

## **Place of Foreign Language Teaching in Turkish Education System with a Specific Reference to German Language**

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### **Abstract**

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*The perception that foreign language teaching in Turkey is unsuccessful and a foreign language can not be taught well has perpetually been kept on the agenda. In this study, we have tried to investigate the success of foreign language teaching in Turkish Education System with a focus on German language teaching. After sharing the quantitative data which signify the quality of education provided to students covering a period starting from primary education to the end of higher education, it is found that even though students succeed in the exams taken during their school years, they are not able to achieve the same success in the exams taken at the end of a certain academic period such as TEOG (the Transition from Primary to Secondary Education Examination), YGS (the Transition to Higher Education Examination) and LYS (Undergraduate Placement Examination). It is possible to observe a similar situation in the results of the international PISA education test and ABIDE, the corresponding test performed by the Ministry of National Education. In the second part of the study, by narrowing the focus of the study on foreign language education in higher education to German language teaching, we have featured a table which shows Gazi University German Language Teaching Program is in the lead over the most preferred programs in Turkey. We have also offered an opportunity to compare the success ratio obtained from the results of the examinations which are on pedagogical content knowledge and taken after graduation to the success ratio of undergraduate students based on their exam results during their education by presenting them hereby in this study. We have diagnosed that there are incredible differences to be considered, examined and solved in the success ratios between the results of the examinations applied in schools in all stages of our education system and the results of domestic and international examinations taken after graduation. We have realized that the problem is not solely related to foreign language education and that education provided to students on almost all courses is not totally well-accomplished. At the end of this paper, we have proposed some solutions for these problems.*

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**Key words:** Education, foreign language education, German language teaching

### **Introduction:**

Achievement level or standards in foreign language teaching have been subject to continued criticism for years owing to the fact that they have not reached to the desired level and solutions have been sought. It is not true, in fact, to limit this failure to only foreign language education as our national education system itself is completely a wound and is a field on whose failure almost the whole nation is of the same mind. Thus, it is unfair to place only foreign language teaching on the failure chair. Unfortunately, quantitative data regarding the questions and answers on Turkish subject and obtained from all examinations such as TEOG, which is held by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) for Secondary Education and YGS, LYS, ALES, KPSS, which are held by OSYM for Higher Education and so forth, reveal that the national education system does not allow even mother tongue teaching to be up to the desired level.

In that regard, we approached this study in two main parts. In the first part, we tried to present the achievement level of our country's general education system via the results of the exams held in all stages of education. We compared the success rates in foreign language education to the other subject areas in charts with the help of quantitative data.

We realized that failure was not solely in the field of foreign language education. We also detected that there was, unfortunately, not any data to be considered as success in almost any field. In the second part of the paper, we examined the institutions which train the prospective foreign language teachers of primary and secondary education, namely German Language Teaching Programs, through deduction. We tried to show the functions of teaching programs together with their positive and negative impacts on foreign language teachers' proficiency which plays an important role in the analysis of success or failure of foreign language teaching.

### **PART- 1 (Analysis of the Examinations Taken in Primary and Secondary Education and for Entrance to Higher Education)**

It has been said for years that Turkey is unsuccessful in foreign language education (and it is true). A student used to be exposed to a foreign language course in the 6th grade when 5+3+3 system was being implemented. However, after the education system transformed into first 4+4+3 and then b 4+4+4 systems, students started to take foreign language courses in the 4th grade. As a result of this system, the implementation of 1st foreign language course as a must course and 2nd foreign language course as an elective course has begun at schools. Then, the students who graduate from high school and select a major that is unrelated to any foreign language take foreign language courses (also called as YOK Foreign Language Course or YOK English) for at least 2 years at the college or university they're placed in. Furthermore, in some divisions, students take foreign language courses for several semesters as Occupational Foreign Language Course. A sort of calculation, after all, is made on the issue as follows: Students take foreign language courses for 10 years during their primary and secondary education if we don't count the very first 2 years and for 2 or 4 years in higher education, which equals 12-14 years in total, yet they are not able to have daily conversations in that foreign language which means that they have not learned it and they're considered to waste so many years in the matter of foreign language education. This calculation is true. Moreover, the criticism of foreign language education is a right criticism. However, it is not fair to relate the whole disruptions, mistakes and failures in our education system to only foreign language education and to scapegoat foreign language education since it is not possible to come across a really satisfying picture regarding success and failure ratios also when we examine the other branches of education. To illustrate, success averages of TEOG exam belonging to 2015-2016 and 2017 academic years are provided in Table-1. The exam which is held for the transition from the last grade of primary education, the 8th grade, to the first grade of secondary education, the 9th grade, comprises of 20 questions for each course groups listed in the Table and thus 120 questions in total. Each course of 20 questions has been assessed out of 100 points and the scores of the students who took the exam have been given in the table. Considering the data in the table, one can clearly see that foreign language (English) exam scores of the students were 49.71, 57.60 and 60.10 in the academic years of 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively. This shows that in 2015 students were more successful in foreign language with a score of 49.71 than in Maths (43.18) and in 2016 students were more successful in foreign language with a score of 57.60 than in Maths (42.05) and in Science and Technology (56.04). As can also be seen in the table, students got higher scores in foreign language (60.10) than in Maths exam (55.35) in 2017. There is an interesting finding for the year 2017: in the transition to secondary education examinations held so far under the names of SBS, TEOG and so on, students, for the first time, have scored over 50 in the subject of Maths. Furthermore, it is known that the exam held in 2017 was very easy and there were top scorers who got full marks in surprising numbers. This is probably the reason of the noteworthy increase in the scores of 2017 when compared to the previous year as can be seen in Table-1.

