



*Gürsoy Değirmencioğlu, Mert Gürer*

## A Study On Arguments About Theoretical And Practical Education At Communication Faculties In Turkey

### ABSTRACT

One of the issues that has been argued for many years is what the ratio of theoretical and practical classes should be in the curriculum of Communication Faculties in Turkey. Academic traditions, that communication faculties have, determine the content and the quality of communication education. In this context, disagreement arose between communication faculties and the media sector about whether the education is given to students should be theoretical or practical. This study aims to examine the historical development process of the State and Foundation communication faculties that have been increasing in number in Turkey since the 1990s. It also aims to reveal the problems that are experienced in communication education and the arguments about whether education should be theoretical or practical. These aims have been addressed by scanning the literature. The study has examined the lessons at communication faculties in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, which rank high in terms of socio-economic levels. The content analysis method was applied during the practical classes.

### KEY WORDS

Communication education in Turkey. Communication faculty. Theoretical and practical course contents.

# 1. Introduction

Academicians in Turkey have been arguing for many years about certain issues, such as promoting the quality of education given at Communication Faculties, and how the content should be formed. Academic traditions at universities and the background characteristics of a city's workforce resulting from the location of universities play a significant role in determining the content of the courses at Communication Faculties. Similarly to Ankara University Communication Faculty, which primarily determined its vision and mission in providing students with theoretical education, there are some other faculties giving theoretical and practical classes in a balanced way in Istanbul, which is located in the heart of the media sector. For this reason, there are some major disagreements between faculties with different academic traditions and the media sector about the quality of education given in the communication area. The media sector persistently states that there should be more practical classes in the curriculum. Managers at the media sector claim that students who graduate from Communication Faculties do not have sufficient experience in practical areas. They blame the contents of the classes taught to students at communication faculties for this situation. When this is evaluated regarding communication faculties in Turkey, it is observed that the curriculum was prepared with different ratios of practical and theoretical classes in general. Students that study in departments such as Journalism, Public Relations, Radio, Television and Cinema, Visual Communication and Advertising try to gain professional experience via practical units. Within these units, the students gain experience with issues such as writing news techniques, photography, using a camera, graphic page design, television or radio broadcasting. They aim to take their first steps in the media sector. However, the competitive structure of the media sector and employment problems make it difficult for most of these students to get jobs in the sector.

This study aims to examine the historical development process of communication education, the problems that are experienced in communication education, the expectations of the media sector, and the arguments about whether the education should be theoretical or practical. These aims have been addressed by scanning the Literature. In the methodological part, in which content analysis was applied, the contents of the lessons in State and Foundation communication faculties in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir were analysed comparatively in the context of theoretical and practical lessons.

## 2. Historical Process of Communication Education in Turkey

It was observed that the oldest state universities, Ankara University and Istanbul University, play an important role in providing communication education in Turkey. However, communication education is not provided only at universities. Anatolian Communication Vocational Schools and some private academic foundations organise communication classes and courses to meet the need for the intermediate staff.<sup>1</sup>

The first initiative of journalism education in Turkey was started in 1947. Sedat Simavi, who was the chairman of the Journalists Association of the period, sent a letter to the Rectorate of Istanbul University and he requested the establishment of an institute for providing such an educational program at the university. After the demand was accepted, the Senate of the University decided to establish a journalism institute that affiliated to the Faculty of Economics in 1949.<sup>2</sup> "The Journalism Institution" was founded to give a two-year education under the Faculty of Economics in accordance with the rules taken by the Senate of Istanbul University in November 1949. Besides the academicians at the Faculty, well-known journalists gave classes at the Institute. Later, the education period was extended to three years. In the following years, the name of this institution

<sup>1</sup> TOKGÖZ, O.: Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi: Elli Yıllık Bir Geçmişin Değerlendirilmesi. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> TOPUZ, H.: *100 Soruda Başlangıçtan Bugüne Türk Basın Tarihi*. İstanbul : Gerçek Yayınevi, 1996, p. 204.



was changed into “Istanbul University, School of Journalism and Public Relations”.<sup>3</sup> Tokgöz also says that Ankara Association of Journalists suggested a new school should be founded in the late 1960s because this institution had been studying media in the strict sense, so it was needed to found an educational foundation that would provide complete education, including mass media.<sup>4</sup> The Senate of Ankara University accepted the Legislation about opening “The School of Press” inside the Faculty of Political Sciences in 1964. The School opened its doors to education on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1965 after this ruling had been promulgated in the Official Journal.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, private journalism schools were opened with the adoption of the Law on The Private Education Institutions in 1965. Primarily, the first Private Journalism Higher School in Istanbul in 1966, after that The Başkent Private Journalism Higher School in Ankara and The Karataş Private Journalism Higher School in Izmir started to provide education in 1967.<sup>6</sup> Tılıç says that The Journalism and Communications Higher School in Ankara became a leading model for the public journalism schools which were later opened in other cities.<sup>7</sup>

