

# **Domain of Culture in Foreign Language Teachers' Competency: A Comparison of Turkey and China**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study reviews comparatively Foreign Language (FL) teacher competency studies conducted both in Turkey and China. The main concern is to reveal how culture as an important domain of language education is handled both in Turkish and Chinese contexts. Document analysis through a survey of literature is conducted to investigate the similarities and differences between the Turkish and the Chinese standards set for FL teachers. Online databases of Ministry of National Education (MONE) and Beijing Education for Chinese Government were analyzed comparatively for documentation. As a result both similarities and differences were found between the two countries' FL teacher education competencies and qualities regarding to their cultural, social, historical, geographical, political and economic contexts. Moreover, the study reveals that different educational policies of the countries mutually affect each other in improving the quality of education in general.

*Key Words:* Teachers' competency, Foreign language teachers, Culture in foreign language

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## INTRODUCTION

The quality of education is parallel to the quality of teachers' professional development. During the last decade, a growing interest in teacher education has prompted efforts to improve both teacher quality and teacher education programs. While organizing these efforts, scholars and national or international institutions across the world urged countries to set teacher standards as a base for their programs and curricula. The Teacher Development Agency (TDA) of the UK, for example, states that its "Professional Standards are statements of a teacher's professional attribution, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills" (2007). Heretofore, the US. (NBPTS, 2001), with its Association of Teacher Educators (1996), Australia (<http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/standards/standards.html>), and UK (TDA, 2007; <http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/professionalstandards.aspx>) have pioneered attempts to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers.

As a candidate member of the European Union (EU), Turkey has also experienced a period of rapid transformations to its educational policies and practices (Isikoglu, Basturk & Karaca, 2009). Many educational reforms to the curricula of primary and secondary education and to teacher competencies have enacted the EU's educational guidelines introduced by the Maastricht Treaty (1992). To jump-start the fulfillment of requirements for full EU membership, the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) began a project called Teacher Education in 2002.

With the support of universities and the Higher Education Council, MoNE has evaluated the setting of standards that include generic and field-specific teacher (e.g., history, science, mathematics, arts, and foreign language) competencies. Since the European Commission has for over 30 years prioritized language teaching, foreign language (FL) education has emerged as a key concept during the standardization process. In 2002, the Barcelona European Council recommended that children should learn at least two foreign languages from a very early age (Eurydice, 2005), thus the Turkish government has recognized the necessity of knowing others languages in today's multilingual and multicultural world.

Since language learning requires and hones different skills and sub-skills, setting standards for foreign language teachers is a challenging task. For Hymes (1971) and Labov (1969), language learning is more than simply learning a linguistic system by which to categorize the physical world or to refer to abstract concepts; it also involves using the system for achieves appropriate and effective communication in various social situations. Therefore, a qualified FL teacher need not only fulfill language-specific qualifications and competencies, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, but also a thorough understanding of other aspects of language learning, such as socio-cultural knowledge and a keen sense of pragmatics (Bailey, 2006; Kamhi-Stein, 2009). Altogether, these credentials identify FL teachers who possess knowledge of both how individuals see themselves and how they enact their roles within different social and cultural settings, such as teacher-learner interactions (Miller, 2009; Richards, 2011). Accordingly, enacting these roles in different social and cultural situations necessitates a knowledge and awareness of the language's culture(s), an idea which several scholars have emphasized as an important domain of FL (Byram, 1989; Alptekin, 2005; Risager, 2005).

While setting standards for FL teachers, most countries including Turkey have not ignored the importance of their teachers' cultural competencies. However, depending on each country's geographical, social, historical, environmental, and cultural features,

countries have approached cultural competencies from different perspectives. To understand the rationale behind such differences in a globalized context, international comparisons of educational systems are both timely and useful. According to Kubow and Fossum (2007, 4), “educational reforms in the first part of the 21st century will be shaped by debate about how nations should educate students for a global world in light of nation-state allegiances.” Accordingly, international comparisons between different countries’ educational systems are important to gaining a worldwide perspective for the internationalization of education in each country.

This study thus aims to compare Turkish and Chinese standards for FL teachers in terms of cultural competencies. Choosing Turkey and China stems from the two countries’ specific features: Turkey and China are two very old civilizations, each with rich historical and cultural backgrounds. Though an EU member candidate, Turkey represents both European and Asian contexts given its geographical location. China, on the other hand, as a dominant Asian country with a traditional self-image as a universalistic civilization and much potential for becoming a political and economic superpower, has made building mutually beneficial cultural and educational relationships inevitable between Turkey and other countries.