2015-2016-2017 AVERAGE TEOG SCORES (Table-1)

SUBJECTS	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2016 <sup>2</sup>	2017 <sup>3</sup>
Average Score in Turkish	69.14	60	72.3
Average Score in Maths	43.18	42.05	55.35
Average Score in Science and Technology	60.14	56.04	65.75
Average Score in the History of Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism	63.40	65.08	73.75
Average Score in English	49.71	57.60	60.10
Average Score in Ethics and Religious Culture1	82.73	78.25	78.15

1 [PDF]2013-2016 yılları arası teog ders ortalamaları değişimi 2013-2014/1 ...19.08.2017

[golcukkocatepe.meb.k12.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/41/.../21070423\\_yillaragredem.pdf](http://golcukkocatepe.meb.k12.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/41/.../21070423_yillaragredem.pdf)

2 <http://www.meb.gov.tr/teog-istatistikleri-yayimlandi/haber/11409/tr> 19.08.2017

3 <http://www.kamuajans.com/teog/meb-teog-istatistiklerini-yayinladi-h511622.html> 19.08.2017

It can clearly be seen also in the table above that it will be unfair, as mentioned before, to place only foreign language on the failure chair due to its not being able to be taught and learned. Among the scores got in the exams for transition from primary to secondary education, foreign language proficiency score doesn't deserve such specific criticism. Let's take a look at Table-2 which includes quantitative data regarding the results of the Transition to Higher Education (YGS) examination and Undergraduate Placement examination (LYS):

2015-2016-2017 Average YGS Scores (Table-2)

	2015 <sup>4</sup>	2016 <sup>5</sup>	2017 <sup>6</sup>
Turkish	15.8	19.101	17.278
Social Sciences	10.7	10.752	12.308
Basic Mathematics	5.2	7.891	5.128
Science	3.9	4.697	4.611

4 <http://www.ogretmenler.com/haberler/2024-2016-ygs-istatistikleri-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 19.08.2017

5 [PDF]2016-YGS Sayısal Bilgiler - Osym

[dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/2016/YGS/2016\\_YGS\\_Sayisal\\_Bilgiler.pdf](http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/2016/YGS/2016_YGS_Sayisal_Bilgiler.pdf) 19.08.2017

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<http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,13047/2017-ygs-sinav-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 19.08.2017

Even though no average of foreign language scores exists within YGS quantitative data since it doesn't involve any foreign language questions, arithmetic averages of the 4 main group courses listed in Table 2 do exist. Thus, one can not say that the success ratios of the main courses except foreign language are high. To clarify this issue further, let's take a look at Table-3 which covers average LYS scores including those of foreign language:

2015-2016-2017 Average LYS Scores (Table-3)

	2015 <sup>7</sup>	2016 <sup>8</sup>	2017 <sup>9</sup>
LYS1 Mathematics (50 questions)	9.72	9.85	15.68
LYS1 Geometry (30 questions)	3.78	4.22	-----
LYS2 Physics (30 questions)	6.48	5.03	6.82
LYS2 Chemistry (30 questions)	8.75	9.53	10.23
LYS2 Biology (30 questions)	9.78	7.73	10.13
LYS3 Turkish Language and Literature (56 questions)	20.98	27.36	21.80
LYS3 Geography-1 (24 questions)	10.21	7.88	9.30
LYS4 History (44 questions)	13.12	14.87	17.70
LYS4 Geography-2 (14 questions)	5.82	5.09	5.19
LYS4 Philosophy (32 questions)	10.80	9.53	11.90
LYS5 Foreign Language (German) (80 questions)	26.56	24.95	28.85
LYS5 Foreign Language (French) (80 questions)	35.60	31.05	31.14
LYS5 Foreign Language (English) (80 questions)	20.07	20.02	22.73

7 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,59/2015-lys-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 19.08.2017

8 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,12452/2016-lys-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 19.08.2017

9 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,13261/2017-lys-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 19.08.2017

In Table-3, no data on Geometry exists for the year of 2017. This is because there were 80 questions for Maths in LYS1 in 2017 whereas it used to be 50 in the previous years. That is, the 30 questions allocated for LYS1 Geometry were added to LYS1 Maths in 2017. Consequently, the average score of LYS1 Maths in 2017, which is 15.68, is given as a sum of LYS1 Maths (50 questions) and LYS1 Geometry (30 questions) under the category of LYS1 Maths (80 questions).