The Istanbul Private Journalism School was the country’s first journalism school in this field. Tılıç says that the curriculum of this first journalism school was a combination of technical and practical knowledge of journalism and of general science courses. Tılıç also says that this tendency, which in the following years took the form of theoretical and practical courses, has continued in Turkish journalism schools even until today.<sup>8</sup>

It has been stated that communication education started to become institutionalised in Turkey in the 1960s, whereas in the USA and European countries the process started in the 1950s. In the following years, schools of press started to be founded inside Gazi University, Anadolu University, Marmara and Ege Universities.<sup>9</sup>

With the law enacted in September 1971, it was decided to nationalize private higher school. Within the framework of the law, the higher school in Istanbul affiliated to the Istanbul Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences, the higher school in Ankara affiliated to the Ankara Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences, and the higher school in Izmir affiliated to the Izmir Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences. In addition, the Institute of Education with Television was established in the Eskişehir Academy of Economics and Commercial Sciences. This institute was transformed into the Cinema and Television Higher School in 1975 and the Departments of Communication Arts, Cinema and Television and Press and Broadcasting were established in the following years.<sup>10</sup>

In 1983, the situation of higher schools was reconsidered and the administration of some of the press and broadcasting higher schools in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir was left to the rectorate of Ankara, Gazi, Ege, Istanbul and Marmara Universities. The departments related to communication within Anadolu University in Eskişehir also formed a “communication faculty”. With the latest change made in 1992, the name of these higher schools was changed to “Communication Faculties”.<sup>11</sup> The number of State Universities and Foundation Universities, which provide communication education, started to increase after the 1990s.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>3</sup> TOKGÖZ, O.: Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi: Elli Yıllık Bir Geçmişin Değerlendirilmesi. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> TOPUZ, H.: *100 Soruda Başlangıçtan Bugüne Türk Basın Tarihi*. İstanbul : Gerçek Yayınevi, 1996, p. 205.

<sup>7</sup> TILIÇ, D. L.: The Turkish Journalism Education Landscape. In TERZİS, G.: *European Journalism Education*. Bristol and Chicago : Intellect, 2009, p. 334.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, p. 333-334.

<sup>9</sup> DAĞTAŞ, E., KAYMAS, S.: Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi Üzerine Öneriler. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 94.

<sup>10</sup> TOPUZ, H.: *100 Soruda Başlangıçtan Bugüne Türk Basın Tarihi*. İstanbul : Gerçek Yayınevi, 1996, p. 206.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 206.

<sup>12</sup> TOKGÖZ, O.: Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi: Elli Yıllık Bir Geçmişin Değerlendirilmesi. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 11.

Communication education that started in Turkey directly as a result of demand from the communication sector conflicts with the sector today. The number of communication faculties has increased in recent years. Some of these faculties couldn't reach the quantity at the same speed as others. This situation directly affects the quality of the education. This applies not only to communication faculties, though. There are problems arising from not having enough theoretical education, insufficiency of practical classes, and the lack of physical opportunities. In addition, as the communication sector is a highly changeable and competitive environment, these deficiencies are easily recognised.<sup>13</sup>

### 3. The Problems in Communication Education and The Expectations of The Media

Dağtaş and Kaymas claim the USA agree that communication is a privileged and varied academic action in today's world.<sup>14</sup> They explain that the most important reason for it is the fact that the studies that have been done since the 1930s have reached an important level both as for quality and quantity. Dağtaş says that there were problems to employ the graduates from communication faculties to meet the need for an inexpensive workforce of the media sector. He also states that the more the number of towns converted into cities and the number of new universities rose, the more the number of communication faculties increased. Dağtaş says that it is necessary to overcome the hesitation towards the theory and practice in communication education without compromising the universal understanding in the curriculum. He also emphasises that the perception that the theory is already practical in itself shouldn't be ignored.<sup>15</sup>

It is observed that the communication education schools in Turkey are mostly for providing the media sector with workforce rather than contributing in the area themselves.<sup>16</sup> One of the essential issues argued at schools giving communication education and training is the concern about training the staff the sector requires. However, a compromise hasn't been reached on this yet because the profile for a communicator demanded by the media is not clearly defined.<sup>17</sup> It seems that forming and discussing collaboration between the school and the sector is a need for the students.<sup>18</sup>

There is a close relation between the education given at communication faculties and the media sector and media industry.<sup>19</sup> In accordance with this, it is seen that the media sector has some expectations from the communication faculties. The sector demands that students at these faculties should be more trained at practice level.

