2016: 164-166) can be considered equivalent to secondary schools in Turkey, although they do not have exactly the same characteristics. It has been a well-known fact that foreign language teaching in Turkey has not fully achieved its goal and has been unsuccessful in language teaching for years. The education system is seen as one of the reasons for this situation (Yalçın, 2020: 378). In this sense, it is thought that a detailed examination and comparison of the secondary foreign language education systems of the two countries will contribute to the literature. In the study, answers to six sub-problems were sought based on a basic research question:

- 1) What are the similarities and differences between the foreign language teaching policies implemented in secondary schools in Turkey and Germany in terms of objectives and functioning?
 - a) What are the foreign language teaching policies of Germany and Turkey?
 - b) What are the foreign languages that are taught?
 - c) What syllabus is adopted in Germany and Turkey?
 - d) How many language course hours are spent a week?
 - e) Which teaching methods are used?
 - f) What are the language teaching materials?

Method

As a qualitative research method, document analysis method is used in this study as it is aimed at determining the differences and similarities about foreign language education in Germany and Turkey



secondary schools in terms of foreign languages taught, syllabus, and language course hours a week, language policies, teaching goals and teaching materials. Document analysis can be applied to qualitative case studies-intensive researches that creates rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organization or program (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Merriam (1988) pointed out, 'Documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem' (p. 118). Understandably, documents may be the only source of data necessary for studies designed within an interpretive paradigm, or they may be the only applicable source (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis is of significance in doing the research for it not only helps the researcher collect data and prepare a report but also analyze the data and come up with concrete solutions regarding the problem.

Data Collection

In this study, literature review, documentation and text review were used in order to collect data. Turkish Secondary Education English Course Teaching Program and Guidelines (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Grades) were examined. German Language Teaching Program and related articles in the body of literature were examined in terms of foreign language teaching policies, syllabus, teaching methods and teaching materials. Any document related to the research topic such as, course drafts, course books, programs In selection of documents can be utilized in the field of education (Chandra, 2004).

Findings

Policy and teaching goals

The significance of a foreign language in Europe was widely accepted after the 1950s, and after this date, significant developments recorded in foreign language education. Political events have generally had great effects on foreign language teaching (Tok, 2006: 40). The Council of Europe (CoE), established in 1949, has always encouraged language education (Krause-Ono, 2008: 3).

In 1955, the introduction of the first foreign language (English) teaching at secondary level in Germany was enabled by the agreement on harmonization in school systems, known as the Düsseldorf Agreement. In 1964, the first foreign language became compulsory in all secondary education institutions. Since then, two foreign languages have been taught in schools from the seventh grade. A second foreign language is also available as an elective course in Realschule (Tok, 2006: 40). Since the 1970s, the Council of Europe's projects have placed an emphasis on language education and diversification in language learning for democratic citizenship, increasingly addressing the social and political dimensions of language learning. In 1991, the European Language Portfolio was introduced. In 2001, a comprehensive language tool called the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was introduced (Krause-Ono, 2008: 3).

Foreign language teaching in Germany today is based on the CEFR, which formulates the objectives and strategies for language acquisition and language use (Decke-Cornill & Küster, 2010: 147). The CEFR provides common reference levels (A1-C2) and a comprehensive system of language proficiency. It presents also curriculum design options to promote multilingual and intercultural education (Council of Europe, 2018: 25). The purpose of CEFR is to help language teachers to enhance the effectiveness of

language learning and teaching. It brings a new and powerful vision for the student and promotes teaching and learning of languages as a means of communication (Council of Europe, 2020: 28). The document specifies the competencies necessary for communication, the relevant knowledge and skills, and the communication situations and areas comprehensively (Krause-Ono, 2008: 4). The CEFR determines reference points for the competence levels to be aimed for in the Realschule. At the end of secondary level I, learners of English (usually the first foreign language in Germany) as a foreign language should measure themselves against the criteria of competence level B1 (Hessisches Kultusministerium, 2021: 4).