What is to be understood from the quantitative data given in Table-3 which cover the last 3 years' average LYS scores is that the students who are placed in higher education institutions are not very well equipped. When grouping the lessons in Table-3 under 3 main categories, which are Verbal, Quantitative and Foreign Language, it is seen that Verbal is the field where the most success is attained and then Foreign Language and Quantitative fields come next respectively. This sequence matches up also with the data of the Transition from Primary to Secondary Education Exam (TEOG), Transition to Higher Education Exam (YGS) and Undergraduate Placement Exam (LYS). However, there is a remarkable difference here between Primary and Secondary Education. When the success is assessed on a scale of 0-100 points, it is seen that the students in primary education scored over 50 points in TEOG exam for all the disciplines listed in Table 1 except Maths (43.18) and English (49.71) in 2015, Maths (42.05) in 2016. When calculating the arithmetic mean of the data in the table out of 100 points, it is found to be 61.38 for 2015, 59.83 for 2016 and 67.56 for 2017. Considering these results, it is possible to conclude that education provided to primary education students is statistically successful when calculated on a scale of 0-100. On the other hand, the very same students couldn't achieve the same success when sitting YGS and LYS exams 4 years later. It is seen that they couldn't reach up to 50 points for all the disciplines when calculating the net scores they got in these exams on a scale of 0-100. In other words, they couldn't achieve even a success rate of 50%. In virtue of this fact, one can say that education provided to secondary education students didn't even bring numerical success. In other words, there is an enormous deficiency and defect in the second level of education system, which is secondary education. This is obviously seen at least in the related quantitative data.

The failure in education depicted above is also noticed in the findings of research done by PISA, which is The Programme for International Student Assessment financed by OECD (the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, of which Turkey is a member country). The research is to be carried out in order to measure and evaluate the function of education and published once every 3 years. 72 countries participated in this programme according to the last data, namely the data of 2015, as seen in the table. 35 of these countries including Turkey as one of the founding members are OECD members. The remaining 37 countries are non-member countries involved in this study as participants. When considering world economy, these 72 countries constitute almost 90% of it. This means that 72 countries are economically powerful and take place in the list of developed and developing countries. Countries' having a powerful economy or being categorized as developed or developing country is directly related to education, the importance attached to education, budget allocated for education and education provided to all children, young people and adults, in short related to the education system implemented. The data representing the last 3 results of the survey which has been conducted by PISA every 3 years since 2000 are provided in the table below.

2009-2012-2015 PISA RESULTS (Table-4)

(10)	Mathematics			Science			Reading skills		
	2015	2012	2009	2015	2012	2009	2015	2012	2009
OECD Average	490	494	496	493	501	495	493	496	493
Average across all countries	461	470	465	465	477	471	460	471	464
Turkey's Average	420	448	445	425	463	454	428	475	464
Ranking	50	44	41	54	43	47	50	42	39
The number of participant countries	72	65	65	72	65	65	72	65	65

10 [http://pisa.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PISA2015\\_UlusalRapor.pdf](http://pisa.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PISA2015_UlusalRapor.pdf) 15.11.2017

