

**Results of the Students' Lecturer Evaluations and Evaluations of Their Own Learning-Outcomes in Accordance with the Bologna Process in German as a Second Foreign Language Program (G2FL)**

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**Abstract**

*Purpose of the Study:* While preparing for the Bologna process at our university, student involvement was essential. During the university-wide, end of semester survey, students were asked to evaluate their instructors as well as their individual learning outcomes. Our goal, in the Department of G2FL, was to quantitatively analyze the survey results, the effectiveness of the Department's language teaching methods and ultimately to ascertain student learning outcomes.

*Methods:* In the first part of the survey, students evaluated their instructors. They answered 15 questions using a five-point scale. In the second part of the survey, they evaluated their own learning outcomes in five language competencies. The data obtained from the students' evaluation were qualitatively analyzed by the German Department.

*Findings:* Based on the survey results, the G2FL Department scored higher than the entire university. Most of the students rated themselves good/very good in listening, reading, and writing skills. However, they gave themselves lower marks in the two-way conversation and the oral explanation competencies.

*Discussions:* After the survey, the opinions of 778 students in German Language courses were evaluated by 12 German Language Lecturers. Finally, the opinions of both students and instructors were analyzed by the Department Head.

*Conclusion:* We concluded that our teaching strategy should include a greater emphasis on improving student conversational competency in German. As such, this year-end survey identifies essential learning, concomitantly, the teaching of specific competencies. Once the results are analyzed in detail, they are very useful for improving the quality of teaching as well as learning.

*Keywords:* German as a second foreign language (G2FL), quality assurance, European credit transfer system (ECTS), learning outcomes, Bologna process.

### **Introduction**

In 1999, the Bologna Declaration was ratified by 29 European countries to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications among the European universities. Today, 47 European countries participate in the process and the process was expected to be completed in 2010.

The Council of Higher Education in Turkey (CHET) has also issued a regulation concerning "Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement" on September 20, 2005. The Bologna Process has been defined by the Council as "an intergovernmental European reform process aimed at establishing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010." The "corner stones" of such an open space are "mutual recognition of degrees and other higher education qualifications, transparency (readable and comparable degrees organised in a three-cycle structure) and European cooperation in quality assurance" (YOK 2012).

Izmir University of Economics (IUE) is one of four universities in Turkey selected by CHET to pilot the Bologna Process. A goal of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is to provide students with a seamless and transparent navigation between European Universities. A process of quality assurance has been instituted. Herein every faculty and department member at IUE receives a consummate review by the Board. The Board's assessment includes a review of course descriptions, student assignments, student learning objectives and outcomes, course prerequisites and course credits (IEU 2012).

### **Preparation of Course Portfolios for Alignment with the Bologna Process in IUE**

As a first step of this process, a Bologna Coordination Committee (BCC) was established. The Committee requested each department to prepare a portfolio in preparation for the quality assurance process. The portfolios included the following items:

- 1) “Course Self-Evaluation Form”: We created this form to be filled out by the instructor for each course taught. Prior to completing the form, instructors are required to review their students’ course evaluation forms.
- 2) A second section, located at the bottom of each “Course Self-Evaluation form”, is completed by a randomly selected instructor. Department heads are responsible for the random selection of instructors.
- 3) Course syllabi contain the following: Detailed course introduction and application information, course objectives; Course learning outcomes; Summary of course content; Detailed list of weekly topics and reading list; Course materials and sources; Explanations of the course’s evaluation system; Course work load and assignments.
- 4) Sample midterm and final exams, homework, presentations, etc.
- 5) Sample high, average, low performing student exams, and
- 6) A general evaluation report by the department head.

After completing the evaluation process set forth above, the Course Portfolios were “... submitted to the Library Directorate for certification by the related Faculty Dean/Director of School. [They also] submit[ted] a report to the Bologna Coordination Committee for inclusion in the National Bologna Information Form” (IEU 2010).

In January and February, 2013, our institution will prepare a report of its own self-assessment. These "Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Reports" will be forwarded to the Higher Education Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Committee (YODEK) in March. Thereafter, YODEK will prepare a "Higher Education Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Report," and submit it to higher education organizations such as the Council of Higher Education (YOK) and the Inter-University Council of Turkey (UAK) (Edinsel, Gözen, and Köktaş 2008; Yıldız & Aydemir 2009).