It is admitted by both the students and the graduates and the academicians that practical classes given at communication faculties are not enough for the graduates to work in the media sector without getting an extra training.<sup>20</sup> Lecturers with a critical perspective, who stay away from the media sector, also believe that practical education in communication faculties is not sufficient.

<sup>13</sup> CAN, S.: İletişim Eğitiminde Akademi ve Sektör Beklentileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma. In *Humanities Sciences (NWSAHS)*, 2018, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 58.

<sup>14</sup> DAĞTAŞ, E., KAYMAS, S.: Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi Üzerine Öneriler. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 99.

<sup>15</sup> DAĞTAŞ, E.: Üniversite Sanayi İşbirliği Perspektifinden Türkiye'deki İletişim Eğitimine İlişkin Bir Değerlendirme. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 45-46.

<sup>16</sup> DAĞTAŞ, E., KAYMAS, S.: Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi Üzerine Öneriler. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 100.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 102.

<sup>18</sup> YETKİNER, B.: Radyo, Televizyon ve Sinema Bölümlerinde Sinemayla İlgili Verilen Ders İçeriklerinin Araştırılması. In *İnif E-Dergi*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 84.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> ŞEKER, M., ŞEKER, T.: İletişim Eğitiminde Temel Sorunlar ve Açmazlar. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 103.

There are a great number of practical classes in communication education, however, it varies from faculty to faculty. It is considered important that students take practical and vocational classes, especially after the first two years at the school. They are trained in such a way that they become familiar with the sector.<sup>21</sup> However, there are opinions that the practical classes given at communication faculties are insufficient and students are not ready for their professional lives when graduating. Faculties are criticised for some issues, such as the practical classes are few in number, they are conducted with a content that is not up-to-date, and there are not enough lecturers and technical infrastructure is insufficient.<sup>22</sup>

In the study by Çelik,<sup>23</sup> managers in the media state that the practical education that the graduates were given at faculties is quite limited. They generally say that theoretical education is difficult to apply in the field.

The media sector does not regard communication education as acceptable and therefore makes it difficult for communication faculty graduates to get employed in the sector, even though they approve of providing journalism and communication education. It is difficult to say that the sector defines the communicator profile clearly. However, it seems possible to say that the media sector has some attempts to take communication education under its control, but it cannot fulfill this wish because this education is at a college level.<sup>24</sup>

At this point, it becomes important to determine the ratio of practice and theory classes in the curricula of communication faculties. The faculties examined in this study are the ones in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir and they all have different academic traditions. This plays an important role in their curricula and in determining the content of the classes.

The Communications Faculties in Turkey seek to combine both theory and practice education. However, the weight of theory or practice education changes from one faculty to another. For example, the students of the Communications Faculty of the Anadolu University in Eskisehir become more familiar with practice, especially in Radio and Television Journalism and the students of the Communications Faculty of Ankara University have more theory courses than the practical ones into their communication education and curriculum.<sup>25</sup>

In this context, the problem underlies in the fact that the media sector only demands “practitioner students” without considering the academic traditions of the faculties. That is why this demand coming from the media sector does not seem possible to be met. “Theoretical-empirical” dialectic is one of the basic dilemmas regarding communication education. Basic cultural and theoretical field classes form 60% and practical classes are at a lower level with 40%, and this is an obstacle for a communicator-candidate to be preferred as a qualified media worker.<sup>26</sup> Dağtaş and Kaymas say that the ratio of practical classes and basic cultural field classes should be 50%.<sup>27</sup> This way, communication faculties will act both in accordance with the notions required to be an academy and their graduates will have gained the required abilities and experience and they will be able to transfer this theoretical knowledge into practice.

There are two interlocutors in the employment of the graduates of communication faculties; the news media and television sector and the institutions providing communication education. It is observed that there are some deficiencies in communication education and the levels

<sup>21</sup> ŞEKER, M., ŞEKER, T.: İletişim Eğitiminde Temel Sorunlar ve Açmazlar. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 103.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 105.

<sup>23</sup> ÇELİK, M. U.: Radyo, Televizyon ve Sinema Bölümü Özelinde İletişim Fakültelerindeki Eğitime İlişkin Bir İnceleme. In *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2012, No. 1, p. 63.