The research carried out by PISA includes 15-year-olds who have finished or are about to finish their compulsory education or who are currently students. Students of the last grade of elementary education and the first grade of secondary education, which are the 8th grade and 9th grade respectively as their equivalence in our education system, are the target group of this research. As it is known, 8th graders used to sit the Transition to Secondary Education exam named as TEOG (This exam has just been abolished). As mentioned before, education is relatively more successful in primary education than in secondary and higher education when TEOG exam results are taken into consideration. However, when compared to PISA results, TEOG results proved that this success was not realistic at all. As given on the website of Ministry of National Education ([http://pisa.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PISA2015\\_UlusalRapor.pdf](http://pisa.meb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PISA2015_UlusalRapor.pdf)), the objective of PISA is to match up the education provided worldwide with the knowledge and skills intended for citizens. It appears on the above-mentioned website that the research by PISA aims at measuring to what extent the students who finish compulsory education, also referred as "fundamental education", attain core knowledge and skills required to meet real-life challenges and to socialize in the modern society which we were born to and to what extent they can apply all these thanks to the education they receive. The findings of this study aid to make a comparison among the students of participating countries in terms of knowledge, skills and qualifications. It also provides an opportunity to compare the countries in the matter of the quality of education that is provided to citizens by their education systems. By providing data to the countries involved in the research, PISA helps them detect good and bad sides or strong and weak aspects of their education systems. The research assesses the competencies of students in 3 disciplines which are Mathematics, Science and Reading. In 2015, 72 countries participated in the research while it was 65 in 2009 and 2012. According to the global education rankings in 2009, of 65 countries Turkey was ranked 41st for Mathematics (40 countries performed above Turkey), 47th for Science (46 countries performed above Turkey) and 39th for Reading skills (38 countries were ranked higher than Turkey). In 2012, Turkey was rated 44th out of still 65 countries for Mathematics (43 countries performed above Turkey), 43rd for Science (42 countries were better), 42nd for Reading (41 countries performed better). In 2015, the number of the countries participating in the survey increased to 72 and Turkey was placed 50th out of these 72 countries for Mathematics and Reading (49 countries performed better) and 54th for Science (53 countries were better). If we look from a different standpoint and compare the average scores of Turkey to those of 35 participant OECD countries and the other countries involved in the survey, the situation still appears to be to the detriment of Turkey. With its average scores, Turkey portrays an unsuccessful image remaining below both the OECD countries and other participant countries. Furthermore, every survey result is observed to get worse while it is expected to be better than the previous one. Knowing that the survey results ascertain good and bad, strong and weak, successful and unsuccessful aspects of a country's education system, one can easily say that the authorities diverting the education in our country and determining the education policies do not take into consideration these results or they simply underestimate them. Quality of education does not increase by changing the names of the exams as Ministry of National Education does or conducting the exams once or twice. The best example to this case is the following statement of Ismet Yilmaz, the Minister of National Education, on the failure of students in PISA exams despite the education they receive. The speech was included in all media organs (<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/basarisizlik-abide-si-oldu-gundem-2565283/2.12.2017>) as follows: "PISA is not sufficient on its own to reveal the education level of a country". It unfortunately doesn't contribute to the progress of our education to seek the causes of failure in different platforms. The survey findings of ABIDE (Student Academic Performance Monitoring and Evaluation), an exam which is prepared by Ministry of National Education/Assessment and Evaluation Head Office and applied to the 8th graders, show parallelism with PISA results.

ABIDE 2017 RESULTS (TABLE-5)

(11)	Turkish		Mathematics		Science		Social Sciences	
Competency Levels	Number of Students	Student Percentages						
Beginner	1244	3.6	9148	26.4	6203	17.9	2193	6.3
Elementary	7779	22.4	11632	33.6	11945	34.4	8912	25.7
intermediate	15478	44.6	9956	28.7	11544	33.3	14202	40.9
Upper-intermediate	7979	23.0	2856	8.2	3582	10.3	5838	16.8
Advanced	2220	6.4	1066	3.1	1419	4.1	3566	10.3
Sum	34700	100.0	34658	100.0	34693	100.0	34711	100.0

11 <http://www.sozcu.com.tr/2017/egitim/yerli-pisa-olan-abide-de-sonuc-degismedi-2113290/> -1.12.2017

Referring to the table above briefly, it is not possible to read the numbers as "success". "Upper-intermediate and upper" levels are to be considered as success barrier as "intermediate and elementary" levels mean handling a situation and not promising a future. When approached from this standpoint, it is possible to see 29.4% of success and 70.6% of failure in Turkish, 11.3% of success and 88.7% of failure in Mathematics, 14.4% of success and 85.6% of failure in Science, 27.1% of success and 72.9% of failure in Social Sciences. To mention success, at least half of the students and more were required to be at "upper-intermediate and upper" levels. Then we could say that the majority of the students taking the test achieved with a success rate of 50% and above. As can be recalled from the Introduction part of this paper, it has been stated that even our mother tongue, Turkish, can not be taught at a desired level and success rate. This can clearly be seen also in ABIDE results provided before.

As a summary of this part, although it seems successful in numbers according to the Transition to Secondary Education exam -TEOG- results, the education given in primary education institutions is not satisfactory at all when compared with PISA and ABIDE results. Thus, the fact that the education quality of our country is not good is clearly seen from the data of PISA and ABIDE, the results of Secondary education exam and the results of higher education exam which will be mentioned soon.

## **PART-2 (Evaluation of German Language and Other Teaching Programs)**

In this part, we will share certain exam results and data on education received by prospective teachers who selected these teaching programs and were placed accordingly following the transition and placement to higher education exam taken after the secondary education. Thus, we will provide striking information, especially about the quality of education given by German language teaching programs and the quality of teachers trained through these programs. Of all the public universities in Turkey, the most successful institution on teacher training is known to be Gazi Education Faculty within Gazi University, which was founded by Veteran Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and has gained the approval of Turkish nation and the recognition of all non-governmental organizations as well as formal and informal institutions. Division of German Language Teaching in the Department of Foreign Languages Education, Gazi Education Faculty, is one of the most preferred teaching programs. As is also seen in the table, it is the most preferred one. We hereby included only 5 teaching programs. There are totally 15 teaching programs in Turkey. In Table-6, the most preferred programs over the last 5 years are listed in success order and numbered in parentheses from 1 to 5 in accordance with their success ranking.