### **Foreign Language Education and Culture**

In one sense, the relationship between language and culture can be summed up well in saying that “[c]ulture is in language and language is loaded with culture” Agar (1994, 28). Language and culture are intimately related since language synthesizes every aspect of a culture. Language is also a vehicle used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. From this perspective, learning a new language involves the learning of a new culture (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). Consequently, according to Byram (1989), language teachers are also teachers of culture. This dual role makes the tasks of FL teachers extremely demanding since culture reflects all dimensions of language, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, syntax, and pragmatics, among others. According to Byram (1991), most current misunderstandings in communication stem from an inadequate focus on the dialogic relationship between language and culture in FL teaching. Subsequently, the language and educational policies of most countries have perceived culture as one of the most important competencies of FL education. Nevertheless, different FL education programs and organizations throughout the world show that differences exist in the interpretation of culture competencies.

In this study, we review FL education policies of the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) since most countries including Turkey refer to these organizations’ standards while preparing their own curricula and teacher standards.

In Europe, EU efforts to promote education commenced in 2002. By 2004, the European Commission began to prioritize the development of common European principles for teacher and trainer competencies and qualifications. “To fulfill the chief aspects of the Language Learning for European Citizenship Project, the Council of Europe relied heavily on CEFR designed between 1989 and 1996, whose main aim continues to be providing a method of learning, teaching, and assessing which applies to all languages in Europe” (CEFR). In November 2001, a European Union Council Resolution suggested using CEFR to set standards in order to validate language ability. Among other language domains, CEFR

set standards for culture, for which the relationship between language and culture was conceptualized as “intercultural competence”: “Knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of the target community’ produce an intercultural awareness” (CEFR, 2001)

Intercultural competence refers to an awareness of diversity in both worlds’ geographical, social, and political issues. In order to develop an appropriate intercultural competence, CEFR framed the educational dimension of intercultural awareness and set standards for what language learners require (2001):

- The prior sociocultural experience and knowledge that the learner is assumed and/or required to have;
- The new experiences and knowledge of social life in the learner’s community and the target community that the learner will need to acquire to meet the requirements of L2 communication;
- The awareness of the relations between home and target cultures that the learner will need.

Supporting the standards set by CEFR, all countries studied by the Eurydice Network agree on the importance of cross-cultural competence and have included it in their curricula as a prime objective: “Schools are encouraged to include a European or other international dimension in their programs, and many seek to nurture a European sense of identity by making pupils appreciate the rich cultural heritage of the countries concerned” (Eurydice, 2001).

At the same time, non-European countries such as the U.S. also set standards for FL education, namely with the first national organization called the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The ACTFL was founded in 1966 to meet and measure the changing needs of FL educators and students. Its mission is to provide vision, leadership, and support for high quality teaching and learning of languages. The same year, the TESOL International Association, formerly Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, was founded as the largest professional organization for teachers of English as a second or foreign language. As of 2013, TESOL had 12,100 members worldwide and was affiliated with 109 language education organizations, just over half of which were based outside the US (TESOL, 2010).

Standards established by TESOL and ACTFL overlapped in some areas, such as “knowledge of language as a system (for the target language), second or foreign language acquisition and development, and assessment procedures” (TESOL, 2010, 6). Importantly, however, ACTFL and TESOL differ in their perceptions of culture. For ACTFL, culture primarily refers to the knowledge of language and culture used outside of the U.S. (e.g., French culture in France, Quebec, and Haiti). However, for TESOL, the knowledge of target culture refers strictly to the U.S. culture.

According to TESOL standards, teachers of English language learners (ELLs) in the U.S. need to have knowledge of other cultures, such as those of immigrants. ELLs should also know how to react when those two cultures conflict and should be aware of those conflicts’ possible effects on academic achievement. In this context, while setting standards for candidate teachers, TESOL ranks the domain of culture second to the domain of language. The domains included in the TESOL standards are as follows (TESOL, 2010):

- Domain 1. Language
- Domain 2. Culture
- Domain 3. Planning, Implementing, and Managing Instruction
- Domain 4. Assessment
- Domain 5. Professionalism

For TESOL (2010), standards related to the nature and role of culture have been framed as factors such as “cultural relativism, cultural universalism, the additive nature of culture, intra and intergroup differences, the interrelationship between language and culture, and the effect of this relationship on learning” (p. 39). TESOL also determines cultural content to be the “values, beliefs, and expectations; roles and status; family structure, function, and socialization; relativism and the arts; assumptions about literacy and other content areas; communication and communication systems; and learning styles and modalities” of a given culture (p. 39). Within this broad cultural content, candidate English teachers were expected to prepare appropriate environments for the instruction of culture in and outside the classroom.