<sup>24</sup> TOKGÖZ, O.: Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi: Elli Yıllık Bir Geçmişin Değerlendirilmesi. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 19.

<sup>25</sup> TILIÇ, D. L.: The Turkish Journalism Education Landscape. In TERZİS, G. (ed.): *European Journalism Education*. Bristol and Chicago : Intellect, 2009, p. 337-338.

<sup>26</sup> DAĞTAŞ, E., KAYMAS, S.: Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi Üzerine Öneriler. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 107.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, p. 107.

of the graduates. However, it is obvious that the problems regarding the employment of these graduates occur because of the attitudes of the media institutions. National and common media is getting commercialised day by day and the employment, like every issue, is considered on the profit axis.<sup>28</sup> The rapid quantitative increase in the communication education leads to problems regarding the quality of the education and the staff that will provide the education, as well as the problems in the employment.<sup>29</sup>

Having received communication education does not have a defining feature on the regulation of the working conditions in the media sector and using human resources in an effective way. Students that graduate from communication faculties have often been victims in recent years because of the increase of the monopolisation in the media sector. They cannot use their bargaining power to be employed in the sector in the context of capital/media/technology relations.<sup>30</sup> Öztürk says that the real purpose of communication education should be creating “the new intellectual”.<sup>31</sup> According to Öztürk, the position of this intellectual is the consciousness that life is built in a biased way, which brings theory and practice together, oscillates between abstract and concrete, can apply knowledge and draw theoretical generalizations from practices and experiences, looks crooked, questions life, criticizes and struggles to transform it when necessary. It must be at a stage where it realizes that even being neutral in itself means bias. Öztürk states that teachers need to evolve themselves first for the creation of this new intellectual.<sup>32</sup> When technological developments, too, are taken into consideration, it is understood that these changes affect the journalism education. It becomes clear how significant and urgent it is to make a critical evaluation on the predicted effect of change on current practices and the curriculum.<sup>33</sup>

Communication education is rapidly converged, as well as corporations, contents and professions in the media sector. Findings show that convergence is not a basic agenda in the arguments about communication education in Turkey. However, the idea of divergence based on the specialisation of departments is still valid.<sup>34</sup>

Ergeç says that international university networks and their partners are one of the solutions for creating a quality and up-to-date understanding of education. He claims that this will help strengthen the culture of peace and a mutual understanding.ERGEÇ states that encouraging a broad-based academic exchange and creating multi-cultural collaborations will contribute to communication education.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> ŞEKER, M., ŞEKER, T.: İletişim Eğitiminde Temel Sorunlar ve Açmazlar. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 101.

<sup>29</sup> UZUN, R.: İstihdam Sorunu Bağlamında Türkiye’de İletişim Eğitimi ve Öğrenci Yerleştirme. In *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 2007, No. 25, p. 133.

<sup>30</sup> ÇELİK, M. U.: Radyo, Televizyon ve Sinema Bölümü Özelinde İletişim Fakültelerindeki Eğitime İlişkin Bir İnceleme. In *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2012, No. 1, p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> ÖZTÜRK, S.: İletişim Eğitiminin Hedefi: Yeni Bir Entellektüel Yaratmak. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 155.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, p. 155.

<sup>33</sup> BAYRAKTUTAN, G. et al: Gazetecilik Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Gözünden Yeni Medya Çağında Gazetecilik. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2018, No. 29, p. 226.

<sup>34</sup> ATABEK, Ü., ATABEK, G.: İletişim Eğitiminde Farklı Perspektifler: Öğrenciler, Akademisyenler ve Meslek Mensuplarının İletişim Eğitimi Hakkındaki Tutumları. In *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 2014, No. 38, p. 158.

<sup>35</sup> ERGEÇ, E. N.: Uluslararası Yükseköğretim Trendleri Bağlamında İletişim Eğitimi Yeniden Düşünmek. In *Selçuk İletişim Dergisi*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 24.

## 4. Methodology and The Sampling of The Study

This study deals with the arguments about the theoretical and practical education in communication faculties in Turkey theoretically. In the study, a quantitative content analysis was applied for the practice course hours in the 4-year curriculum of the communication faculties in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, and departments at these faculties. The study aimed to comparatively examine the course-contents of the State and Foundation universities in these three cities. For this reason, the study did not only make a comparison of faculties, it also tried to consider all the departments and curricula at communication faculties and it wanted to reflect the results of the practical courses -obligatory or optional- in a numerical way. In this context, the study evaluated “the field”, “department”, or “university” optional courses, which are commonly included in the 4-year lesson plans of State universities. In addition, “all optional courses”, “art and humanities optional lessons” and “social sciences optional lessons” in the lesson plans of communication faculties of Foundation universities were analysed and the practical class hours of these lessons were evaluated within the total qualitative data.