The goals pursued by foreign language teaching today are closely related to the proficiency orientation that characterizes the current education policy (Jung, 2015: 80). The EU foreign language policy predicts that every European citizen should learn two or more foreign languages besides their mother tongue during the compulsory education process. Individual learning, benefiting from developing media opportunities and acquiring the necessary linguistic skills at all levels are among the main purposes (Gündoğdu, 2005: 122-123).

The objective of German curriculum is to gain a certain level of competence in four skills, writing, reading, speaking and listening, as well as grammar and vocabulary. Learning output is more important than learning input. This is because German foreign language policy prioritizes competences over content or topics. It also aims at successful communication supported by media literacy, society and culture. Students are required to be capable of understanding simple texts/literary texts and everyday conversations (Gruber & Hopwood, 2022: 3-6).

Turkish Ministry of National education has made significant changes in foreign language policy for the last two decades. It was determined that English language would be in the fourth grade in 1998 and to reduce it to the second grade of primary school in the 2013-2014 academic year. English lessons started in the fifth grade in primary and secondary schools (Demir, 2021).

University students could choose French or German till 1994, by taking into account which foreign language they had studied in their high school education. However, in the course of time, English has become the first foreign language in Turkish education. Because most of the students do not prefer to choose German and French to learn as foreign languages at the university level, they were not included in the curriculum. English is offered as a compulsory course.

To develop communicative skills students are expected to gain through integrated skills is one of the objectives of the English curriculum of Grades 6 to 8. The 1997 curriculum introduced the concept of communicative approach to English language teaching (Kırkgöz, 2005). The aim of the language teaching policy is to enable students to develop communicative performance to help them use the target language for speaking purposes in classroom activities. The curriculum develops student-centered learning. English teacher is a facilitator in the learning process. Teachers help students develop linguistic performance, and nurture positive attitudes towards English language learning. Meanwhile, the students are expected to be well-prepared and play an active role in the learning process (Kırkgöz, 2007).



According to results of the study done by Çelebi and Narinalp (2020), English teachers in Turkey state that physical atmosphere is not appropriate for English teaching, examination system has a negative impact on English teaching, students are not well-prepared before the lesson, curriculum and course books do not meet the learning needs of the students, teachers are not given enough in service training, MEB does not provide affective solutions for all these problems.

Foreign languages that are taught

Although the curriculum and foreign languages taught, differ from one state to another in Germany, mostly similar languages are taught in the country. Foreign language teaching is compulsory at Secondary Level I. Anyone aiming to obtain a Realschule certificate of completion must be learning a foreign language from the 5th grade onwards (Bliesener, 1998: 6). It can be stated that the amount of foreign language courses offered in secondary school is directly related to the level of school-leaving qualifications. There are also at least two foreign languages to choose from in Realschule (Finkbeiner, 2003: 204).

The first foreign language taught in Realschules in Germany is usually English (Koçak & Çobanoğulları, 2016: 169). It is also possible that in some schools, French is offered as the first foreign language in the curriculum along with English (SenBJV Berlin, 2018). From the 7th and 8th grades, students can take elective courses according to their interests and abilities. These include a second foreign language course. French is usually taught as a second foreign language (MEB, 2020: 24-25). Languages in the curriculum of secondary schools in Germany are Czech, Danish, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese, Dutch, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Turkish, Chinese, Ancient Greek, Ancient Hebrew and Latin 2002 (Tok, 2006: 37). Latin is taught as a second foreign language in some schools (Finkbeiner, 2003: 205). In addition to the languages mentioned above, languages such as Modern Greek are also included in the curriculum of some cities, such as Berlin (SenBJV Berlin, 2018).

In Turkey, English is the first foreign language taught in Turkish-medium secondary education institutions. Class hours allocated for English teaching, the quality of teaching, teaching materials, qualification of English teachers differ from school to school (Kırkgöz, 2005). Besides, German is taught as the first foreign language in 32 Anatolian High Schools and 4 Super High Schools. However, since the beginning of the 90s, new graduates of secondary schools have not been assigned German teachers, so there has been a shortage of teachers (Karatepe, 2005). Different from Germany, French is not taught in secondary schools in Turkey as second language. However, it is seen that French is taken as an elective course, especially in language departments and super high school sections of high schools. Karatepe (2005) maintains that German is selected as a second language in private universities while the students in public university do not tend to choose German as a second language due to the fact that it is not offered to students in compulsory status.