Rankings of German Language Teaching Programs (Table-6) (12 - 13)

Name of the University	Name of the Faculty	2013 Success Ranking	2014 Success Ranking	2015 Success Ranking	2016 Success Ranking	2017 Success Ranking
Gazi University	Gazi Education Faculty	20.300 (1)	19.600 (1)	22.100 (1)	24.500 (3)	<u>332,39817</u> (2)
Uludağ University (Bursa)	Education Faculty	22.600 (3)	20.900 (2)	22.600 (2)	20.700 (1)	<u>345,60139</u> (1)
Anadolu University (Eskişehir)	Education Faculty Education Faculty	22.600 (2)	21.000 (3)	23.000 (3)	24.300 (2)	<u>326,99180</u> (3)
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	Education Faculty (German)	26.100 (4)	23.200 (4)	25.100 (4)	28.700 (4)	<u>318,50601</u> (4)
19 Mayıs University (Samsun)	Education Faculty	28.400 (6)	26.400 (5)	26.700 (5)	28.900 (5)	<u>313,21794</u> (5)

12<https://www.basarisiralamalari.com/almanca-ogretmenligi-basari-siralamasi-taban-puanlari/> 29.10.2017

13[http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/2017/OSYS/YER/Tablo-4\\_12082017.pdf](http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/2017/OSYS/YER/Tablo-4_12082017.pdf) 29.10.2017

Gazi University German Language Teaching Program has the feature of being the most preferred program, and thus, being a program with the best students when compared to other German Language Teaching programs. In another paper by us, namely "Student Profile of Gazi University German Language Teaching Program", it has been detected that about 75% percent of the students who have attended the program do not know German. It has also been observed that a clear majority of the remaining 25% speak in German only for daily conversation, some do not have a good command of even their mother tongue, which is Turkish, and some have reading comprehension problems. This is because some of these students were born and raised abroad, graduated from high school there, and came to Turkey only for higher education. Some were born and raised abroad, as well, came to Turkey after primary education and graduated from high school in Turkey. Some received only primary education, fully or partially, abroad, and completed the rest of their education in Turkey. Furthermore, almost all of the students comprising the group of 75% are those who aim at any English Language program, but due to the insufficiency of their scores, are placed to German Language Teaching Program based on the second foreign language education they receive at high school (German) and consequently lack motivation. I would like to highlight hereby that if the profiles of the students who have selected German Language Teaching Program are like this, it will not be so difficult to predict the profiles of those who have selected programs which are ranked lower and even the lowest in terms of achievement.

Here is some quantitative data that demonstrates the academic standing of the students of Gazi University German Language Teaching Program, which is a program selected by the best students in Turkey to study German Language Teaching. The data given below are obtained from Student Information System at Gazi University. The information presented belong to the Academic year of 2016-2017, Autumn and Spring semesters. Only departmental courses are included in the table. Non-departmental courses like general knowledge, professional knowledge and foreign language are not included. If we included also non-departmental courses, both class averages and achievement averages could be higher.

2016-2017 AUTUMN SEMESTER (Table-7) (14)

Course Code and Name	Class Average	Number of Students	Pass		Failure		Absenteeism		
				%		%		%	
Elective-I (German-Turkish Translation)	87.48	34	34	100	0	0	0	0	
Elective-III (German-Turkish Translation)	90.74	37	37	100	0	0	0	0	
German Textbook Analysis and Evaluation	87.87	42	37	100	0	0	5	11.9	
German for Specific Purposes-I	92	48	44	100	0	0	4	8.3	
Language Acquisition	91.17	37	34	97.1	1	2.9	2	5.4	
Verbal Communication Skills-I	73.33	46	42	91.3	4	8.7	0	0	
Linguistics	74.22	56	49	94.2	3	4.8	4	7.1	
Advanced Oral Expression-I	77.60	58	48	88.9	6	11.1	4	6.9	
German Literature-I	71.25	40	29	82.8	6	17.2	5	12.5	
German Grammar-I	62.13	53	36	72	14	28	3	5.7	
Reading Skills-I	61.80	56	40	71.4	16	28.6	0	0	
Writing Skills-I	48.62	75	45	64.3	25	35.7	5	6.7	
Approaches to German Language Teaching-I	47.72	68	40	61.5	25	38.5	3	4.4	
Literary Text Analysis and Teaching-I	57.06	38	19	50	15	39.5	4	10.5	
2016-2017 SPRING SEMESTER									
Elective-IV (Turkish-German Translation)	81.83	46	46	100	0	0	0	0	
Verbal Communication Skills-II	78.05	44	41	93.2	3	6.8	0	0	
Teaching German as a Foreign Language to Young Learners	81.37	34	32	96.9	1	3.1	1	3	
Advanced Oral Expression-II	80.86	55	53	98.1	1	1.9	1	1.8	
Elective-II (Turkish-German Translation)	81.32	37	35	97.2	1	2.8	1	2.7	
Special Teaching Methods-II	77.83	33	30	93.8	2	6.2	1	3	
German Literature-II	73.52	34	29	85.3	5	14.7	0	0	
Linguistics-II	74.26	56	48	85.7	8	14.3	0	0	
Literary Text Analysis and Teaching-II	59.42	32	22	68.7	10	31.3	0	0	
Comparative Cultural Studies	64.70	49	39	81.3	9	18.7	1	2	
Comparative Grammar	67.60	55	42	77.8	12	22.2	1	1.8	
Reading Skills-II	54.57	55	41	74.5	14	25.5	0	0	
German Grammar-II	59.03	52	36	70.6	15	29.4	1	1.9	
Approaches to German Language Teaching-II	49.55	57	40	70.2	17	29.8	0	0	
Writing Skills-II	53.70	61	37	63.8	21	36.2	3	4.9	

