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A COMPARISON OF THE CURRICULA OF ENGLISH PHILOLOGY DEPARTMENTS IN KAZAKHSTAN AND TURKEY

Abstract. English philology students make up one of the essential segments of the whole university student population both in Kazakhstan and Turkey. Apart from the possibility of continuing their graduate education in philology departments or working as teachers in state or private schools, numerous English philology graduates find jobs in the business world. Today, because growing foreign businesses and even state-owned offices need various documents to be translated while various spoken and written contexts need speakers and writers of English, these new graduates can and do fill a critical gap in such areas. In both countries, these realities add to the need for educating English language speakers as proficient users of English. Hence, the aim of this paper is to have a closer look at the curricula used in English philology departments in both countries to suggest some ideas to improve the content of the curricula. Suggestions that emerge from this comparison, in relation to the qualities of novice graduates as expected by the business world, will shed light on how future curriculum changes will help to fill the gap between the givens of the curricula and the needs of the external world.

Keywords: philology, university, humanities, English language and literature, department.

Introduction. In his discussion on the place of English departments in the USA, Parker (1967) underlines that the concept of English departments has been problematic and argues that even in England and the USA, such departments under the name of English have changed their characters many times in the brief century of their existence (351). Although such discussions on the place of English language and literature departments have already taken place in countries where English is the mother tongue or official language of the over-ruling majority of society, a similar portrait can be seen in Kazakhstan and Turkey, where the need for English language speakers is continuously growing.

Because “higher education is a key economic and social driver” that expands one country’s output, “countries are engaging in postsecondary reforms aimed at expanding access, improving educational quality, and ensuring financial responsibility and sustainability” (Hartley and friends, 2016, 278). In today’s business world, knowledge of English appears to be of utmost importance, especially when finding a job is considered. Both Kazakhstan and Turkey are similar in that they continuously update their educational materials and curricula while having a heterogeneous composition of students. Likewise, both countries have strictly centralized systems that decide on what to be taught and when suggesting that curricula at all levels are framed by means of centralized entities.

The first academic department concentrating on English philology operating at a Turkish university was founded in 1933 as a part of widespread educational reforms. As stated by Tapan and Kuruyazıcı (2020), in Istanbul University, the first department on English philology, as a part of a larger Western Philology unit, became a part of Turkey’s new university system. The establishment of similar

philology departments followed this introduction opened at Ankara University's Language, History, and Geography Faculty, and since then, various departments have been established offering BA, MA, and Ph.D. level degrees in English Studies under a variety of names, including English Language and Literature or English Culture and Literature.

“In recent decades, the English language has become an asset as the language of technology, commerce, education, entertainment, science, tourism, and the Internet” (Paola Diaz & Arikan, 2016, 155). As the importance of the knowledge of the English language becomes more obvious, the pressing need for attaining such knowledge becomes fundamentally important. To meet this need, English philology departments remain as the single most significant resource for various countries mainly because the graduates of these departments withhold only one single quality in their repertoire of qualities, that is their high command of English. This need for English language teachers is visible in both countries, where the serious shortage of English language teachers was deeply felt in Kazakhstan in 2002 (see Fierman, 2006). Similar shortages were also observed severely in the 1950s and then in the 1990s in Turkey (see Özdemir, 2012).

Considering these departments' student output, many English language speakers find jobs as teachers of English or as translators upon graduation. In contrast, many others work in the tourism sector mainly because “one of the most important parts of ensuring the sustainability of customer satisfaction and loyalty is personnel and customer communication” (Arikan & Yücel, 2019, 658). Arikan and Yücel (2019) further note that when the case of the staff working in various hotels in Antalya is considered, almost all personnel recognize the fundamental importance of proficiency in foreign languages, especially in English. Likewise, the case of the English language and literature departments in Kazakhstan portray a similar picture in that almost all graduates of the program become English language teachers all around the country. Hence, in both programs, almost all graduates become English language teachers while they may continue to take part in various graduate degree programs.