The contents of the practical class-hours in the lesson plans were created by bringing together the 4-year lesson plan data or, in other words, 8-term period, which are published on the websites of the faculties under different names like “Curriculum”, “Education Program”.

In this context, some problems arose within the study to collect up-to-date data. As some communication faculties did not upload the revised versions of their curricula, this study included the ones regarding the years prior to the “2020-2021 Academic Years”. It can be said that these communication faculties did not upload their curricula because they had not made any changes in them, and thus did not need to upload them on their web pages.

The list of State and Foundation communication faculties that are in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir was created first at arranging the quantitative-analysing process. It can be seen that departments, or head departments, started to be established in communication faculties under the names like “Media and Communication Studies”, “Media and Cultural Studies”, “Visual Arts” and “Humanities”. In this context, the sample of this study was determined only with faculties that were opened bearing the name “Communication Faculty”. It was found out in this study that there are 7 communication faculties in the State universities and 17 communication faculties in the Foundation universities, which are in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. One of the reasons why these three cities were chosen to be the sample of this study is the fact that the first communication faculties were opened in these cities. Other reasons why these three cities were picked are the urbanization, or socio-economic level of these cities, and the fact that the media sector is more widely spread in these cities.

## 5. Findings

One of the most remarkable facts that was revealed in this study is that the departments that were called as “most known” were more common during the first years of these universities. In other words, these departments – “Journalism”, “Public Relations and Publicity”, “Radio, Television and Cinema” – are the most obvious basic departments at these faculties. Unlike these departments, it can be seen that education is given in the “Advertising” department in the Faculty of Communication in Ege University and the “Communication Undergraduate Program” in the Faculty of Communication in Galatasaray University. When the optional classes in communication faculties in State Universities were examined, it was observed that “university optional classes” are predominant besides “field” or “departmental optional classes”. However, it was seen that students at the Foundation universities are able to choose from a wide variety of optional classes in the curricula of almost all faculties, such as “Art and Humanities”, “All Optional Classes”, “Social Sciences” and “Optional Language Classes”.

University/Faculty	The Province	Department/Program	Practical Class Hours	Compulsory (Hour)	Optional (Hour)
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University Faculty of Communication	Ankara	Journalism	7	2	5
		Public Relations and Publicity	4	2	2
		Radio, Television and Cinema	5	2	3
Ankara University Faculty of Communication	Ankara	Journalism	325	2	323
		Public Relations and Publicity	323	2	321
		Radio, Television and Cinema	327	2	325
Ege University Faculty of Communication	İzmir	Journalism	7	-	7
		Public Relations and Publicity	60	18	42
		Radio, Television and Cinema	117	46	71
		Advertising	25	7	18
Galatasaray University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Communication Undergraduate Programme	210	120	90
Hacettepe University Faculty of Communication	Ankara	Communication Sciences Program	17	3	14
İstanbul University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	2	2	-
		Public Relations and Publicity	2	2	-
		Radio, Television and Cinema	22	18	4
Marmara University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	2	2	-
		Public Relations and Publicity	2	2	-
		Radio, Television and Cinema	2	2	-

**TABLE 1:** Practical class hours according to the 4-year Curriculum of the Communication Faculties of the State Universities (According to the weight in compulsory and practical courses)

Source: own processing, 2021

When the communication faculties in these three cities were evaluated among themselves, it was seen that the Communication Faculty in Ankara University is the one providing the students with the biggest number of optional practical classes. It was also observed that “Communication Undergraduate Program” in the Faculty of Communication in Galatasaray University comes second to provide the most practical classes. However, at this stage, when the weights of “practical classes” within the compulsory and optional classes were taken into consideration, it was found out that only 2 hours of practical classes are included in the compulsory classes in each department of Ankara University. Similarly, it was also seen that only 2 hours of practical classes are offered to students in compulsory classes in Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli and İstanbul and Marmara Universities. One of the most remarkable facts is that there are 18-hour practiceclasses only in “Radio, Cinema and Television” department in İstanbul University.

Another finding is that Communication Undergraduate Program in Galatasaray University stands out with 120-hours of practice classes within a 210-hour compulsory lesson plan. In Ege University, there are 18-hours of practice classes in “Public Relations and Publicity”. However, the “Radio, Television and Cinema” department comes second after Galatasaray University with 46-hours of practice classes in a compulsory classes program. It is a significant finding that there no practice classes in the compulsory classes program in the “Journalism” department at Ege University, but there are 7-hour practice classes in “University Optional Classes”.