## Preparatory Activities of the Department of German Language as a Second Foreign Language (G2FL)

English is the language of instruction in IUE. Second to English, German is one of ten second foreign languages that are offered as compulsory electives. Students are required to enroll in a second foreign language class consisting of four hours a week, for a total duration of eight semesters.

As a part of the preparation process, the German as a Second Language Department (G2FL) reviewed all course descriptions and learning outcomes. All four levels of instruction are included within this stage of preparation. Also, this stage is in accord with the framework of language competencies described by the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) (Council of Europe 2012; ALTE 2012). The G2FL courses and levels are shown in the table below:

Table 1

*CEFR Levels and Course Codes of G2FL Program at IUE*

GSFL	Freshman		Sophomore		Junior		Senior	
Semester	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
Course	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER
Code	101	102	201	202	301	302	401	402
Level	A1.1	A1.2	A2.1	A2.2	A2.3	B1.1	B1.2	B1.3

In this preparation process, the German curriculum for all four levels underwent a meticulous review process and was thoroughly reorganized. After performing a series of detailed studies, Course Introduction and Application Information (Syllabus) were also prepared. Course objectives, learning outcomes, semester program, course grading system, and workloads were also revised. This was a time-consuming and exhaustive process with the sole purpose of improving the quality of teaching and learning in our classes. Student involvement in this process was deemed to be paramount, because, *“through effective, empowering opportunities to use students’ voice, experience and knowledge to make meaningful decisions, they can have ownership in their learning, and the investment to succeed”* (Fletcher 2012: 3). Consequently, our institution asked the students to evaluate their instructors and courses through an on-line survey at the end of each semester, prior to learning their grades.

## Materials and Methods

### The Survey

In the Spring Term, 2011-2012, the German Language Department offered a total of 47 classes taught by 11 full-time and one part-time instructor. The participants consisted of seven hundred and seventy-eight students from different faculties. The list of faculties, in the table below, selected G2FL participants.

Table 2

#### *Faculties and Departments of IUE*

Faculty of Science & Literature		Faculty of Economics & Administrative Sciences		Faculty of Communication		Faculty of Fine Arts & Design		Faculty of Engineering & Computer Sciences	
Mathematics	<b>MATH</b>	Economics	<b>ECON</b>	Public Relations & Advertising	<b>PR</b>	Fashion Design	<b>FD</b>	Software Eng.	<b>SE</b>
Psychology	<b>PSY</b>	Business Administration	<b>BA</b>	Media & Communi- cation	<b>MC</b>	Industrial Design	<b>ID</b>	Computer Eng.	<b>CE</b>
Translation & Interpretation	<b>ETI</b>	International Relations & the European Union	<b>IREU</b>			Interior Arch. & Environ. Design	<b>IAED</b>	Industrial System Eng.	<b>ISE</b>
Sociology	<b>SOC</b>	International Trade & Finance	<b>ITF</b>			Archi- tecture	<b>ARCH</b>	Electronics & Comm. Eng.	<b>ETE</b>
		Logistics Management	<b>LOG</b>			Visual Comm. Design	<b>VCD</b>		

The students evaluated their German instructors and their own learning outcomes in the semester-end university-wide survey.

The survey forms were divided in two categories:

- a) Lecturer evaluation by the students, and
- b) Students' evaluation of their own learning.

We analyzed the students' survey quantitatively, and we applied qualitative research design methods for the course evaluations by the lecturers.

## Findings

### German Lecturer Evaluations by the Students

In the first part of the survey entitled the “Lecturer Evaluation”, students answered 15 questions allotting a maximum of 5.00 points: 1 = Totally Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Totally Agree. Each rating reflects the students’ opinion of the German Language Instructor’s: Instructor’s subject knowledge; Teaching methodology; Classroom behavior and performance; Classroom management; Lesson flow; Course materials, etc. The results of the first part of the survey are shown in the table below:

Table 3  
*Lecturer evaluation by the students*

INSTRUCTORS/ Total & Cumulative Average	German as a Second Foreign Language LEVELS				German ELECTIVE SUBJECTS	
	GER 102 A1.2	GER 202 A2.2	GER 302 B1.1	GER 402 B1.3	GER 312 Bussiness German B1.1	GER 412 Advanced German B1.3
<b>E.B. / 4.87</b> <b>Cum.: 4.89</b>		MATH1 / 4.92		BA1 / 4.85		
				ISE1 / 4.89		
<b>C.T. / 4.68</b> <b>Cum.: 4.67</b>		ITF1 / 4.70		CE2 / 4.72	MIX / 4.41	
				SE1 / 4.84		
<b>S.D.B. / 4.71</b> <b>Cum.: 4.69</b>	BA1 / 4.84		ARCH1 / 4.79			
	LOG1 / 4.61		BA1 / 4.61			
<b>H.E. / 4.50</b> <b>Cum.: 4.54</b>		BA1 / 4.52		CE1 / 4.62		
		CE1 / 4.73		ISE1 / 4.23		
				ARCH1 / 4.38		
<b>N.D. / 4.58</b> <b>Cum.: 4.68</b>	ETE+SE2 / 4.11		E1+PR1 / 4.76			
	MIX / 4.57		ISE1 / 4.88			
<b>N.A.G. / 4.46</b> <b>Cum.: 4.47</b>	ITF1 / 3.89		ID1 / 4.69			
	PSY1 / 4.64		SE1 / 4.62			
<b>B.S.M. / 4.47</b> <b>Cum.: 4.50</b>	SE1 / 4.53	LOG1 / 4.69		ETII / 4.18		
<b>S.D. / 4.68</b> <b>Cum.: 4.68</b>		PSY1 / 4.78		ITF1 / 4.52		
		SE1 / 4.71		LOG1 / 4.77		
				MATH1 / 4.56		

<b>T.I. / 4.60</b>	ECON1 / 4.52		ITF1 / 4.91			MIX / 4.27
<b>Cum.: 4.67</b>			MATH1 / 4.71			
<b>J.V. / 4.73</b>		ISE1 / 4.78		E1 / 4.78		
<b>Cum.: 4.74</b>		ISE2 / 4.71		PSY1 / 4.53		
		E1 / 4.83				
<b>H.Y. / 4.25</b>	BA 2 / 3.99		CE1 / 3.89			
<b>Cum.: 4.34</b>	CE1 / 4.28		ITF1 / 4.54			
	LOG1 / 4.57					
<b>B. T. / 4.01</b>	VCD / 4.01					
<b>Cum.: 4.01</b>						
<b>Instructors: 12</b>	<b>12 / 4.38</b>	<b>10 / 4.74</b>	<b>10 / 4.64</b>	<b>13 / 4.61</b>	<b>1 / 4.41</b>	<b>1 / 4.27</b>
<b>Classes: 47</b>						
<b>Average: 4.51</b>						
<b>Cumulative: 4.62</b>						
Highest score: 5.00, P>0.0005						

The column on the left in Table 3, lists each of the German instructors (whose names are coded by their initials) and their total average score from all their classes. Cumulative scores are calculated by taking into account the number of students taught by each instructor. The scores for each course level and section are listed in the columns to the right. The bottom row of Table 3 shows that German instructors:

- scored 4.38 out of a possible 5.00 points from the first-year students
- scored 4.74 out of a possible 5.00 points from the second-year students
- scored 4.64 out of a possible 5.00 points from the third-year students
- scored 4.61 out of a possible 5.00 points from the fourth-year students
- scored 4.41 and 4.27 out of a possible 5.00 points from students who had elective German subjects.
- scored a *total average* of 4.51 out of the maximum possible of 5.00 points.

The G2FL Department received a higher score than the average score of the University as a whole, and 0.06 point lower than the score of the School of Foreign Languages (SFL).

Comparios on Table 3 and Table 4 below shows that the G2FL Department (4.62) performed better than IUE (4.43) and SFL (4.57), since the scores are cumulatively calculated by the university:

Table 4

*Average scores at the IUE*

University Average:	4.43
School of Foreign Languages Average:	4.57
German Language Department Average :	4.62

**Students’ Self Evaluation about Their Own Learning Outcomes in German Classes**

In the second part of the survey, students evaluated themselves by allotting a maximum of 5.00 points: 1 = None, 2 = A Little, 3 = Some, 4 = A Lot, 5 = Quite A Lot. Students also evaluated how well they attained the learning outcomes. The learning outcomes were clearly set forth both on the syllabi as “Course Learning Outcomes”, and also in the survey as Student Learning Outcomes “SO-Questions”.