Having considered the importance of the English language in both countries and the importance of English philology departments that cater for the staff needs of the growing business enterprises, this study aims to compare the university level curricula used in two philology departments in Kazakhstan and Turkey in a way to suggest some changes such as offering additional courses or replacing some with some others. However, because all curricula in Kazakhstan are decided by the centralized government, which yields no chance to the philology department to change the compulsory courses in Kazakhstan, suggestions for this specific program focus on the delivery of the course content as well.

Methods. In this qualitative study, the comparative methodology was employed in tandem with the document analysis. As Greator et al. (2019) argue, documentary evidence plays a critical role in comparing two or more curricula. Additionally, documents provide insightful accounts about the phenomenon in question as they are recorded without the researcher's intervention (Bowen, 2009), and they also help the researcher reveal new meanings, deepen understanding and discover insights relevant to the research problem (Merriam, 1988, 118). From this standpoint, document analysis was employed to understand the nature of the data; the two curricula used in the countries mentioned (see the Appendices). First, tables were prepared to understand the coursework that needed to be completed by the students. This tabulated data, then, was used to find the similarities and differences between the two curricula. Finally, by commenting on the differences

and similarities, the researchers suggested ways to improve their curricula. A sample curriculum used in a Turkish state university is given in Appendix A, while the one that is used in its Kazakhstani counterpart is given in Appendix B.

Findings. In the Turkish university, students must take a total of 240 credits to graduate. The curriculum consists of compulsory and elective courses, and the curriculum used in the English philology department in Turkey has the following features:

1. Students' first year prepares them for literature courses that require extensive knowledge of the English language. Therefore, compulsory courses such as Academic Reading and Writing, Syntax and Semantics, and Listening and Pronunciation aim to prepare these students' upcoming courses that require higher-order skills so that such course content can be manageable.

2. In the first year, students are also taught two courses titled "Introduction to Cultural Studies I" and "Introduction to Cultural Studies II." The existence of these courses suggests that students' comprehension of the cultural content of the upcoming years' curricular work is facilitated by means of teaching them the fundamental terminology of cultural studies.

3. Again, in the first year, Short Story and Novel Analysis and Poetry and Drama Analysis courses are given as pillow courses that give the students the basic terminology that they can use while studying the course content awaiting in the upcoming years.

4. The compulsory courses offered in the second year are Mythology I and II, History of British Culture I and II, and Survey of English Literature I and II. These courses continue to prepare students for the upcoming literature courses in which textual analysis is to be performed. Hence, the first- and second-year courses can be considered a time period during which students increase their knowledge of the English language and cultural terms and discussions. Such a curricular perspective premises that understanding literary and cultural texts and performing textual analysis cannot be possible unless the students are made ready for such activities.

5. The third and fourth years are the time periods for students during which they are exposed to literary texts in the English language. Students take compulsory courses that enable them to read and analyze texts written in the genres of short story, drama, novel, and poetry. Students also read Shakespeare's poetry and prose work in their fourth year.

6. In their fourth year, students take two courses on literary criticism and theory. This may suggest that this course is considered one of the most challenging courses with which students must tackle because of its abstract content that does not depend on reading and analysis of texts but requires knowledge of lengthy discussions on criticism from a historical perspective.

7. Finally, students take a course on the history of American literature and another one on the history of American literature. These are the only two compulsory courses on American studies.

8. A review of the elective courses in the curriculum suggests that students are free to concentrate on the literary or cultural aspects of the degree program or can even develop themselves towards working as English language teachers. Hence, all of these elective courses are designed to be categorized under one of the following streams, namely, cultural studies, literature, and pedagogy.

