



YABANCI DİL EĞİTİMİ PROGRAMLARINDA TÜRK EĞİTİM TARİHİ DERSİNİN ÖNEMİ VE İÇERİĞİNE İLİŞKİN ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞLERİ

STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE IMPORTANCE AND CONTENT OF "TURKISH HISTORY OF EDUCATION" COURSE IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CURRICULA

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Extended Abstract

With the decisions given by Executive Council of Higher Education in 1998- 1999 and in 2006-2007, curriculum revisions for all teacher education programs have been put into effect by all of the education faculties in Turkey. One of the main differences in this new curriculum is increasing the number of courses on general knowledge. The reason for such a change is believed to equip the prospective teachers with multi-dimensional knowledge base that can help them cope with the requirements of contemporary education. It has also been presupposed that teachers who are competent in general knowledge will also contribute to the development of future generations. With such aims, the revised curriculum includes courses such as History of Ideas, Methods of Scientific Research, Introduction to Philosophy, Effective Communication Skills and History of Turkish Education. Hence, 50% of the new curriculum includes courses on content knowledge and skills, 30% is allocated for knowledge and skills in the teaching profession and 20% is for general knowledge. The percentages change slightly depending on the departments.

The aim of this study is to collect and analyze students' views in order to design the History of Turkish Education course placed in the curriculum of Foreign Language Teaching Departments at Education Faculties. The research questions guided the study are as follows:

1. What is the students' attitude towards History of Turkish Education course?
2. What do the students think about the extent of various issues to be covered in the course syllabus?
3. What do the students think about the place of foreign language education within the course syllabus?
4. Which teaching methods do the students think more appropriate for the in-class application of History of Turkish Education course?

The data were collected through a questionnaire prepared via expert opinion as well as the researchers' peer consultation. The questionnaire is composed of 15 Likert-type items. During the process of developing the questionnaire, the related literature and similar other question samples were gathered and reviewed. Each item in the questionnaire includes 5 alternatives (Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Decisive, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

After the questionnaire was applied, the collected data were analyzed through SPSS 11.0 and illustrated in such a way to offer reader-friendly presentation. The Cronbach Alpha value of the

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instrument was found to be 0.83. Since there were not variables collected via the questionnaire, the results were presented only in percentages.

100 BA students participated in the study. All of the participants were senior students. 50 participants were students enrolled in the division of German Language Education and 50 other participants were in the division of English Language Education. Since the variables were not considered as valuable in the study, the demographic data were not collected.

Based upon the research findings, some of the suggestions proposed in the study are as follows:

- The students participated indicated that their knowledge on history of Turkish education is insufficient; but, they believed that such a course is necessary in their teacher education curriculum. Nevertheless, the percentage of participants who strongly disagreed, disagreed and were indecisive is 32% which, in our opinion, cannot be disregarded as it is rather high. One of the reasons behind this situation might be that the students had not contemplated about the course before. Hence, the place and importance of History of Turkish education within the curricula of teacher education should be explained and presented to course participants thoroughly.
- The participants pointed out that they were eager to discuss and research especially on the historical development and on the contemporary problems of foreign language education in Turkey. Therefore, the course syllabuses are required to be kept up to date with the recent educational problems and also developments. While doing this, the history of education should be presented both in a contrastive and interconnected manner.
- For the teaching methodology, student-centered method can be suggested, since the findings indicate that the participants support the idea that the course participants should suggest in-class discussion topics.
- According to the findings, the students are not interested in the history related knowledge. Nevertheless, curriculum planners might presuppose the necessity of sharing historical information. The findings of the study also indicate that the students are interested in learning through visual materials. Therefore, it can be suggested that using visual materials effectively especially during the teaching of the topics covering historical information heavily might provide an efficient learning context for the students.
- The content of History of Turkish Education course should be related with the other courses in the teacher education curriculum. Therefore, as it is indicated by Demirel (2003b: 24) the necessary adaptations should be made continuously.