

SHAPING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF TOURISM FACULTY UNDERGRADUATES IN TURKISH UNIVERSITIES

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The article under consideration deals with the problem of identifying foreign language preparation of tourism faculty undergraduates in Turkish universities. The survey comprised the outlook of different approaches, programs, methods, technologies which are being currently implemented in learning environment. As a result, foreign language training was marked out as the most important occupational ability for future tourism experts' vocational activity as well as unsolved and open for further discussions and profound studies. **Keywords:** foreign language competence, undergraduates, programs, tourism faculty, training.

Stating of the Problem. Due to making economic contributions, such as supporting the balance of payments and providing employment opportunities, tourism has become an extremely important sector for developing countries. Meanwhile, developed countries have been taking the largest share from international tourism income. Tourism is a laborintensive service industry. Most tourism and hospitality services are provided in interpersonal interactions. Thus, satisfying the client depends on the attitudes, behaviors and skills of service providers and their managers.

In Turkey the direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is calculated to be consistent with the output, as expressed in National Accounting, of tourism-characteristic sectors such as hotels, airlines, airports, travel agents and leisure and recreation services that deal directly with tourists. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is calculated from total internal spending by 'netting out' the purchases made by the different tourism sectors.

Travel and tourism generated 587,500 jobs directly in 2013 (2.3% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 3.8% in 2014 to 610,000 (2.3% of total employment). This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists. By 2024, travel and tourism will account for 910,000 jobs directly, an increase of 4.1% pa over the next ten years [4].

Taking into account the urgent need of tourism development, advancement and modification, Turkish government is attempting to implement English tourism department undergraduates preparation. Consequently, many universities in Turkey offer study programmes taught in English. Studying abroad in English-taught classes makes it easier to transfer your acquired knowledge to other countries. Furthermore, English-taught education will ensure international career opportunities in the future.

Recent Surveys and Issues Analysis. The most common foreign language in Turkey is English, which in public schools is taught from 4th grade (age 10) onwards, through to the end of high school. In high school a second foreign language is introduced. However, the number of lessons given in public schools is minimal compared to private

colleges, which begin teaching English in kindergarten, have two or three times as many English lessons in their timetables, and in many cases employ native speakers of English as teachers.

In 2011 the Ministry of Education, under pressure from the Prime Minister to improve the learning of English in Turkey, announced that the approach to language would be thoroughly revised, part of which would include a plan to hire 40,000 foreigners as language assistants in public schools. As a result of the poor standards achieved by the public system many students take an intensive English language study when entering university [5].

These are offered by both state and private universities throughout Turkey.

More and more people are aware of the fact that at least some knowledge of English is necessary to get ahead in life. It brings high status to the individual socially as well as extending job opportunities. That's why many join one of the numerous language schools in the country. There is a list of high quality English language schools in Turkey, such as follows: Oxford House College Istanbul, English Time, British Side, Bogazizi University Language Department, Tomer, Inkur English Language Institute, Kent English [3].

According numerous investigations and researches it can be concluded that foreign language ability of the human resources in tourism sector is vitally important. It is important to prefer a FLTM which may produce optimum outputs for all the shareholders like sector, academy, students and their financier families. Tourism sector expects highly satisfying foreign language ability from the graduates. This expectation has also been increasing day by day.

English, as the international language of the last periods, may have the priority to be taught as a foreign language. In addition to the strong ability of international language (English) tourism workers are expected to speak at least two other foreign language at medium level.

After school, climbing the steps of career up faster, the students expect more intensive foreign language education from the schools. This intensive foreign language education can be achieved by additional lessons which may cause additional year to graduation. Under these circumstances the first model (classical FLTM) with its low number of foreign language lessons hours may not be able to satisfy expectations of students and sector. It

may be stated that the first (1) model (classical FLTM) is not efficient and does not produce FL outcomes expected by the sector or academy. The second model (Compulsory FL teaching class model) delays graduation by one year, extending the 4-year degree program to 5 years [2].

That means, other schools' students – the rivals – will graduate one year earlier and thus will gain an additional year of experience in the sector or in the academy. The model also leads students and their families to bear additional financial costs for, for example, education, nutrition, shelter, and transportation, among others. In addition to these costs, there is also the opportunity cost derived from an additional year out of the labor market. It also doesn't guarantee strong ability of foreign language because after the one year preparatory class, intensive foreign language lessons stop and students almost never have foreign language lessons for the next four years. This may cause concentration lost and erosion of foreign language ability.