In the Kazakhstani university, students must take a total of 260 credits to graduate. The curriculum consists of compulsory and elective courses, and the curriculum used in the English philology department in the Kazakhstani university has the following features:

1. First-year students study Basics of English, such as Basic English B1 level, Foreign language 1, Practical Grammar. These are compulsory Courses. At school, students have a basic English A-level. In addition, they also study courses related to humanities and technology, such as Computer Sciences, History of Kazakhstan, Kazakh/Russian language and art etc.

2. In the first year course also the students begin their study from the English Grammar in order to build their speech correctly. In this meaning, they hold the Grammar according to the program in the textbook by the author V. D. Arakin. The existence of these courses suggests that students' comprehension of the content of the upcoming years' curricular work is facilitated by means of teaching them the fundamental terminology of grammar and phonetics studies.

3. From the beginning, students study theoretical courses such as Country Study, Fundamentals of Language Theories, etc. This year they also begin studying literatures through a course called Home Reading. It means that they take any literary book – read them, analyze it taking into account the lexis of the texts. These courses are given as pillow courses that give the students the basic terminology that they can use while studying the course content awaiting in the upcoming years.

4. The compulsory courses as Basic English, Basic English Language B2, Basic English Language C1-1, Basic English Language C1-2 are offered each year. These courses continue to prepare students for the upcoming literature courses in which textual analysis is performed. So, the first- and second-year courses can be considered a time period during which students increase their knowledge of the English language and discussions. Such a curricular perspective premises that understanding literary and cultural texts and performing textual analysis cannot be possible unless the students are made ready for such activities. These courses bring them to study such courses as Language for Academic Purposes and Interpretation of Literary Texts.

5. In the fourth year, students take Creative Writing as a preparation for writing essays or for preparing themselves for IELTS tests. Students are exposed to literary texts in the English language. Students take compulsory courses such as Stylistics for analyzing the texts, which enable them to read and analyze texts written in the genres of short story, drama, novel, and poetry.

A review of the elective courses in the curriculum suggests that students are free to choose one of these courses in order to concentrate on the literary or cultural aspects as the direction is Literary, or they can even develop themselves towards working as English language teachers. Besides below, after the tables are given the pre-requisites, such courses are designed in the curriculum for those who want to transfer from other specialties. They pass these courses for about one month and after that take exams according to the credits.

Discussion and Conclusion. It must be expected that universities must prepare their students for their professional needs as these graduates will have to work in fields in which they must possess certain skills to perform well in their jobs. Although almost all of the graduates of both departments become English language teachers, the Turkish curriculum lacks a compulsory course that introduces teachers to the field of teaching. However, the Kazakhstani curriculum has compulsory courses on teaching methods. When the professional preparation of these students, who mostly become teachers, is considered, having compulsory courses on teaching methods appears to be a strength of the curriculum, which is lacking in the Turkish curriculum.

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Appendix A

The Curriculum of an English Philology Department in Turkey

First Year/ First Semester/ Courses	Status	ECTS
Academic Reading and Writing I	Comp.	5
Syntax and Semantics I	Comp.	3
Listening and Pronunciation	Comp.	3
Introduction to Cultural Studies I	Comp.	5
Short Story and Novel Analysis	Comp.	6
Turkish Language I	Comp.	2
Atatürk’s Principles and History of Revolution I	Comp.	2

First Year/ Second Semester/ Courses	Status	ECTS
Academic Reading and Writing II	Comp.	5
Syntax and Semantics II	Comp.	3
Listening and Speaking	Comp.	3
Introduction to Cultural Studies II	Comp.	4
Poetry and Drama Analysis	Comp.	5
Turkish Language II	Comp.	2
Atatürk’s Principles and History of Revolution II	Comp.	2
Career Planning	Comp.	2

Second Year/ Third Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Mythology I	Comp.	6
History of British Culture I	Comp.	6
Survey of English Literature I	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

Second Year/ Fourth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Mythology II	Comp.	6
History of British Culture II	Comp.	6
Survey of English Literature II	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