Unlike CEFR, TESOL and ACTFL have set standards for English language teachers whose native language is English. These organizations’ perspectives on culture focus on the culture of immigrants or foreigners who are learning English in the U.S. Since the EU supports the multilingual and multicultural nature of Europe, all foreign languages are included in language teachers’ standards determined by CEFR.

## **METHOD**

For this study, document analysis was performed after surveying the literature. Documents related to cultural aspects of FL teacher competency in Turkey and China were located by using online databases and subsequently analyzed comparatively. Documents of public and private records were used for qualitative studies to obtain data about a site or participants in a study. These documents were valuable sources for understanding phenomena central to qualitative studies (Creswell, 2005). The government websites of national educational institutions or ministries of Turkey and China were also analyzed. For China, this website was Beijing Education at [www.being.org.cn/eng/eng.htm](http://www.being.org.cn/eng/eng.htm), while for Turkey it was the website of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and Teacher Training Agency (TTA) at [oyegm.meb.gov.tr/](http://oyegm.meb.gov.tr/). Documents of the Chinese government were translated into English with Google Translate. A descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze all documents.

## **RESULTS**

### **The Turkish Context**

As in many countries around the world, teacher competencies have recently evolved vis-à-vis the educational policies of Turkey. In 1999, MoNE in collaboration with universities and the Council of Higher Education started to study the revision and progress of teacher competencies, which included professional knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. The aim was to adapt teacher quality to the changing conditions of time and society.

Turkey’s integration into the EU accelerated studies of MoNE to determine task definitions for teachers. The EU has supported the project of MoNE as part of the Support to Basic Education Program to improve the quality of education in Turkey. A committee consisting of university academics, MoNE members, school superintendents, and teachers

was also assembled to examine the teacher standards of the other countries, such as the U.S., the U.K., and Australia. Finally, the General Directorate of Teacher Training of MoNE prepared Generic Teacher Competencies in 2006 (MoNE Generic Teacher Competencies, 2008).

After the completion of Generic Teacher Competencies, field-specific competencies were determined in 2008 for different fields, including English language teaching (ELT) for primary schools. The common goal of developing generic and field-specific competencies for teachers is to validate Turkish teacher education policies related to pre- and in-service education programs, the selection and appointment of teaching staffs, and performance assessment.

Five domains of field-specific competencies were identified for field-specific standards on three levels of ELTs: A1 (basic), A2 (intermediate), and A3 (advanced). The five domains were: planning English language teaching processes; helping students to develop language skills; monitoring and evaluating language learning; cooperating with the schools, families, and society; and professionally developing primary educators (MoNE, 2008).

Later in 2010, MoNE decided to reassemble a new FL commission to set standards for FL teachers of any language(s). The reasons behind this effort were twofold. The first reason concerns the program of education faculties in Turkey, for which no distinction was made between primary- and high-school teachers for subjects such as FLs, music, and physical education, among others. For example, a single program was offered for the training of both primary- and high-school FL teachers. The new commission reformed this problem by unifying the competencies of the stages on a single document and making the teacher responsible for the requirements of the stage at which he/she is working. The second reason concerns the need to set standards for FL teachers of languages other than English in Turkish curricula. Preexisting standards set in 2005 included only English language teachers in primary education. To this end, the new FL commission supported by university academics and FL teachers in primary and high schools analyzed national and international studies. Standards of TESOL and ACTFL were referred to while determining Turkish FL teachers' competencies. After drafting a long-term study, the commission sent a copy to stakeholders, such as academics studying in FL departments, FL teachers working in various regions of Turkey, and school administrators, among others. Upon receiving feedback from the stakeholders, necessary changes were made and the study was finalized in 2013. MoNE's review of the study is currently underway. Unlike 2005 ELT competencies, three levels of language proficiency (i.e., A1, A2, and A3) were excluded in the revised study.

The study identified 18 competencies within three major domains. The first two domains relate to content knowledge, which refers to knowledge specific to FL teachers (Richards, 2011). Content knowledge is divided into two domains: *disciplinary knowledge* and *pedagogical content knowledge*. Disciplinary knowledge refers to knowledge about the FL discipline as opposed to knowledge about pedagogy and includes knowledge of second language acquisition, history of language teaching methods, sociolinguistics, phonology and syntax, discourse analysis, theories of language, and critical applied linguistics, among others (Richards, 2011). Pedagogical content knowledge refers to knowledge related to language teaching and learning itself. The third domain is values and attitudes, which refer to an awareness of what it means to be a language teacher in different social and cultural roles and the teachers' consciousness during interactions with students during the learning process (Miller, 2009). The three domains and their themes included in the revised study are as follows.