Syllabus

In the agreement of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education (KMK) on the types of schools and courses of education in the lower secondary level from December 1993 in the currently valid

version, a common time frame for grades 5 to 9/10 is set. In this way, a common subject core is created for all types of school (KMK, 2019: 127).

When we look at the courses in the Realschule curriculum in detail, German, Foreign Language (usually English), Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Politics, Music, Painting, Sports and Religion are taught as the basic courses. In addition, there are elective courses in the 7th and 8th grades, which may vary by state. Students take elective courses according to their interests and abilities. Among the elective courses, there is also French as a second foreign language (MEB, 2020: 25). Courses such as music, painting, physical education and ethics can be offered as optional or compulsory courses (KMK, 2019: 128). Mathematics, German and the first foreign language have a special importance among the courses taught in Realschule (Hessisches Kultusministerium, 2016).

Each federal state in Germany decides on its own curriculum. However, the thematic focus of the curricula is significantly identical. Foreign language lessons include topics such as; friendship, leisure, school life, technology, volunteering, social media (Gruber & Hopwood, 2022: 3), family life, hobbies, daily routine, weather and seasons, birthday celebrations, holidays, shopping, body parts, health and illness, clothing and fashion, traffic, navigation, work and occupation, youth problems (Hessisches Kultusministerium, 2021: 7-8).

When Turkish education in secondary school is analyzed, it is seen that it provides the students with the compulsory courses, Turkish, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Turkish Revolution History and Atatürkism, Foreign Language, Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge, Visual Arts, Religion, Music, Physical Education and Sports, Technology & Design (MEB, 2021). Besides, various elective courses are also taken by secondary schoolers, such as Reading Skills, Writing and Writing Skills, Living Languages and Dialects, Communication and Presentation Skills, Foreign Languages (Decision of the Council of Ministers), Science and Mathematics, Science Applications, Math Applications, Environmental Education, Information Technologies and Software, Arts & Sports, Visual Arts (MEB, 2021). These courses allow students to explore their intellectual curiosity and broaden their area of exposure to a variety of topics (Sample, 2018).

It is noteworthy that Turkish ministry of education took some significant decisions about English teaching programs in the state schools and focused on innovative teaching methods and course contents in accordance with Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in 2018. In the curriculum development, two issues were given significance, such as communicative approach and values education, which was integrated implicitly (MEB, 2018). These values are friendship, justice, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love, responsibility, patriotism, altruism (Yaman, 2019). Foreign language lessons include topics such as; movies, part time, festivals, downtown, at the fair, friendship, the internet tourism, natural forces. Themes such as my family, my city, sports and friends are covered in English lessons to 'relate to students' daily lives and to emphasize that English is a real communication tool rather than an academic exercise, taking into account students' age and developmental level' (Kırkgöz et al., 2016).



Language course hours a week

At the secondary level in Germany, basic teaching hours are usually from 7.30/8.30 to 13.30 (Monday to Friday). Weekly teaching time in the compulsory and compulsory elective field is generally 28 to 30 hours per week for all school types. Grades 7-10 usually have 30 to 32 hours of lessons per week, with each lesson being 45 minutes (KMK, 2019: 126). Three to five hours per week are allocated to first foreign language lessons. Depending on the type of school, three to five hours a week are allocated for the second foreign language as a compulsory or elective course starting from the 7th grade at the latest (KMK, 2019: 128).

Foreign language education in schools in Turkey started in the 2nd grade of primary school in 2012. In the first 3 years, 2 hours of foreign language education per week and 4 hours per week in the 5th-8th grades in the second level were compulsorily included in the education programs. The class hours are 2 lessons (2x40=80 minutes) hours per week from primary school 2nd grade to 4th grade, 3 lessons (3x40=120) hours in 5th and 6th grades of secondary school, and 4 lessons (4x40=160 minutes) hours in 7th and 8th grades. Thus, students take a total of 140 hours of English lessons in 7 years during their primary and secondary school education (Aydoğmuş & Kurnaz, 2017).