The third model (concentrated FLTM) saves students one year, enabling them to save time and money—both the money otherwise spent on an additional year of classes and the income otherwise foregone. In addition to these benefits, however, this model presents some curricular difficulty.

By the way, an increased number of FL lessons places additional time demands on the curriculum, which also includes professional, science and general culture courses; consequently, credits and lesson except from FL are decreased. Consequently, FL becomes the most important subject, with the other subjects becoming deprioritized [5].

If the negative dimensions of the different FLTMs are considered, it remains unresolved which FLTM is the most appropriate model for tourism bachelor's degree programs. However, it is clear that graduates with better FL skills have a higher chance of being employed at management-level positions in the sector as well as of being hired for faculty positions.

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Highlighting of the Earlier Unsolved Problem Sections. If the negative dimensions of the different FLTMs are considered, it remains unresolved which FLTM is the most appropriate model for tourism bachelor's degree programs. However, it is clear that graduates with better FL skills have a higher chance of being employed at management-level positions in the sector as well as of being hired for faculty positions. The survey findings indicate that the FLTM with the most support and producing the greatest satisfaction among students in their final year is third model which is concentrated FLTM. Considering the fact that foreign language preparation is intensively introduced into general as well as academic preparation of tourism faculty undergraduates we can induce the result which states that different Turkish universities are attempting to develop and implement their own programs and approaches of teaching English [1, 5].

As a result, the purpose of the scientific survey is to find out how various Turkish universities realize foreign language training for tourism

specialties students in order to come to sufficient outcomes and conclusions.

Material Exposition. We are starting our analysis from Bilkent University, which prides itself on its truly international perspective. The medium of instruction at Bilkent is English, and its international community of scholars and students forms an essential component of the university's academic and social life. International faculty and instructors make up more than a quarter of all academic staff, representing 40 different countries. There is a growing body of full-time international students and exchange students coming from 75 countries.

Also, the curriculum of the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management emphasizes practical applications in the international hospitality and tourism industry. The program focuses on providing a world-class education in operational and managerial aspects of the tourism industry in general, especially in hotel, restaurant, food and beverage, and travel services management. Students gain theoretical as well as practical knowledge that is immediately applicable to real-life circumstances. Prior to graduation, students are required to successfully complete a one-semester internship.

Next findings conducted in Near East University depicts the message from the Associate Professor, director of Tourism and Hotel Management – Tülen Saner. It was cited, that Near East University, School of Tourism and Hotel Management aims to prepare students for managerial and academic positions in their future careers by providing them with a contemporary education programme that caters for the needs of the tourism industry. All of the academic and administrative staff works with a team spirit towards training students to serve the needs of the tourism industry. Equipped with the required knowhow, students learn to think analytically and learn how to successfully lead a business in the international tourism industry as managers, entrepreneurs and consultants [2].

The curriculum is prepared to equip students with core business skills and gives insights into the tourism industry. The medium of teaching is in the English language. Students are also expected to take elective language courses in addition to English such as; Russian, German, Italian, French and Arabic. The computer laboratories of the department offer students the opportunity to learn the world's most advanced and widely used programs such as Amadeus and Fidelio. The practical application of courses taught in the classroom are made possible through the use of university facilities; Dorana Hotel, Residence, Dorana Travel Agency, restaurants, cafeterias and the Guest House on the campus, which makes our school exceptional among tourism schools.

In addition to all this, summer training, as part of the curriculum, provides the students the opportunity of on the job training and post placement. Compulsory summer trainings allow students to develop the skills learnt in the classroom and combine theory with practice. School of Tourism and Hotel Management, through the career days held each year, helps students to be placed in practical training in reputable work places at the end of the first and the third years.

Graduate students are employed both in private and public sector. Demand for qualified staff in the tourism industry is on the rise. Graduate students can find job opportunities especially in the Lodging Industry, the Travel Industry and the Food and Beverage Industry. Guaranteeing a job to our successful graduates is another point that distinguishes us and makes us exceptional among tourism schools. Students of the School of Tourism and Hotel Management are supported and assisted throughout their education in a very warm and welcoming environment and also this support continues after their graduation [4].