14 [https://ogrenci.gazi.edu.tr/ogretim\\_uyeleri/htmlNavigate.php?ReqID=DERS\\_BSR\\_LIS\\_EKR&myID=fb6aad28581b84c7475df38d152be339](https://ogrenci.gazi.edu.tr/ogretim_uyeleri/htmlNavigate.php?ReqID=DERS_BSR_LIS_EKR&myID=fb6aad28581b84c7475df38d152be339) 1.12.2017

As seen in the table 7, the results are really satisfactory when we look at the class averages and achievement averages. The number of the students registered to the courses given in the table in Autumn semester were 688, but 39 of them were absentees. Thus, they are excluded as they do not have any impact on neither success nor failure and thus 649 students are included in the evaluation. As for Spring semester, 690 students are evaluated. 534 of these 649 students evaluated in Autumn semester passed the exams in 14 school subjects.

That is, 82.3% of the students were successful and 115 of them, which is 17.7%, were unsuccessful. In addition, the success ratio of the successful students is 83.8% and the failure ratio of the unsuccessful students is 16.2%. Of the 690 students evaluated in Spring semester, 571 students, which is 82.8%, achieved a success ratio of 83.8% in the exams of 15 school subjects. 119 of them, which is 17.2%, were unsuccessful at a ratio of 16.2%. A success rate of 82%-84%, which was achieved during Autumn and Spring semesters of 2016-2017 Academic Year, is too high to underestimate. Much higher rates (app. 88-90%) are to be seen when we examine the previous years (<https://ogrenci.gazi.edu.tr/>). From these achievement rates, one can claim that the graduates of Gazi University German Language Teaching Program are well trained prospective teachers of German language with good field knowledge as it is proven by the achievement rates obtained from the exam results. If we consider a score of 85 and above as "excellent" when assessed on a scale of 0-100 points, achieving a rate above 85% means having field knowledge almost at an excellent level.

After primary and secondary education, now it is time to verify the achievement rate of education provided in Higher Education by means of quantitative data. Let's see if the quantitative data obtained from the exams taken after higher education, namely success rates, can come up to desired figures. To understand this, we would like to look at the results of KPSS, an examination taken by all graduates of higher education to join the civil service. The focus of the analysis is particularly on the results covering content-knowledge. This is because it is the section which includes questions specifically in relation to the discipline the graduate has studied. It will give us an opportunity to make a comparison with the success rate of 85-90% which was achieved by the students of Gazi German Language Teaching Program. Since this is the matter in hand, the sections related to teaching profession, for sure, attracts our attention more. Quantitative data attained from KPSS examination regarding the teaching profession will be shared hereby.

The results covering "General Knowledge and Aptitude Test" which is taken by all candidates in KPSS are, as well, of importance for us. Just like the previously provided ones, here is a table illustrating the quantitative data of KPSS exam this time, with figures again belonging to the last 3 years of the exam, which is 2015, 2016 and 2017.

2015-2016-2017 KPSS UNDERGRADUATE AVERAGES (Table-8)

	2015 <sup>15</sup>	2016 <sup>16</sup>	2017 <sup>17</sup>
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE	21.564	23.176	24.010
GENERAL APTITUDE	22.869	21.384	20.511
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES	38.946	41.031	33.833

15 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,90/2015-kpss-a-grubu-ve-ogretmenlik-ile-oabt-sinav-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017

16 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,12450/2016-kpss-lisans-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017

17 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,13200/2017-kpss-a-grubu-ve-ogretmenlik-sinavi-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017

Anyone who completes higher education with a note-worthy degree, graduates and receives the well deserved diploma shall sit and pass the exam of KPSS if he/she is enthusiastic about being a public servant. In this exam, it is a must for all candidates to answer General Knowledge (60) and General Aptitude (60) questions, but the following tests vary according to the fields the candidates have studied. Graduates of Education Faculty, in other words prospective teachers, who are our subject matter, should sit Educational Sciences (80 questions) Test and the related Pedagogical Content Knowledge Test (50 questions) in addition to General Aptitude and General Knowledge Tests.