Teaching methods

For Germany, language learning is based on the methodological message of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This message emphasizes real-life communication skills (Level A1-C2). Although the CEFR does not mention a specific method of teaching, it advocates that the teaching and learning process should be action-oriented. The action-oriented approach of CEFR represents a purpose-built curriculum for real-world tasks. The CEFR appreciates language as a means of communication, not a subject of study (Council of Europe, 2020: 28-29).

Learning English or French in the fifth or sixth grade in secondary schools in Germany should also be action-oriented and communicative. Despite the time pressure from the curriculum and textbooks, it is important to integrate the orientation of real communication and action into the lessons. As a requirement of the action, more time is given to project work. In addition, forms of study such as language games, pictures, detective activities and creative writing are used. Students are linguistically active and engage in meaningful activities with language (Jung, 2015: 73-74). Basic skills such as independent study, research, exchange of ideas and mutual agreement form the framework of education. Project lessons, professional experience and presentation techniques are the basic elements of the course that support these basic skills (Ehmke, 2006).

In Turkey, English language education in the primary, secondary and high schools is based on grammar translation method (Tepav, 2013), although the ELT curriculum was revised in 2005 in order to improve the English language-teaching program prescribed by the 1997 curriculum. The communicative approach and constructivist approach were taken into consideration in 2005 teaching programme. The use of tasks, and application of Multiple Intelligences Theory, Neuro-linguistic programming, experiential learning and content- and language-integrated learning were used to support this

programme and Turkey's ELT curriculum was integrated with the European Union's language teaching standards (Kırkgöz et al., 2016).

The English Teaching Program for Primary & Secondary Schools prepared by MEB (2018) is rich in content, such as songs, poems, stories, websites fairy tales, podcasts, advertisements, food and menus. MEB also focused on engaging activities to enhance students' foreign language learning. For instance, drawing, pantomime, guessing, storytelling, the use of arts and crafts, labelling were presented in the programme (Çulha, 2018).

Language teaching materials

When we look at the Realschule curricula in Germany, textbooks and workbooks come first among the materials used in foreign language courses. Some of these books may also have Audio-CDs. In addition, it has been determined that materials such as online audio workbook and dictionary (bilingual) are usually used (Realschule Westerburg, 2022). Many auxiliary materials are also used in foreign language courses. These are didactic and simple original texts, practical texts, letters, e-mails, postcards, diaries, text messages; invitations, advertisements, posters, flyers, information boards, presentations; narrative and landscape texts; lyric texts: songs, poems; illustrated stories; audio and video clips (MSB NRW, 2021: 20) and posters, comics, photos, simple graphics and authentic materials. There is also a large number of written materials that both teachers and students can access free of charge over the internet (ISB, 2022).

In Turkey, '5th grade English Course Curriculum, two different books have been determined as English 5 (Yalçın et al., 2019) and Happy English 5 (Ceylan et al., 2019), which were decided to be taught at the 5th grade level of public schools in the 2020-2021 academic year by the Board of Education (TTKB). As a result of the interviews with the teachers and the observations made by the researcher, it was found that foreign language teachers mostly carry out their lessons with the activities in the textbook, sometimes use ready-made materials that are related to the subject, but do not make a preliminary preparation in an effort to appeal to all learning styles (Ertürk & Üstündağ, 2007). In addition, smart boards, posters, visual aids, brochures and postcards, songs, stories, websites and podcasts are used as auxiliary materials and tools (Kırbaş, 2018).

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the foreign language education systems of Realschules in Germany and secondary schools in Turkey are examined and compared. The educational policy of the schools, foreign languages that are taught, syllabus, weekly foreign language course hours, teaching methods and teaching materials were analyzed.