**Domain 1: Disciplinary knowledge.** This domain refers to knowledge of theories of language acquisition, approaches, methods, and techniques of FL teaching; the components of language and concepts of linguistics; the examination of translated texts; and analyzing the relationship of language with literature and culture.

**Domain 2: Pedagogical content knowledge.** This domain refers to planning English language teaching curricula; helping students develop language skills; monitoring and evaluating language learning; using appropriate strategies, methods, and techniques; and using of sources and materials appropriate for FL development.

**Domain 3: Attitudes and values.** This domain refers to giving importance to FL education; professional development and language-culture interaction; and language sensitivity in respect of Atatürk's principles (1923).

The concept of culture is involved in domains 1 and 3. The competencies and performance indicators related to culture are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. *Competencies and performance indicators related to culture included in Domain 1*

<b>Domain 1: Disciplinary knowledge</b>	
<i>Competence</i>	<i>Performance indicators related to culture</i>
Ability to analyze the relationship of language to culture and literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzes the contribution of literary works in the target language to the history of culture</li> <li>Analyzes the author-work-age relationship of literary works written in the target language in terms of culture and age mentality</li> </ul>
Ability to examine the texts for translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains the relationship between language and culture to make sense of the text</li> </ul>

Table 2. *Competencies and performance indicators related to culture included in Domain 3*

<b>Domain 3: Attitudes and values</b>	
<i>Competence</i>	<i>Performance indicators related to culture</i>
Giving importance to the interaction of language and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocates the importance of the interaction of language and culture</li> <li>Volunteers to introduce the values of Turkish culture through FL in various contexts</li> <li>Tolerates other cultures</li> <li>Gives importance to learning and introducing different nations' cultural values</li> <li>Gives importance to cultural interaction with people and institutions of different nations</li> </ul>

As it is seen in Tables 1 and 2, three competencies and eight performance indicators relate to culture as identified in revised study of the Turkish FL teachers' standards. The competence indicators for disciplinary knowledge focus on the relationship of culture to language, literature, and translated texts, all of which are knowledge based. Indicators of attitudes and values regarding the competency of prioritizing the interaction of language and culture are based on the attitudinal dimension of language teaching.

### The Chinese Context

Unlike Turkey, national curricula in China specifically focus on English language teaching. The Chinese government promotes English education at all stages to enhance its citizens' capacity to compete in the international arena. National primary- and high-school English courses are designed to develop students' interest in learning English in a natural, enjoyable language-learning environment.

In 2003, the Chinese government set English standards, which reflect the qualifications of English language education for students and teachers (Beijing Education, 2003). The standards are identified for all Chinese schools, though there is flexibility in the application in various schools and contexts. Language teaching approaches, and the individual differences and needs of students, including age and physical and mental development are taken into account while determining national standards for English curricula. Given China's immense population, territorial span, and unbalanced economic and educational development, the geographical, social, and economic features of China served as effective factors in the identification process (Beijing Education, 2003).

The curriculum goals identified for national primary- and high-school English education are as follows:

- Improve students' basic English communication skills for real-life situations;
- Develop both students' interest in learning English and effective learning methods;
- Enhance students' understanding of foreign culture and customs in order to compare and encourage respect for cultural differences.

As clearly shown by these curriculum objectives, culture and customs are identified as being in a domain separate from language. The Chinese government has set standards for English language teachers to identify task definitions within two stages of education. English curriculum is divided into two stages: primary and secondary. The first stage is between the third to sixth grade and the second stage is from grade one to three.

The first stage is primary education and the competence indicators of the standards related with culture and customs for two stages appear in Table 3.