When the communication faculties of Foundation universities in these three cities were evaluated among themselves, it was observed that they provide their students with education in a number of different departments. While the “Journalism” department continues to be inside Foundation Universities, it can be seen that a new department called “New Media and Journalism” has been opened in the Communication Faculties in Üsküdar and Yaşar Universities, together with the development in digital communication technologies, because the “new media” concept is becoming more and more common. It was also observed that a department and a program called “New Media and Communication” has been opened in the Communication Faculties of Fenerbahçe, İstanbul Arel, İstanbul Aydın, İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl, İzmir Ekonomi, Medipol and Üsküdar Universities. In addition, it was seen that departments provide education only under the name of “New Media” in the Communication Faculties of Bahçeşehir, Beykent, and Kadir Has Universities.

When the names of departments and programmes of the communication faculties in Foundation Universities were examined, it was seen that communication education is provided at the departments like “Public Relations and Publicity” besides “Public Relations and Advertising” and it was also seen that, even though the name “Radio, Television and Cinema” is widely used, there are also some other names like “Cinema and Television”, “Television Journalism and Programming” and “Cinema and Digital Media”. “Advertising” was observed to be the most remarkable department independent from “Public Relations and Publicity” in Foundation Universities.

Foundation universities are opening new departments in the field of communication and media for their students in addition to optional practical classes. We see that communication education can be conducted in their departments and programs, such as “Cartoons and Animation”, “Digital Game Design”, “Photography and Video”, “Visual Art and Design”, “Communication and Design”, “Communication Design and Management”, “Advertising Design and Communication”, “The Media and Communication”, “Media and Communication Systems”, “The Media and Visual Arts”, “Performance Arts and Management” and “Art and Culture Management”.

University/Faculty	The Province	Department/Program	Practical Class Hours	Compulsory (Hour)	Optional (Hour)
Bahçeşehir University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Cartoons and Animation	58	46	12
		Photography	36	36	-
		Digital Game Design	40	40	-
		Communication and Design	46	46	-
		Public Relations and Publicity	8	8	-
		Advertising	18	18	-
		Cinema and Television	20	20	-
		New Media	26	26	-
Başkent University Faculty of Communication	Ankara	Public Relations and Publicity	-	-	-
		Communication and Designing Program	-	-	-
		Radio, Television and Cinema	-	-	-

Beykent University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Visual Communication	39	13	26
		Public Relations and Advertising	26	6	20
		Media and Communication	19	7	12
		Television Journalism and Programming	28	8	20
		New Media	30	10	20
Fenerbahçe University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Public Relations and Publicity	28	26	2
		Radio, Television and Cinema	46	44	2
		New Media and Communication	32	30	2
İbn Haldun University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Media and Communication Programme	112	38	74
İstanbul Arel University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	12	12	-
		Visual Communication Design	24	24	-
		Public Relations and Advertising	14	14	-
		Cinema and Television	18	18	-
		New Media and Communication	10	10	-
İstanbul Aydın University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	17	17	
		Public Relations and Publicity	11	7	4
		Visual Communication Design	49	25	24
		Radio, Television and Cinema	21	17	4
		Advertising	12	12	
		Television Journalism and Programming	17	15	2
		New Media and Communication	66	24	42
İstanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Photography and Video	127	4	123
		Visual Communication Design	-	-	119
		Digital Game Design	145	24	121
		Communication Design and Management	-	-	114
		Radio, Television and Cinema	127	4	123
		Advertising	119	3	116
		Performance Arts Management	160	10	150
		Art and Culture Management	125	4	121
İstanbul Ticaret University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Visual Communication Design	48	26	22
		Public Relations and Advertising	34	16	18
		Public Relations	24	12	12
		Media and Communication Systems	46	20	26
		Media and Communication	50	20	30
		Advertising	14	12	2

İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Public Relations and Advertising	49	32	17
		Visual Communication Design	90	50	40
		Radio, Television and Cinema	80	40	40
		New Media and Communication	60	34	26
İzmir Ekonomi University Faculty of Communication	İzmir	Public Relations and Advertising	46	22	24
		Cinema and Digital Media	77	54	23
		New Media and Communication	56	46	10
Kadir Has University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Visual Communication Design	214	58	156
		Public Relations and Publicity	164	54	110
		Radio, Television and Cinema	194	58	136
		Advertising	156	62	94
		New Media	160	50	110
Maltepe University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	56	36	20
		Visual Communication Design	90	60	30
		Public Relations and Publicity	64	46	18
		Radio, Television and Cinema	70	50	20
Medipol University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism Program	41	17	24
		Media and Visual Arts Programming	92	25	67
		Radio, Television and Cinema Program	77	25	52
		New Media and Communication Program	68	14	54
Üsküdar University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Cartoons and Animation	58	30	28
		Journalism	28	28	-
		Visual Communication Design	160	36	124
		Public Relations and Publicity	56	34	22
		Radio, Television and Cinema	58	32	26
		Advertising	56	32	24
		New Media and Communication	28	28	-
		New Media and Journalism	66	28	38
Yaşar University Faculty of Communication	İzmir	Visual Communication Design	402	58	344
		Public Relations and Publicity	218	22	196
		Radio, Television and Cinema	348	28	320
		New Media and Journalism	394	50	344
Yeditepe University Faculty of Communication	İstanbul	Journalism	38	22	16
		Visual Communication Design	52	38	14
		Public Relations and Publicity	36	26	10
		Radio, Television and Cinema	34	22	14
		Design of Advertising and Communication	40	22	18

**TABLE 2** Practical class hours according to the 4-year Curriculum of the Communication Faculties of the State Universities (According to the weight in compulsory and practical courses)

Source: own processing, 2021

When the communication faculties in Foundation Universities were evaluated among themselves, The Faculty of Communication in Yaşar University, which is in Izmir, was observed to be the faculty providing the students with the most hours of optional practical classes. In our study, the total number of optional practical class hours of the four departments in this faculty was observed to be in the first three of all. Another finding is that this faculty provides its students with the total number of 402-hour of practical classes, both compulsory and optional, in the department of “Visual Art and Design”. It is noteworthy that there are a total of 394 hours of practical classes in the “New Media and Journalism” department; 348 in the “Radio, Television and Cinema” department; and 218 in the “Public Relations and Publicity” department.

When we studied the hours of practical classes, it was found that the Faculty of Communication in Kadir Has University comes second after Yaşar University. According to this data, it was counted that there are 214 practice hours in “Visual Art and Design”, 194 in “Radio, Television and Cinema”, 164 in “Public Relations and Publicity” and 160 hours in “The New Media”. In addition, it was also revealed that there is 160-hour practical education in the “Visual Art and Design” in the Faculty of Communication, Üsküdar University and 156 hours of practical classes in the “Advertising” department of the Communication Faculty, Kadir Has University. The figures close to these total practice class hours were determined in the departments of Faculty of Education at Istanbul Bilgi University. Other data from this university is as follows: 160 in “Performance Arts and Management”; 145 in “Digital Game Design”; 127 in both “Photography and Video” and “Radio, Television and Cinema”; 125 in “Art and Culture Management”; 119 in “Visual Art and Design” and “Advertising”; and 114 in the “Communication Design and Management” department. The reason why the number of practice class hours is high in the Communication Faculty in Istanbul Bilgi University is that 110 optional class hours opened at different faculties are provided to the students. It was seen that other optional classes are offered in the “Arts and Humanities”, “Social Sciences” and “Departmental Optional” classes list.

Among Foundation Universities, Istanbul University is followed by Ibn Haldun University with 112 class hours in the Media and Communication Program in the Communication Faculty. Another remarkable finding is that this faculty provides its students with 224 hours of optional language classes of many different languages.

Other findings are as follows: 92hours of practical classes in the department of “Media and Visual Arts Programme” at the Communication Faculty of Medipol University; 90-hour classes in the departments of “Visual Arts and Design” at the Communication Faculty of Maltepe University and Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University; and 80 hours of practical classes in the “Radio, Television and Cinema” department at the Communication Faculty of İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University. However, it was seen that no practical classes were put in the curricula of any of the departments at the Faculty of Communication in Baskent University.

When all the practice class hours were evaluated, it was seen that “Visual Art Design” departments at communication faculties in Foundation Universities offer their students an intensive class content. It was also seen that the weight of practical classes stands out in the curricula of the “Radio, Television and Cinema” departments and at the recently-opened departments of “New Media” and “New Media and Journalism”.