German language proficiency levels and the description of the learning outcomes were modeled after the "can do statements" in CEFR. The Learning Outcomes have been stated in five language competences as in the table below:

Table 5

*Students’ learning outcomes-questions: an example for level GER 302*

Q01)	Listening: The student will be able to comprehend the main points in a clear, standard communication -if spoken slowly- on common subjects which are met frequently in surroundings such as work, vacation, and trips. For example, food recipes, daily events or radio and television programs which are regarding personal interests.	4.00
Q02)	Reading: The student will be able to understand texts with words which are most frequently used in business life or in daily language. (For example, description of events in personal letters, wishes and feelings, instructions)	4.19
Q03)	Two-Way Conversation: The student will be able to join in the conversations regarding various situations which may appear while travelling in the country of the spoken language; regarding subjects which draw his/her attention or which are about his/her daily life. (For example, hobbies, work, apprenticeship, music, books and daily events)	4.00



Q04)	Oral explanation: The student will be able to express her opinion about a story, book or a movie's subject by using various structures which she has learned to describe a photo, her experiences, dreams, hopes, wishes and events.	4.00
Q05)	Writing: The student will be able to write a survey, article (for example, newspaper article) and a letter by describing his/her experiences and impressions related to subjects that are known or subjects that draw his/her interest.	4.06

The total survey results show that most of the students gave themselves above 4.00 points (“Good” to “Very Good”) in listening, reading, and writing competencies. However, students felt relatively weaker in “conversational” and “oral explanation” competencies. Here they self-scored between 3.50-4.00 points. Hence, in the future, we need to focus more on improving students' speaking and conversational abilities to every extent possible.

### **Discussions**

#### **Instructors' Opinions about the Course and Students**

In evaluating the students' survey results, we employed qualitative research methods to obtain detailed descriptions of the instructors' opinions. The following are the highlights that emerged from the instructors' evaluations of the course and students:

In GER 101 (12 classes), students overall performed worse than expected, that is, they did not meet the workload requirements envisioned by the department. Students reported spending much less time and effort than is necessary for the successful completion of these classes. Students must take care to do their homework and be better motivated. Learning outcomes for this course were mostly achieved. However, the workload needs to be increased for some of the classes.

First-year students who come to the University from high school need to learn to adapt to the rhythms and demands of university-level work. Students need to learn to be independent researchers, to be attentive during lessons, and instructors need to provide them more information on how to study and how to become better learners and scholars. In short, students need more guidance, and encouragement in these matters.

In GER 202 level (10 classes), the students' self-reported workload was very close to the workload designated by the department. This shows that the students here have

greater motivation and are able to meet the demands of the course. The course materials and resource books used by the department treat all five competencies in language acquisition equally. As a result of the diligent work of the students in the GER 202 classes and their regular participation in class activities, all the learning outcomes -namely LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5- were achieved. Rightfully, students evaluated their own learning outcomes very close to 5.00 points.

In GER 302 (10 classes), the department offered students 99 hours of workload in the Spring Semester. However, some of the teaching staff commented that the workload, indicated by the students, was more than what was actually required. So, as the students here appear to be highly motivated, some instructors have suggested that they will increase the workload of this group in the coming semester.

In GER 402 (13 classes), the level of workload projected by the department was 99 hours, whereas, the students' estimate of the workload was between 90 and 108 hours. According to students' outcomes in this group, faculty members need to determine what kind of adjustment is needed in the use of class material. On the other hand, the motivation techniques must be adjusted to match the motivation of the students in each class.

In GER 312 (1 class / Business German, Elective Course), the instructor reported that the students have reached the A2 level by achieving all learning outcomes in Business German. The students' workload was close to the workload suggested by the German Department.

In GER 412 (1 class / Advanced Level, German, Elective Course), the instructor stated that the students reached the B1 level and achieved all learning outcomes for that course. The students' workload evaluation was also appropriate.

To summarize, instructors have reported that the main goals in German classes as second foreign language have been reached. At the end of the semester, students have reached anticipated objectives in each level.

### **Conclusion**

With the start of the Bologna Process, higher education institutions in European countries generally concentrated on the following activities:

- 1) Creation of a triple rating system consisting of three cycles, thereby ensuring compatibility with rating systems in other European universities;

- 2) Creation of a national qualifications framework;
- 3) Implementation of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, and
- 4) Establishment of a system of Quality Assurance.

During the preparation for the Bologna process, our University was selected by the Turkish Council of Higher Education as one of four universities to establish a pilot program. Our university adopted the process and made the necessary improvements in the above mentioned areas in a very short time frame.