Third Year/ Fifth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
British Short Story	Comp.	6
British Novel I	Comp.	6
British Drama I	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

Third Year/ Sixth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
British Poetry	Comp.	6
British Novel II	Comp.	6
British Drama II	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

Fourth Year/ Seventh Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Literary Criticism I	Comp.	6
Shakespeare: His Time and Poems	Comp.	6
History of American Culture	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

Fourth Year/ Eighth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Literary Criticism II	Comp.	6
Shakespeare: Drama and Staging	Comp.	6
History of American Literature	Comp.	6
12 (ECTS) CREDITS FROM ELECTIVE COURSES MUST BE TAKEN BY STUDENTS		

A sample of elective courses: Literature and Music, Selections from World Literature, Introduction to Children's Literature, Art History, Teaching of Culture, Renaissance Art and Literature, Sociology of Literature, Literary Translation, British History, American History, Teaching Language Skills, American Poetry, etc.

Appendix B

The Curriculum of an English Philology Department in Kazakhstan

First Year/ First Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Harmonization of the Educational Environment and the Learner	Comp.	5
Foreign Language 1	Comp.	5
Kazakh (Russian) Language 1	Comp.	5
Information and Communication Technologies	Comp.	5
Practical Grammar of English Language	Comp.	5
Basic English Language B1	Comp.	5
Physical Education	Comp.	2
First Year/ Second Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Foreign Language 2	Comp.	5
Kazakh (Russian) Language 2	Comp.	5
Educational Practice	Comp.	2
Basic English Language in the Context of Intercultural Communication	Comp.	5
Phonetics of the English Language	Comp.	5
Oral Speech Practice	Comp.	5
Physical Education	Comp.	2
Second Year/ Third Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Philosophy	Comp.	5
SPK2 (Political, Cultural)	Comp.	4
Business English Language	Comp.	4
Basic English Language B2-1	Comp.	5
Home Reading	Comp.	3
Interpretation of English Literature	Comp.	3
Fundamentals of Language Theory	Comp.	5
Country Study	Comp.	4
Second Year/ Fourth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Spiritual Succession (from Al-Farabi to Hakim Abay)	Comp.	3
SPK1 (Sociology, Psychology)	Comp.	4
Second Foreign Language A1	Comp.	5
Basic English Language B2-2	Comp.	5
Pedagogical Practice 1	Comp.	4
Sociopolitical Lexis	Comp.	4
Third Year/ Fifth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Applied Economics	Comp.	3
Climate Change and "Green" Economy	Comp.	3
Theoretical Grammar of the English Language	Comp.	5
Basic Second Foreign Language A2	Comp.	5
Basic English Language C1-1	Comp.	5
Lexicology of the English Language	Comp.	5
Third Year/ Sixth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Organizing Distance Learning: Tools and Technologies	Comp.	5

Business Law	Comp.	3
Foundations of Life Safety	Comp.	3
Basic Second Foreign Language B1	Comp.	3
Basic English Language C1-2	Comp.	4
Stylistics of the English Language	Comp.	4
Professionally- Oriented Methods of Teaching a Foreign Language	Comp.	5
Pedagogical Practice 2	Comp.	4
English for Media Literacy	Comp.	3
Fourth Year/ Seventh Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Fundamentals of Research, Commercialization and Academic Writing	Comp.	4
Skills Management	Comp.	4
Entrepreneurial Business	Comp.	4
Second Foreign Language B2	Comp.	4
Lexicology of the English Language	Comp.	5
Developing Creative Writing Skills in English	Comp.	4
Literature of Great Britain	Comp.	3
Stylistics of the English Language	Comp.	4
Language for Academic Purposes	Comp.	3
Fourth Year/ Eighth Semester Courses	Status	ECTS
Basic English Language C 2	Comp.	5
Stylistic Analysis of a Literary Text	Comp.	5
Annotation and Referencing Scientific Work	Comp.	4
Pre-graduation Internship (Field Practice 3)	Comp.	4
Writing and Defending a Thesis (Project) or Preparing and Passing Two Comprehensive Exams	Comp.	12

A sample of elective courses: Professional Applications of Specialty, Analysis of Literary Text, Linguistic Typology and Language Universals, Literature of the Studied Country, Languages from the Beginning.

