

Report – Trip to Turkey – Job-shadowing

In week 15 (April 7th – April 14th) a colleague and I travelled to Turkey, Nazilli to visit our partner school. My goal was to visit foreign language classes, observe the teacher-student-relationships and find out what kind of digital equipment is used at a typical Turkish school.

General information:

I was able to visit two different schools: Sosyal Bilimler lisesi, 450 students, for 4 days and Mehmet Akif Ersoy Anadolu lisesi, 750 students, for 1 day. Both schools are secondary schools. Lessons in Turkey last for 40 minutes with 10 minutes breaks between each lesson. As far as I could see, students only have single lessons in English and never a double lesson. Teachers in Turkey only teach one subject at a school and never a combination of different subjects. After 12th grade, the students receive a diploma. Still, this diploma doesn't enable the pupils to apply at a university. In order to enter a university the pupils have to take entrance examinations. Those examinations take place at different schools. Therefore, the students often focus in 12th grade on subjects that are important for university. English or other second language studies are – in agreement with the teachers – neglected.



Lessons:

English:

I visited English lessons from 9th grade to 11th grade with four different English teachers. An average class contents of 30-34 pupils. The classrooms are small and simple. Each student has a book financed by the government. The students own this book and are allowed to write in it.

Since the lessons are quite short and the classes big, it sometimes seems difficult to engage all the students in the activities. The teacher steers the lesson and sometimes students repeat in a chorus new words.

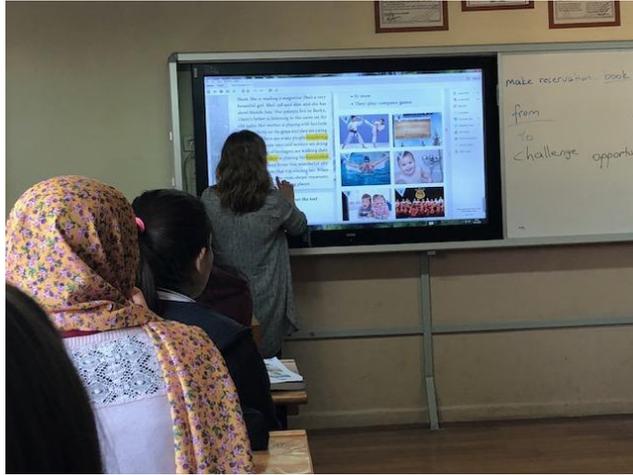


French:

The lesson I visited was 11th grade French. The teacher and students have a routine in the beginning of each lesson: They greet each other and ask how they are. During that lesson, the students tried to ask questions in French. The teacher helped when they struggled.

Digital equipment:

Each classroom has a whiteboard and a smartboard. Smartboards are often used by the teacher for listening to texts and interactive tasks. The teachers are familiar with the programme and so are the students. There are one to two computers in the staff room that are used both by teachers and students (under supervision). There is no computer room or other digital equipment at school. Some of the students own a smartphone, but it is not used in the lessons.



Student-Teacher-Relationship:

The teachers are dressed formally for school. Men often wear suits. Students have to get up when the lessons start. They call their teacher hoca (teacher). The tone is respectful but cordial and genuine. There is no shouting in the classroom. Sometimes it seems difficult to motivate the pupils.

Conclusion:

The journey was fantastic. The Turkish teachers we visited were open, generous and cordial. They did their very best to include us and show us their way of teaching and living. The assistant headmaster allowed the students and teachers to show us around and made space in their timetables. In the beginning they felt embarrassed because they thought, compared to Norway, there is nothing that they can show us. That is, of course, not true. The situation in Turkey is not easy and the government doesn't spend a lot of money on education. The teachers and pupils, however, make the best out of the situation. I feel that I learnt a lot from this trip and wish that there were more. This definitely helps the cultural understanding between the countries.