Table 3. *Competence indicators related to culture and customs for Chinese English teachers*

Stage	Competence indicators
First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to describe to students the main festivals and customs of foreign countries</li> <li>• ability to describe to students the domestic customs of the major festivals</li> <li>• ability to understand the basic etiquette norms of the international community</li> <li>• knowledge about the role and position of cultural themes such as custom, ritual, and ideology in the Chinese context</li> </ul>
Second	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to describe English people and culture at home and abroad</li> <li>• ability to apply basic etiquette norms of the international community in the classroom</li> <li>• ability to understand and respect different cultures and customs from a multicultural perspective</li> </ul>



As shown by Table 3, competence indicators related to culture for Chinese teachers of English focus on the customs, practices, common expressions, and other components of foreign cultures. The reason for teaching these aspects of culture is not to simply communicate with foreigners but also to “deepen understanding of Chinese culture” (Beijing Education, 2003). As with Turkey, the influence of a long history of civilization makes China very sensitive to how it is perceived by the international community but only without losing its cultural values.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The increasing tendency of determining teacher competencies to provide higher quality in education across the world is also the main concern of Turkish educational policies. To this end, studies conducted in every country affect Turkey and vice versa. This study is an attempt to compare Turkish and Chinese FL teachers’ competencies in terms of an important domain of language education: culture.

The countries chosen for this purpose, China and Turkey, are unique representatives of their regions by virtue of their geographical, social, historical and cultural situations. When the two countries’ FL curricula objectives and teacher competencies were analyzed, it is clear that both appreciate the value of knowing another language because it is an important way to both perceive the world and learn about others. Though Chinese FL education focuses on English language learning, the key concepts about culture for both countries’ policies have similarities. For example, tolerance and respect for other nations’ cultural differences, customs, lifestyles, and norms are emphasized in both sets of standards. Unlike Chinese standards, Turkish standards treat culture as a disciplinary knowledge that includes an awareness of the relationship of culture to literature and translated texts and how those relationships contribute to the analysis of different texts used in the classroom. This difference is essential since the study of the texts produced in a language not only offers an active engagement with the language and culture but also helps us to see and understand the world in which we live.

When the economic and social contexts of Turkey are taken into consideration, the force of the EU integration process, UN membership, and the relationship between the Middle East and other countries are clear in Turkey’s national educational policies. These factors have similarly influenced MoNE’s decision to broaden the scope of standards for FL teachers in the revised study, whose earlier version had previously evaluated only teachers of English. Standards set for FL teachers encourage teachers and candidate teachers to see language education from a wider perspective instead of as a phenomenon solely covering the four basic skills of communication (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening). One competence indicator in the revised study “[g]ives importance to having a cultural interaction with people and institutions of different nations,” which supports the policy by reflecting upon the importance of communication in the international arena.

On the other hand, China focuses on the festivals, etiquette norms, and customs of its country and foreign countries alike. This emphasis may derive from the Chinese culture itself, which is highly influenced by its customs, traditions, and rituals. Unlike Turkey, the repetition of etiquette norms in competence indicators may reflect their difference from the Western world in terms of etiquette and lifestyles.

Another similarity between Turkey and China is their tendency to introduce their own culture to others in different contexts. These two longstanding civilizations of the world

support interaction with a multicultural world yet try to preserve and strictly monitor their cultural heritage, as well as transfer it to new generations.

### Suggestions for Subsequent Studies

As this study has shown, it is consequently impossible to determine the qualifications, professionalism, and effectiveness of FL teachers without taking into account different kinds of biases, such as culture, context, and individual beliefs and preferences. Attempting to set standards or devise policy for language teaching is therefore vast and complicated.

The paradigm of multiculturalism has shifted national language policies to reflect not only the culture of the target language but also the culture of other nations as well as the students', teachers', and administration's culture in order to avoid cultural misinterpretation. In other words, language teaching policies should cover the cultural ideologies of each student and teacher as well as the culture of the target language.

Policymakers in different countries therefore need to develop and revise their own teacher standards regarding cultural values to improve teacher quality. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has stressed the importance of combining culture teaching with language education into curricula that promote the understanding and acceptance of differences between people, cultures, and ideologies (Association of Teacher Educators, 1996). However, simply adding a cultural dimension to curricula objectives will not improve teacher competencies. Importance should be given to the needs of the teachers and the society regarding its economic, social, historical, geographical, and demographic features in order to compete with the educational context. It is thus necessary to inform language teachers about appropriate and effective methodologies of interaction-based teaching, as well as how to design these methodologies to develop their own teaching methods to encourage interaction between students (Kim, 2004). In this regard, a detailed analysis and comparison of different countries' curricula objectives and teacher competencies are essential to the revision and updating of national educational policies. As a result, further studies are needed to review the FL education policies of different countries in different world regions in order to make broader assessments of and comparisons to national educational policies.