Pre-requisites: Basic English in the Context of Intercultural Communication, Practical Grammar of the English Language, Basic English B1, Basic English B2, Second Foreign Language A1, Basic English Phonetics, Social-political lexis.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАН ЖӘНЕ ТҮРКИЯДАҒЫ АҒЫЛШЫН ФИЛОЛОГИЯСЫ БӨЛІМІНДЕГІ ОҚУ БАҒДАРЛАМАЛАРЫНЫҢ АРАСЫНДАҒЫ АЙЫРМАШЫЛЫҚТАР

Аннотация. Ағылшын тілінің филолог студенттері Қазақстандағы және Түркиядағы университеттердің барлық студенттік тұрғындарының маңызды бөлігін құрайды. Жоғары білімін филология факультеттерінде жалғастыру немесе мемлекеттік немесе жеке мектептерде оқытушы болып жұмыс істеу мүмкіндігімен қатар, ағылшын филологиясының көптеген түлектері іскерлік әлемде жұмыс табады.

Бүгінгі таңда дамып келе жатқан шетелдік бизнес және тіпті мемлекеттік мекемелер әртүрлі құжаттарды аударуды қажет ететіндіктен, әр түрлі ауызша және жазбаша контексте ағылшын тілінде сөйлейтіндер мен жазушылар қажет болса, бұл жаңа түлектер осындай салалардағы маңызды тапсырмаларды орындай алады. Екі елде де бұл шындық ағылшын тілін тәжірибелі қолданушылар ретінде оқыту қажеттілігін күшейтеді. Демек, осы мақаланың мақсаты екі елдегі ағылшын филологиясының факультеттерінде қолданылатын оқу бағдарламаларын егжей-тегжейлі зерделеу, оқу бағдарламаларының мазмұнын жақсарту бойынша кейбір идеяларды ұсыну болып табылады. Осы салыстырудың нәтижесінде пайда болатын ұсыныстар бизнес әлемі күткен жаңадан келген түлектердің сапасына қатысты болашақ оқу жоспарларындағы өзгерістер оқу жоспарлары мен сыртқы әлемнің қажеттіліктеріне жауап бере алады.

Тірек сөздер: филология, университет, гуманитарлық ғылымдар, Ағылшын тілі және әдебиеті, кафедра.

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РАЗЛИЧИЯ МЕЖДУ УЧЕБНЫМИ ПРОГРАММАМИ ОТДЕЛЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОЙ ФИЛОЛОГИИ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ И ТУРЦИИ

Аннотация. Студенты-филологи английского языка составляют значительную часть всего студенческого населения университетов Казахстана и Турции. Помимо возможности продолжить свое высшее образование на филологических факультетах или работать преподавателем в государственных или частных школах, многие выпускники английской филологии находят работу в деловом мире. Поскольку сегодня развивающийся иностранный бизнес и даже государственные учреждения требуют перевода различных документов, эти новые выпускники могут выполнять важные задачи в таких областях, если им нужны носители английского языка и писатели в различных устных и письменных контекстах. В обеих странах эта реальность усиливает необходимость преподавания английского языка как опытных пользователей. Следовательно, целью данной статьи является детальное изучение учебных программ, используемых на факультетах английской филологии в обеих странах, представление некоторых идей по улучшению содержания учебных программ. Предложения, которые появляются в результате этого сравнения изменения в будущих учебных планах относительно качества начинающих выпускников, которых ожидает бизнес-мир, могут отвечать потребностям в учебных планах и внешнем мире.

Ключевые слова: филология, университет, гуманитарные науки, английский язык и литература, кафедра.