Examining learning outcomes and course and lecturer evaluations by the students is an important way of ensuring quality control in the process of teaching and learning. Likewise, student participation in the quality evaluation process is an essential part of the quality assurance of teaching and learning, and quality development.

All in all, the participants included 47 German classes in four levels, with a total 778 students' and 12 lecturers' whose evaluations were taken into consideration. As such, we obtained sufficient data about student expectations of quality and the expected level of quality of the academic staff. This quantitative study results show that the German Language Department teaching staff received scores exceeding the average score for IUE overall.

Students' self-evaluation was also above average and lecturers found the students' work load generally sufficient. Consequently, the German program succeeded in reaching its course objectives. Nevertheless, we strive to improve upon these findings and look for ways for the instructors to further engage the students in class activities, help them increase their work load, and encourage them to use more L3 in the classroom.

These surveys show the bases of performance indicators for either success or failure for the learners. In this way, we are able to follow up and evaluate the effectiveness of our higher educational teaching methods and learning outcomes. The results also give the department data-driven direction for future planning. Finally, the surveys and the data they provide, reveal the evidence of the necessity for continual improvement of the program and to ameliorate the program with visible and viable outcomes.

Such semester surveys are, therefore, extremely useful. Upon obtaining the survey findings, the results are best discussed in group meetings or workshops with the instructors to develop solutions to problems that are identified.

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**Bologna Uyum Sürecinde Öğrencilerin, Öğretim Elemanı ve Öğrenme Çıktıları  
açısından İkinci Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretilen Almanca (A2YD) Programını  
Değerlendirme Sonuçları**

**Öz**

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bologna uyum sürecinde üniversitemizde verilen öğretimde öğrenci katılımı esas alınmıştır. Dönem sonlarında üniversite çapında yapılan anketlerde, öğrencilerin öğretim elemanının yanı sıra kendi bireysel öğrenme çıktılarını da değerlendirmeleri istenmektedir. Amacımız, İkinci Yabancı Dil olarak öğretilen Almanca (A2YD) Bölümü adına anket sonuçlarını nicelik ve nitelik olarak analiz etmek, Almanca dil öğretim yöntemlerinin ne derece etkin olduğunu tespit etmek ve Almanca öğrencilerinin öğrenme çıktılarını (Learning Outcomes) değerlendirmektir.

*Yöntem:* Üniversite tarafından yapılan ve nicel bir yöntemle hazırlanmış olan dönem sonu anketinin ilk bölümünde öğrenciler 15 soru yanıtlayarak öğretim elemanlarını ve ikinci bölümde ise kendi yabancı dil yeterliklerini beş ölçekte değerlendirmişlerdir. Öğrencilerden elde edilen anket verileri Almanca birimi tarafından nitel araştırma yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir.

*Bulgular:* Öğrenci anketlerinden elde edilen verilere göre, A2YD Bölümü'nün tüm üniversitenin ortalama puanından daha yüksek bir puan elde ettiği tespit edilmiştir. Öğrencilerin büyük bir çoğunluğunun kendilerini Almanca okuma, yazma ve dinleme-anlama becerilerinde iyi-çok iyi arasında değerlendirdikleri, ancak karşılıklı konuşma ve sözlü açıklama yetkinliklerinde kendilerine daha düşük not verdikleri görülmüştür.

*Tartışma:* Anket sonrasında 778 Almanca öğrencisinden elde edilen sonuçlar 12 Almanca öğretim elemanı tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Son olarak, hem öğrenci çıktıları ve hem de öğretim elemanlarının görüşleri bölüm başkanı tarafından analiz edilmiştir.

*Sonuç:* Anketten elde edilen veriler ışığında, Almanca öğretim stratejisi açısından öğrencilerin konuşma yetilerinin geliştirilmesine daha çok önem verilmesi gerektiği sonucuna varılmıştır. Bu tür dönem sonu öğrenci anketleri temel öğrenme durumunu ortaya çıkarmakla birlikte aynı zamanda belirli yabancı dil yetkinliklerindeki öğretim durumunu da tanımlamaktadır. Anket sonuçlarının detaylı olarak analiz edilmesi Almanca öğretiminde tüm müfredatın ve öğretim stratejilerinin kalitesinin iyileştirilmesini kolaylaştırmaktadır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* İkinci yabancı dil olarak Almanca (A2YD), kalite güvencesi, Avrupa kredi transfer sistemi (AKTS), öğrenme çıktıları, Bologna süreci.