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## **Yabancı Dil Öğretmeni Yeterliklerinde Kültür Ögesi: Türkiye ve Çin Karşılaştırması**

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### **Giriş**

Eğitimin niteliği öğretmenlerin mesleki yeterlikleri ve niteliğiyle yakından ilgilidir. Bu nedenle öğretmen yeterlikleri günümüzde eğitim-öğretimin niteliğini arttırmak isteyen tüm ülkelerin gündeminde olan bir konudur. Türkiye’de Avrupa Birliği’ne aday ülkelerden biri olarak eğitim politikalarını geliştirmede hızlı bir yol almaktadır. Bu bağlamda 1992’de Maastricht Antlaşması ile tanıtılan Avrupa Birliği eğitim esaslarına dayanarak Türkiye’de özellikle ilk ve ortaöğretimde müfredat ve öğretmen yeterliklerinde önemli yenilikler yapılmaya başlanmıştır. Bu amaçla Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB), 2002’de Temel Eğitime Destek Projesi kapsamında öğretmen yetiştirme bileşeni altında öğretmen yeterliklerini belirleme çalışmalarını başlatmıştır. O tarihten bu yana Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) ve üniversitelerin de desteğiyle genel ve özel alan öğretmen yeterlikleri belirleme çalışmaları sürdürülmektedir. Tarih, fen bilgisi, matematik, resim, müzik ve yabancı dil özel alan yeterlikleri arasında özellikle yabancı dil öğretmenliği çok kültürlü ve çok dilli günümüz dünyasında ön plana çıkmaktadır. Ayrıca Barselona Avrupa Birliği Komisyonunda (2002) erken yaşlarda en az iki yabancı dil öğrenmenin önemi de vurgulanmıştır (Eurydice, 2005). Fakat yabancı dil bilgisi pek çok beceri ve yan beceriden oluştuğundan yabancı dil öğretmenleri için yeterlikleri belirlemek pek kolay görünmemektedir. Yetkin bir yabancı dil öğretmenin yazma, okuma, dinleme, konuşma gibi dil becerilerinin yanı sıra sosyo-kültürel ve pragmatik öğretim gibi farklı becerilere de sahip olması gerekmektedir (Bailey, 2006; Kamhi-Stein, 2009).

Bu becerilerden en önemlisi de kültürel farkındalık ve kültür bilgisidir. Yabancı dil öğretiminde kültürün önemi pek çok bilim adamı tarafından vurgulanmıştır (Byram, 1989; Alptekin, 2005; Risager, 2005). Bu nedenle yabancı dil öğretmeni yeterliklerinin belirlenmesinde Türkiye dâhil pek çok ülke kültür ögesini göz ardı etmemiştir. Fakat her ülke, kendi coğrafi, tarihi, sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel özellikleri kapsamında kültür ögesini farklı şekillerde ele almıştır. Bu farklılıkların altında yatan sebepleri anlamak için farklı ulusların eğitim politikalarını incelemek ve birbirleriyle karşılaştırmak gerekmektedir. Çünkü 21. yüzyılın küresel dünyasında uluslararası karşılıklı iletişim ve etkileşim önemli bir yer tutmaktadır (Kubow & Fossum, 2007, 4).

Bu bağlamda çalışmanın amacı, Türk ve Çin yabancı dil öğretmeni yeterliklerini kültürel becerilerin ele alınışı açısından incelemek ve karşılaştırmaktır. Çalışmada örneklem olarak Türkiye ve Çin’in seçilmesinin iki sebebi bulunmaktadır. Birincisi, Japonya, Portekiz, Kore gibi pek çok ülkenin ulusal web siteleri incelendiğinde, yabancı dil veya İngilizce öğretimi alanında yalnızca programları olduğu ama belirlenmiş öğretmen yeterlikleri olmadığı görülmüştür. İkinci neden olarak da Türkiye ve Çin’in dünyanın iki uzak noktasında, zengin tarihi ve kültürel geçmişleriyle iki büyük medeniyeti temsil etmeleridir. Bir tarafta Avrupa Birliği adayı kimliği ve coğrafi konumuyla hem Avrupa’yı hem de Asya’yı temsil eden Türkiye, diğer tarafta gelenekçi ve evrensel imajıyla, politik ve ekonomik açıdan süper güç olmaya aday Güney Asya ülkesi Çin. Bu önemli özellikleri

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bakımından iki ülkenin Yabancı Dil öğretmeni yeterlikleri kültürel açıdan incelenmeye değer bulunmuştur.