Germany and Turkey take Common European Framework of Reference for Languages-CEFR and focus on real World of language and include true to life topics in the syllabus. It should be emphasized that the syllabus of both countries is based on thematic approach. On the other hand, the curriculum varies from state to state in Germany while it is applied in all schools in Turkey. There are institutions in Germany, however, which are responsible for preventing inequalities in education by taking into account the differences between the States. In this respect, although Germany is composed of many



states, it has been determined that a holistic structure is aimed in the education system in terms of both quantity and quality. When the literature is examined, differences and some similarities draw attention in the curricula of Turkey and other European countries. Şahin & Aykaç (2019: 590) who compared the primary school foreign language teaching programs of Turkey and European countries found that the program prepared in Turkey was implemented throughout the country, but that countries such as Austria, Finland, the Netherlands and Poland, including Germany, could organize their own programs. England has a central education system similar to Turkey (Gruber & Hopwood, 2022: 3). On the other hand, Aslan (2016: 42) stated that the curricula of Germany, Turkey and the Netherlands differ in terms of content presentation. While the German and Dutch curricula give teachers more freedom in lesson planning, the content of the English curriculum in Turkey is detailed and teachers are obliged to follow this program.

Mathematics and English are of considerable significance in both countries' syllabus. It should also be noted that values education in Turkey has been integrated in English lessons implicitly, friendship, justice, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love. Meanwhile, communication is given special emphasis in foreign language education policies of Germany and Turkey. When other studies are examined, it is seen that the content in the primary school foreign language curriculum in EU countries and Turkey is based on the daily life of the child. However, Şahin & Aykaç (2019: 591) concluded that the content selection of the German, Austrian, Netherlands, Finland English Curriculum is student-centered, while the English Language Curriculum in Turkey is language-centered. Comparing the foreign language education system of Turkey and EU countries, Tok (2006) argued that the foreign language course should be student-centered and that the activities should be done in an environment that prioritizes motivation and verbal language.

A foreign language can only be learnt well if it is practiced many times in a day. In that regard, language course hours in education system play pivotal role in determining the language achievement of the students. In Turkey, the class hours are 2 lessons (2x40=80 minutes) hours per week from primary school 2nd grade to 4th grade, 3 lessons (3x40=120) hours in 5th and 6th grades of secondary school, and 4 lessons (4x40=160 minutes) hours in 7th and 8th grades, which is not sufficient for foreign language acquisition. Compared to class hours in first foreign language education in secondary schools in Turkey, Germany allocates more time, three to five hours per week. Depending on the type of school, three to five hours a week are allocated for the second foreign language as a compulsory or elective course starting from the 7th grade at the latest. There is no doubt that the duration of exposition to a language directly promotes language learning. Similarly, Şahin & Aykaç (2019: 590) emphasizing in their studies that the number of foreign language lesson hours in Turkey are less, stated that the foreign language lesson hours, which are taught for 2 hours a week in primary schools, are less than in other countries.

This study also shows that teaching methods used in foreign language education in Turkey was revised and communicative method was given emphasis in the curriculum. However, as it is stated in TEPAV's report, grammar translation method, which has no effect in developing communication skills of language learners, is still used in English lessons in secondary and high schools. When the methods

implemented in English classes in secondary schools in Germany are analyzed, the focus is on communication. An action-oriented approach is followed in the lessons. In order to develop communication skills of the students, engaging classroom environment is created by making use of language games, pictures, detective activities and creative writing. Language learning is not taken as a study but as a means of communication. Aslan (2016) expressed another issue about the methods and techniques applied in foreign language education in his study. According to Aslan (2016: 42), the teaching process of countries such as Germany and the Netherlands are clearly stated in terms of methods and techniques. Turkey, on the other hand, has listed the methods and techniques used in the English program, but there is no explanation as to where and how to use them.