According to Table-8, prospective teachers do not appear to be successful quantitatively in General Aptitude, General Knowledge and Educational Sciences Tests. It can be seen that only in year 2016 a success rate of about 50% was achieved in the field of Educational Sciences with a net of 41.031 out of 80 questions, which means that it slightly surpassed 50 out of 100 points.

2015-2016-2017 KPSS PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TEST (OABT) AVERAGES (Table-9)

	2015 <sup>18</sup>	2016 <sup>19</sup>	2017 <sup>20</sup>
Turkish	30.809	32.637	29.896
Primary Mathematics	19.803	17.150	16.925
Science/ Science and Technology	14.589	16.464	11.777
Social Sciences	26.245	29.242	23.798
Turkish Language and Literature	25.092	22.816	18.326
History	21.097	27.039	20.958
Geography	22.208	25.511	24.194
Mathematics (High School)	14.747	9.994	11.877
Physics	16.399	15.377	16.198
Chemistry	14.574	16.503	14.091
Biology	12.899	17.032	21.180
Ethics and Religious Culture	25.209	25.879	29.435
Foreign Language (English)	23.247	27.295	24.439
Foreign Language (German)	17.484	14.239	-----
Psychological Counselling and Guidance	30.760	31.964	34.714
Primary School Teaching	26.271	24.338	23.309
Preschool Teaching	-----	26.550	28.891

18 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,90/2015-kpss-a-grubu-ve-ogretmenlik-ile-oabt-sinav-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017 19 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,12611/2016-kpss-oabt-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017

20 <http://www.osym.gov.tr/TR,13307/2017-kpss-oabt-sonuclarina-iliskin-sayisal-bilgiler.html> 20.08.2017

Pedagogical Content Knowledge Test (OABT) is an exam which is attended by prospective teachers in accordance with their fields and composed of 50 questions. It was first conducted in 2013, so it has been implemented for 5 years. In the previous exams conducted, questions related to several teaching fields did not use to be included and this resulted in injustices. In the last 5 years, these injustices have been at least decreased a little with content-knowledge tests even though not in all fields. For instance, any questions regarding German language didn't use to be asked before to the graduates of German Language Teaching Program. They were being appointed in accordance with their success rankings obtained in the tests of only General Aptitude, General Knowledge and Educational Sciences without being assessed in terms of their knowledge of German Language. This would, most of the time, cause the examinees who were not successful in German but in General Aptitude, General Knowledge and Educational Sciences to outperform those who were successful in German but not in General Aptitude, General Knowledge and Educational Sciences. Thus, the one who did not have a good command of German language was being appointed.

Prospective teachers with a good command of German are not capable of improving their knowledge and comprehension of Turkish language solely through their higher education since they are generally those who are born and raised in Germany and complete their primary and secondary education there. Thus, they can't answer the questions asked in KPSS. The situation that is being clarified hereby was leading to not only strange but also unfair practice. Fortunately, there has been a little improvement in recent years.

After this evaluation, let's take a look at Table-9 for the results of the tests composed of 50 questions and taken by prospective teachers in accordance with their fields. Considering the field knowledge tests in which more than 50% of the questions were correctly answered, Psychological Counselling and Guidance became first with an achievement rate over 60% in the aforementioned 3 years with the scores of 61.5, 64 and 69.4 respectively on a scale of 0-100 points; Turkish Language was ranked the second with the scores of 61.6, 65.2 and 59.8; Preschool Teaching was ranked the third with the scores of 53.1 and 57.8; Ethics and Religious Culture was ranked the fourth with the scores of 50.4, 51.7 and 58.8; Social Sciences was ranked the fifth with 52.5, 58.5 and 47.6. Turkish Language and Literature, History, Geography, English and Primary School Teaching were the fields which scored over 50% only once in 3 years. Other teaching fields such as Primary Mathematics, Science, Mathematics (High School), Physics, Chemistry, Biology and German Language couldn't score over 50% in these 3 years. The most unsuccessful field is observed as Mathematics (High School).

When it comes to the field of Foreign Language, which is our area of interest in particular, it is observed that English Language scored 46.5 in 2015, 54.6 in 2016 and 48.9 in 2017; German Language had the scores of 34.9 in 2015 and 28.5 in 2016. When compared to English Language, failure in the field of German Language Teaching is clearly seen. These results are too low, weak and unsatisfactory to be compared with an achievement rate of around 85-90% which was obtained by the students or prospective teachers who studied Gazi German Language Teaching Program. Why these candidates who graduate from their schools with an excellent degree and command of German Language, on the other hand, fail in Pedagogical Content Knowledge Test is really a serious problem that should be scrutinized and discussed.