The following results of our detailed investigations showed the next information. Turkey has a number of English-medium public and private universities with many modern conveniences. Faculty members are well-respected and have often made a significant contribution to their fields. Many universities are recommended as suitable host institutions for English speaking students with programs available in English, either at undergraduate level or postgraduate level. As the vast majority of classes are taught in English at most of the foundation universities and some of the state universities, students with an institutional language proficiency score are placed in the undergraduate or postgraduate programs.

These universities ensure that students are linguistically prepared for the academic programs. Students when they are admitted to the English speaking programs at universities are usually required to take a Placement Test of the university to determine their English level if they can't submit any institutional language proficiency score. For students whose English proficiency does not meet the desired level of the university, there is an intensive and accelerated language preparation program of study before they begin their undergraduate studies.

Students whose English is not sufficient to earn the required scores set by the university are placed in the language preparation program of study that matches their needs and range from Beginner to Advance levels. Each level has its own curriculum in which students can find opportunities to practice their English language skills in a variety of settings and modalities.

The goal of the English Preparatory Program is to help students improve their level of English to be able to study their majors and be competent in their fields of study. Faculty members at lan-

guage preparation schools generally hold at least a Master's degree in English as a Second Language or a closely related field. Mostly, all have several years of English language teaching experience and they are professionals in their fields. International students who do not participate in an exchange program have to pay tuition fees. Tuition fees can range from USD 1,000 to USD 20,000 depending on institutions where instruction is in English. The variation in fees depends on whether the student chooses to study in a State or Foundation university [2].

One more example is demonstrated on the basis of Akdeniz University, where Tourism Faculty has been established in 1982 and started to education in 1986 at undergraduate level with the name of School of Tourism and Hotel Management. Tourism Faculty' offering short term training programs, research, consultation and the projects that the tourism industry demands along with its 5 undergraduate and 4 graduate programs, is one of the most prestigious Tourism Faculties in Turkey.

Tourism and hotel management programme aims to train students as middle level managers and high level managers who have enough ability, information, experience and job culture that are needed in the sector. Tourism and hotel management programme is two years except for optional English preparatory class. The purpose of the undergraduate program in Tourism and Hotel Management is to bring up high professional knowledgeable employee for the tourism industry who is experienced, well educated, responsible, and good in English and computer usage. The Purpose of this program is also to educate, to prepare qualified administrators or leaders for the Turkish and world tourism sector. The program aims to prepare intellectually developed experts and occupational work force that will answer the long term needs of the world tourism sector and all its fields [5].

Conclusions and Future Strategies. Thus, taking into consideration the detailed theoretical research made on the background of Turkish universities, we may come to the conclusion that there in no one unique approach, method and efficient technology in preparation.

Consequently, future strategies, to our mind, lie in conducting detailed analysis of proposed curriculums, programs applied in Turkish universities and used on the international level in order to find out the most suitable as well as effective ones for tourism faculties undergraduates further preparation.

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ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТІВ ТУРИСТИЧНИХ ФАКУЛЬТЕТІВ В УНІВЕРСИТЕТАХ ТУРЕЧЧИНИ

Анотація

У даній статті розглядається проблема виокремлення іншомовної підготовки студентів туристичних факультетів в університетах Туреччини. Дослідження включало розгляд різних підходів, програм, методів та технологій, які зараз активно застосовуються у навчальному середовищі. В результаті іншомовна підготовка була визначена, як найважливіша професійна здатність фахівців туризму для їхньої діяльності, проте нерозкрита та відкрита для подальших обговорень і глибоких досліджень.

Ключові слова: іншомовна компетентність, студенти, програми, туристичний факультет, підготовка.

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Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается проблема выделения иноязычной подготовки студентов туристических факультетов в университетах Турции. Исследование включало рассмотрение различных подходов, программ, методов и технологий, которые сейчас активно применяются в учебной среде. В результате иноязычная подготовка была определена, как важнейшая профессиональная способность специалистов туризма для их деятельности, однако нераскрытая и открыта для дальнейших обсуждений и глубоких исследований.

Ключевые слова: иноязычная компетентность, студенты, программы, туристический факультет, подготовка.