Öncelikle, Türkiye'nin de içinde bulunduğu pek çok ülkenin referans olarak aldığı uluslararası organizasyonlar ve kurumların (Avrupa Ortak Dil Çerçevesi-CEFR), Yabancılar İngilizce Öğretimi- TESOL), Amerikan Yabancı Dil Öğretimi Kurulu- ACTFL)yabancı dil öğretim hedefleri, programları ve öğretmen yeterlikleri incelenmiştir. Kültür ögesini, CEFR öğrencinin kendi kültürü ve hedef kültür arasında ihtiyaç duyduğu farkındalığı yaratabilmek olarak belirlerken, TESOL ve ACTFL ABD'de İngilizce öğrenen (göçmenler gibi) öğrencilerin kültürlerini bilmeye ve kültürel farklılıklardan doğabilecek yanlış anlaşılmaları çözebilme yetisi olarak tespit etmiştir

## Yöntem

Çalışmada veri toplama yöntemi olarak nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olan doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Türkiye ve Çin'in yabancı dil öğretmeni yeterlikleri çevrimiçi veri tabanları taraması ile araştırılmıştır. Resmi ya da özel kayıtların kullanıldığı bu yöntem değerli bir veri toplama yöntemi ve bilgi kaynağı olarak araştırmacılar tarafından nitel araştırmalarda tercih edilmektedir (Creswell, 2005). Türk Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı ve Pekin Eğitim ulusal web siteleri (<http://oyegm.meb.gov.tr/> ve <http://www.being.org.cn/ncs/eng/eng.htm>) veri kaynakları araştırmada kullanılan başlıca bilgi kaynaklarıdır. Çin ulusal web sitesinde yer alan Çince bilgiler Google çeviri motoru yardımıyla İngilizceye çevrilmiştir. Dokümanlar betimsel analiz tekniğiyle analiz edilmiştir.

## Sonuçlar

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB), üniversitelerin ve Yükseköğretim Kurulu'nun (YÖK) desteğiyle Türk öğretmenlerini çağın gerekliliklerine uyumlu hale getirmek amacıyla profesyonel bilgi, beceri, tutum ve davranışları içeren yeterlikleri belirlemek ve mevcut olanları revize etmek amacıyla 1999 yılında çalışmalarına başlamıştır. Avrupa Birliğine (AB) adaylık süreci de MEB'in çalışmalarına hız katmış ve AB de Temel Eğitimi Destekleme Programı çerçevesinde Türkiye'de ki projeyi desteklemiştir. Sonuç olarak 2006 yılında MEB Öğretmen Yetiştirme ve Geliştirme Genel Müdürlüğü genel öğretmen yeterliklerini belirlemiştir. Genel öğretmen yeterliklerinin belirlenmesinden sonra, ilköğretim İngilizce öğretmenliğini de kapsayan özel alan öğretmen yeterlikleri belirleme çalışmaları başlamış ve 2008 yılında çalışmalar tamamlanmıştır. Bu projede A1 (temel), A2 (orta) ve A3 (ileri) olmak üzere üç düzeyde beş beceri belirlenmiştir.

Daha sonra, 2010'da bu kez yabancı dil öğretmeni yeterliklerini tespit etmek üzere yeni bir komisyon kurulmuştur. Bunun iki nedeni vardır: Birincisi Türkiye'deki eğitim fakültelerinin müzik, beden eğitimi ve yabancı dil öğretmenliği gibi bölümlerinin hem ilköğretim, hem de ortaöğretim için öğretmen yetiştirmeleri, ikincisi ise Türkiye'de yabancı dil olarak İngilizce dâhil okutulan tüm dilleri de kapsayan standart bir yeterlik oluşturma ihtiyacıdır. Oysa mevcut 2008 yılında belirlenen yeterlikler yalnızca ilköğretim İngilizce öğretmenlerini kapsamaktadır. Bu bağlamda yeni oluşturulan komisyon, TESOL ve ACTFL dâhil diğer ulusların özel alan yeterliklerini de inceleyerek oluşturduğu taslak metni 2013'de Bakanlığın görüşüne sunmuştur. Taslak metin şu an inceleme sürecinde olup üç temel beceri altında on sekiz alt beceriden oluşmaktadır. Bu üç temel beceri: alan bilgisi, alan eğitimi bilgisi ve mesleki tutum ve değerlerdir. Kültür kavramı ise hem alan bilgisi hem de tutum ve değerler üst becerilerinin altında yer almıştır. Toplamda sekiz performans göstergesi kültür ögesi ile ilişkilidir.