## **RESULTS AND SOLUTIONS**

At the beginning of this paper, it was stated that the process of teaching was not sufficiently carried out and education, particularly in foreign language, was not successful. It was also mentioned that the whole failure and demerits were not solely of foreign language teaching but also in other fields, no progress was made. In brief, it was claimed that the whole education system itself was responsible for all this failure. The failure in our education system has recently begun to be frequently mentioned by the authorities, as well. Although the political force and Ministry of National Education authorities including the minister himself do not call this failure as "failure", the President himself expressed that achievement was not maintained in the early days of 2017-2018 Academic Year (when he gave a speech on the removal of TEOG). What authorities have admitted and approved us on is that it is our education system which is unsuccessful when considered in general and it is foreign language teaching, particularly foreign language teacher training, which is unsuccessful when considered specifically.

The presence of failure at all stages of education is clearly demonstrated in our study by quantitative data given in tables. Quantitative data of foreign language education that is provided from 4th grade to 8th grade (8th grade included) in Primary education can be seen in the results of TEOG which is applied to all 8th grade students in two phases by the Ministry of National Education itself. It is clearly seen that although foreign language score is quantitatively above 50% according to TEOG exam, it is not a value worth appreciation. However, we should give credit to primary education for this achievement rate when compared to secondary and higher education which haven't achieved this success yet. It is detected that students achieved over 55% in all subjects according to the results of TEOG exam held in late 2016-2017 Academic Year, whereas secondary education students couldn't attain a success rate of 50% in any of the subjects in YGS and LYS exams. One shouldn't let this success rate of the national TEOG exam, which is around 55%, deceive anybody because the results of the international PISA survey and its alternative, ABIDE exam, which are applied to the same age group of students reveal that our education quality is in a poor condition. Prospective teachers who graduate from higher education appear to be unsuccessful in KPSS General Aptitude, General Knowledge and Educational Sciences tests with one exception: achievement at 50% in Educational Sciences Test held in 2016. It is detected that a clear majority of the same students didn't achieve even a success rate of 50% in their related teaching fields including Foreign Languages (only prospective teachers of English Language had a success of 54% in 2016) and excluding some other fields.

There is one more point worth underlining. Our students are mostly unsuccessful in the international and national exams they sit. Quantitative data are provided in the tables. However, when both exam results and diploma grades are taken into consideration, primary, secondary and higher education students appear to be successful numerically at high rates in the courses they take during their education life. To illustrate, the success rates achieved by the students of Gazi German Language Teaching Program in the courses taken during 2016-2017 Academic year are given in Table-7. In brief, our students appear to be successful during their education life but they are extraordinarily unsuccessful in national exams. This explicitly seems to be a contradiction. Then, the education received by the students, in other words provided to the students, is deficient and insufficient and most importantly unsuccessful.

In order to eliminate all the problems mentioned above, it should be an urgent task of all public and private institutions to find out the reasons behind the failure, which is tangibly present in all fields and at all stages of our education system overall and verified by the quantitative data as well, and to turn this failure into success by working on the reasons and putting solutions into effect by taking proper precautions. All attempts made with the intention of improving the education system and making progress such as the changes made in testing systems and their names, annual amendments in teaching programs and curriculums, the changes and transformations in the names, statuses and functions of schools and educational institutions, the changes, promotions and designations in the administrative staff- from the top position, which is Minister of National Education, to the principals and administrators of the schools- did not help, suffice or solve the problem.

Many more problems on this subject can be mentioned. In brief, teaching ought to be left to educators because success in any field is only possible when the job is left to its expert. Selected experts should be the experts of the same field with different worldviews; otherwise, workgroups composed of experts whose perspectives are similar to the government's, which is a single perspective, can not offer a picture different from the present unsuccessful one. Moreover, educators should be given the freedom in their workplace, especially in universities. How much contribution can a school director who is not authorized even to decide on school start times (this decision is given by governorate or the minister) or a teacher who doesn't have the freedom to choose the right textbook for the students make to increase the quality of education?

In order to increase the quality of teachers and enable the prospective teachers to be well-informed, skilled and well-equipped both in the profession and the field, we suggest raising the profile of the students who will attend German Language Teaching Program, guiding, training and preparing them as of secondary education. To achieve this, the very same system applied to the students of English language teaching programs can be implemented. Language classes in secondary education are held only for English language programs; that is, students who choose to enroll in English language teaching programs appear to be with a substantial level of English which is attained through secondary education. As for those who are not successful enough or lacking some knowledge, prep classes are already available. When considered from this point of view, prospective teachers who graduate from English language teaching program are much more competent than those who graduate from German language teaching program in terms of knowledge, skills and qualifications. Thus, German language classes should be generated in secondary education for programs such as German Language Teaching, Philology, Literature or Translation & Interpretation as in English. Teachers should be trained well first if we want to increase the quality of education and teach a foreign language to our students. Enabling the profession of teaching to be preferred by smart and hardworking students ought to be maintained by transforming it into an attractive, prestigious, desired and highly paid profession. Level of development in societies is directly related to the importance and value attributed to education.

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