In terms of language teaching materials used in language classes, both of the countries make use of technology, internet resources, course book, songs, stories, visual aids, posters. Other studies in the literature also support that the materials recommended for the education of foreign language programs in both Turkey and EU countries are in line with the latest technology (Tok, 2006). However, it should be specified that language learning in Germany is enriched with online audio workbook, presentations, e-mails, diaries, written materials accessed via internet, simple graphics, cartoons and diaries. In this regard, Gruber & Hopwood (2022: 6) stated that the German curriculum emphasizes more the value of dealing with age-appropriate tasks and materials and adapted original materials. Students are expected to be able to make cultural comparisons and have a new cultural perspective. While there are goals for socio-cultural elements, understanding cultures and multilingualism in the programs of EU countries, such goals are less common in Turkey's curriculum (Şahin & Aykaç, 2019: 590-591). It is clear that the secondary schools in Germany are exposed to language with more teaching materials in longer class hours when compared with the ones who are educated in secondary schools in Turkey.

The fact that education in Germany is different in each state has led to a competition between the states to be better. Thus, education policies and the education system in Germany are constantly being improved (Koçak & Çobanoğulları, 2016: 174) In this sense, Turkey should follow Germany's example. In addition, Ehmke (2006) emphasized that the most important point of overlap in the education systems of the two countries is the 12-year duration of education. He also stated that Turkey needs to create an education system that covers the whole country and does not have gender differentiation, while Germany, as a country of immigration, has to develop integration opportunities in language and social sphere.

In conclusion, Turkey and Germany have made innovative changes in the curriculum to improve the primary and secondary school students' foreign language, English as a first foreign language for the last decade. It is clear that although there have been changes in the Turkish curriculum, communication skills need to be improved with more lesson hours and student-centered approach. That is to say, students should be exposed to language with engaging activities, such as pair and group works to acquire the foreign language. In that respect, Germany has made progress in language teaching by implementing action-oriented and communicative approach. This study is of significance in terms of mapping out a new route for language education in Turkey. Foreign language education in Germany, teaching materials, lesson hours, syllabus, and teaching methods can be taken as a model to come up



with considerable improvements in English lessons in Turkish schools. This study can contribute to further studies, such as the applicability of the action-oriented approach in foreign language education in secondary schools in Turkey.

Author Contribution

1st author: 50%, 2nd author: 50%, contributed to the study.

Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no financial conflict of interest with any institution, organization, person related to our article titled "Foreign Language Teaching in Secondary Schools in Germany and Turkey: A Comparative Study". There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Küreselleşen dünyayla birlikte yabancı dil öğretimi giderek daha önemli bir unsur haline gelmektedir. Ülkelerin yabancı dil öğretimindeki ilerlemelerini anlayabilmek onların eğitim sistemi ve politikalarını anlamakla doğrudan ilişkilidir. Bu çalışmada Almanya’nın ve Türkiye’nin ortaokul yabancı dil eğitim sistemleri karşılaştırmalı olarak ele alınmıştır. Almanya ve Türkiye’deki eğitim sistemlerinin şekillenmesinde birçok faktör rol oynamaktadır. Çalışmada eğitim politikası, öğretilen yabancı diller, müfredat, haftalık yabancı dil ders saatleri, öğretim metotları ve öğretim materyalleri karşılaştırmalı biçimde incelenmiştir. Eğitim sistemlerini karşılaştırarak farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri ortaya çıkarmak ve bu okulları yabancı dil eğitiminde hangi faktörlerin başarılı veya başarısız kıldığını belirlemek amaçlanmıştır.

Çalışmada nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında literatür taraması, dokümantasyon ve metin incelemesi yapılmıştır. Türkiye’nin ve Almanya’nın yabancı dil öğretim programları, yabancı dil öğretim politikaları, müfredat içerikleri,



öğretim yöntemleri ve öğretim materyalleri ilgili dökümanlar ve ilgili çalışmalar kapsamında irdelenerek ele alınmıştır.