Türkiye’den farklı olarak Çin yalnızca İngilizce programı ve İngilizce öğretmeni yeterlikleri üzerine yoğunlaşmıştır. Çin hükümeti ülkenin uluslararası arenada rekabet edebilmesi için İngilizce öğretimini desteklemek üzere 2003 yılında ulusal programını ve İngilizce öğretmeni yeterliklerini belirlemiştir. Standartların belirlenmesinde her seviyeden öğrencilerin ihtiyaçları, öğrenme ortamları, ülkenin sosyal, coğrafi, ekonomik ve kültürel özellikleri dikkate alınmıştır. İngilizce programı hedefleri arasında kültür ögesi üçüncü sırada yer almaktadır. Öğrencilerin farklı kültür ve gelenekleri anlamalarını ve böylece farklı kültürler arasında karşılaştırma yapabilmeyi ve hoşgörülü olmalarını sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. İngilizce öğretmeni yeterliklerinde ise kültürle ilgili performans göstergeleri hem birinci hem de ikinci seviyede olmak üzere toplam sekiz tanedir. Genel olarak gelenekler, görgü kuralları ve farklı yaşam biçimlerini anlama, saygı duyma ve hoşgörülü olma çerçevesinde şekillenen performans göstergeleri aynı zamanda kendi kültürünü tanıyıp başka ülkelere tanıtabilmeyi de ön plana çıkarmıştır.

Eğitimde kaliteyi arttırmak amacıyla Türkiye dâhil dünyadaki pek çok ülke öğretmen yeterlikleri belirleme çalışmalarını hızlandırmıştır. Dünyanın farklı ülkelerinde yapılan bu çalışmalar karşılıklı olarak birbirlerini etkilemektedir. Bu bağlamda farklı ülkelerin eğitim politikalarını karşılaştırmak, etkileşimi hızlandırmak ve daha geniş bir vizyon edinmek adına gereklidir. Çalışmamızda Çin ve Türkiye gibi birbirinden tamamen farklı ve uzak iki ülkenin Yabancı Dil Öğretmeni Yeterlikleri kültür ögesini ele alışları açısından karşılaştırılmıştır.

Sonuç olarak iki ülke arasında hem farklılıklar hem de benzerlikler bulunmuştur. En önemli farklılık Çin’in yalnızca İngilizce öğretmenliği için belirlenmiş yeterliklere sahip olması bir yana kendi kültürüne özgü festivaller, ritüeller ve davranış biçimleri üzerine yoğunlaşmasıdır. Bu da Çin’in yaşam tarzı, gelenek ve görenekleriyle batı dünyasından farklılığının bir göstergesi olarak kabul edilebilir. Türkiye ise hem Avrupa hem Asya coğrafyasında kültürü yalnızca tutum ve davranışlar çerçevesinde değil aynı zamanda alan bilgisi içeriğinde de ele almıştır. Örneğin edebi veya çeviri metinleri değerlendirirken veya öğretirken kültürel farklılıkların da etkili olduğunu anlama ve anlatma becerisi öne çıkan performans göstergelerindedir. İki ülke arsında göze çarpan en önemli benzerlik ise farklı kültürlerle karşı anlayış ve hoşgörü gösterme becerisinin yanı sıra kendi kültürünü ve değerlerini de farklı ülkelere tanıtabilme becerisidir.

## Öneriler

Çok dilli ve çok kültürlü günümüz dünyasında ön plana çıkan yabancı dil öğretimi için bir takım standartlar ve beceriler belirlerken kültür ögesini göz ardı etmek imkânsızdır. Fakat bu standartları ve yeterlikleri belirlerken kültür ögesini yalnızca göstermelik olarak eklemek yeterli değildir. Aslında genel olarak eğitim politikalarını belirlerken içinde bulunan ülkenin ekonomik, sosyal, politik ve kültürel şartları, öğrenciler, okul yöneticileri, veliler vb. koşullar ve ihtiyaçlar da göz önüne alınmalıdır. Sadece hedef dilin kültürüne yoğunlaşmak yerine kültürü tüm bu bileşenlerle bir arada ele almak gerekir. Bu konuda yabancı dil öğretmenlerini öğrencilerin iletişimsel yaklaşımla etkileşim kurabilmelerini sağlayacak kendi metod ve yöntemlerini oluşturmaları konusunda desteklemek gerekmektedir. Ayrıca farklı ülkelerin eğitim politikalarını araştıran çalışmaların yapılması ve desteklenmesi de hem kendi eğitim sistemimize bir ayna tutma hem de farklı ülkelerin sistemleriyle karşılaştırma yaparak uluslararası bir vizyon kazanılması açısından son derece önemlidir.

*Anahtar Sözcükler:* Öğretmen yeterliği, Yabancı dil öğretmenleri, Yabancı dilde kültür

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