Çalışmada elde edilen bulgulara göre, hem Almanya'nın hem Türkiye'nin 12 yıllık eğitim sistemlerinde dört yıl ortaokul eğitimine ayırdıkları anlaşılmıştır. Ayrıca her iki ülke yabancı dil öğretiminde Diller için Ortak Avrupa Referans Çerçevesini benimsemekte ve birinci yabancı dil olarak İngilizce müfredatta önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Benzer bir diğer nokta iki ülkede de yabancı dil dersleri hayata dair güncel temalardan oluşmaktadır. Bununla birlikte Türkiye'de müfredat ülke geneli için sabitken, Almanya'da müfredatın eyaletten eyalete değiştiği belirlenmiştir. Almanya müfredatı öğretmenlere ders planlamasında daha fazla özgürlük tanırken, Türkiye'deki müfredatın içeriği ayrıntılıdır ve öğretmenler bu programı takip etmekle yükümlüdür. Almanya'da eğitimin her eyalette farklı olması, eyaletler arasında bir rekabete yol açmış ve bu durum eğitim sisteminin geliştirilip iyileştirilmesi adına olumlu sonuçlar doğurmuştur.

Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda birinci yabancı dil eğitiminde ders saatlerine kıyasla Almanya'da haftada üç ila beş saat arasında daha fazla zaman ayrılmaktadır. Dile maruz kalma süresi dil öğrenimini doğrudan etkilediğinden Türkiye'de de dil ders saatlerinin artırılması gerektiğine dikkat çekilmiştir. İki ülke dil öğretim yöntemleri ve teknikleri açısından karşılaştırıldığında ise, yabancı dil öğretiminde her iki ülkenin teoride iletişimsel yaklaşıma ve iletişimsel becerilere önem verdiği, ancak Türkiye'deki okullarda dilbilgisi çeviri yönteminin hala uygulandığı, Almanya'nın ise eylem odaklı yaklaşımı ve iletişimsel becerileri benimseyerek yabancı dil öğretiminde daha fazla ilerleme kaydettiği saptanmıştır. Türkiye'de yöntem ve teknikler belirlidir, ancak bunların nerede ve nasıl uygulanacağı konusunda belirsizlikler vardır. Dil öğretim materyalleri açısından her iki ülke de teknolojiden, internet kaynaklarından, ders kitabından, şarkılardan, hikâyelerden, görsel araçlardan, posterlerden yararlanmaktadır. Ancak detaylı bir karşılaştırma yapıldığında, Almanya'da öğretim materyallerinin Türkiye'ye göre daha zengin olduğu belirlenmiştir. Aynı zamanda çalışmada, Alman müfredat ve materyallerinde kültürel öğelere daha fazla dikkat çekilerek, öğrencilerin kültürel karşılaştırmalar yapabilmelerine imkan verildiği vurgulanmıştır. Karşılaştırmalar neticesinde Türkiye'de dil öğretiminin dil merkezli olduğu, Almanya'da ise daha öğrenci merkezli bir dil öğretimi benimsendiği belirlenmiştir.

Türkiye ve Almanya son on yıldır yabancı dil öğretiminde birinci yabancı dil olarak İngilizceyi geliştirmek adına müfredatta yenilikçi değişiklikler yapmıştır. Bu değişikliklere rağmen, Türk müfredatında iletişim becerilerinin daha fazla ders saati ve öğrenci merkezli yaklaşımla geliştirilmesi gerektiği açıktır. Diğer bir ifadeyle, öğrenciler yabancı dili edinmek için ikili ve grup çalışmaları gibi etkileşim gerektiren etkinliklerin içerisinde yer almalıdır. Bu bağlamda Almanya iletişimsel yaklaşımı ve eylem odaklı yaklaşımı yerinde uygulayarak dil öğretiminde ilerleme kaydetmiştir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin dil öğretimi anlamında yeni bir rota çizmesi açısından önem taşımaktadır. Almanya'daki yabancı dil eğitimi, öğretim materyalleri, ders saatleri, müfredat ve öğretim yöntemleri, Türk okullarındaki yabancı dil derslerinde önemli gelişmeler sağlamak için bir model olarak alınabilir. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda yabancı dil öğretiminde eylem odaklı yaklaşımın uygulanması konusunda ileriki çalışmalar için örnek teşkil edebilir.