When the 4-year curricula of the communication faculties in the Foundation Universities was examined, it was observed that Advertising department in the Faculty of Communication in Kadir Has University comes first with 62 hours of practical classes that are offered within the compulsory classes. Marmara University comes second with 60hours of compulsory practical classes in “Visual Art Design” at the Communication Faculty. The Communication Faculty at Kadir Has University offers 58 hours of practical classes within their “Visual Art Design” and “Radio, Television and Cinema” departments, as well as the Yasar University's Communication Faculty does withing their “Visual Art Design”. These faculties and departments are followed



by the “Public Relations and Publicity” in the Faculty of Communication in Kadir Has University and also by the “Cinema and Digital Media” department of the Faculty of Education at Izmir Economy University with 54 hours of practical classes. It was also observed that there are 50-hour practice classes within the compulsory courses in the curricula of “Visual Art Design” at the Communication Faculty of Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University; the “New Media” department at the Communication Faculty of Kadir Has University; the “Radio, Television and Cinema” department at the Communication Faculty of Maltepe University; and the “New Media and Journalism” department at the Communication Faculty of Yaşar University.

Considering the weight of practice class hours in compulsory courses, the faculties and departments that come to the fore in total practice class hours attract attention once more. It was determined that Advertising and Visual Communication Design in Kadir Has University and Maltepe University in Istanbul and Yasar University Communication Faculty in Izmir are at the top of the list.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

It has often been argued about what the weight of practical and theoretical education should be in the curricula of communication faculties in Turkey. When communication faculties are evaluated in general, there are faculties which claim that their mission is not to train students for the media sector, and the ones to give importance to practical education in their curricula, besides theoretical education. While determining the weight of practical and theoretical education, some factors should be taken into consideration, such as the province where the faculty is located; whether the city is close to the media sector; the academic fields for the academicians and lecturers and their proficiency levels; and whether there are units where students can gain practice.

The findings obtained by this study illustrate that, as for the weight of practical classes provided to students, the Foundation Universities outnumber the State Universities. It can be observed that there is a variety of practical classes, such as “University Optional”, “Art and Humanities” and “Social Sciences” besides compulsory classes in some Foundation Universities. In this context, it was determined that the theoretical education in communication faculties of State Universities is paid more attention to. It is sure that practical classes are not sufficient. However, the practical units and workshops at faculties offer the students a chance to gain experience. Thus, it becomes easier for them to transfer into the media sector after graduation.

When the departments were evaluated, it was observed that “Journalism”, “Public Relations and Publicity” and “Radio, Cinema and Television”, which are also called “the best known departments” come to the fore in the communication faculties of State Universities that were examined in this study. Apart from this, another remarkable fact is that the departments differ only in the Communication Faculties of Galatasaray and Hacettepe University with the “Communication” and “Communication Sciences” departments. In addition, “Advertising” comes to the fore in the Ege University besides these three most-known departments. In Ankara University’s Communication Faculty, “Radio, Cinema and Television” has the first place with 327 practice class hours, “Journalism” comes next with 325 hours and is followed by “Public Relations and Publicity” with 323 practice hours. However, it was determined that these three departments provide 2-hour practical classes within compulsory courses.

When the weight of practical classes within compulsory courses was taken into consideration, the result is that 120 hours out of 210 hours of practical classes are included in the compulsory courses in the “Communication Programme” in the Communication Faculty of Galatasaray University. However, 90 hours of practical classes are seen within the optional courses. In other words, the faculty offers the students approximately 57% of the practical

classes within the compulsory courses. While the “Radio, Television and Cinema” department at the Communication Faculty of Ege University provides 117-hour practical education, 46 hours out of this amount is given within the compulsory courses. The faculty provides 60 hours of practical classes in “Public Relations and Publicity”; and 25 hours in “Advertising”. There are 7 hours of practical classes in “Journalism”, but it is interesting that that none of these classes are included in the compulsory courses. At Istanbul University, Communication Faculty, 22 hours of practical classes are provided in “Radio, Cinema and Television”, out of which 18 hours are included within the compulsory courses. When the curricula of other universities were examined, it was observed that the number of practice class hours is extremely low.

When the departments at the communication faculties of Foundation Universities were examined, practice class hours are more intensive in compulsory and optional courses and they are more balanced among the departments. It deserves attention that within some departments, especially “Visual Art Design” and “Radio, Television and Cinema”, there are more practice class hours than within other departments.

It was observed that four departments of the Communication Faculty of Yasar University in Izmir are ranked among the first three regarding the number of practice class hours. In this faculty, 402 hours of practical classes in total are offered to students in the “Visual Art Design”; 394 hours in “The New Media and Journalism”; 348 hours in “Radio, Television and Cinema” and 218 hours in “Public Relations and Publicity”. This faculty is followed by the departments of the Communication Faculty of Kadir Has University. According to the study, the students are offered 214 hours of practical classes in the “Visual Art Design” department at this faculty; 194 hours in “Radio, Television and Cinema”; 164 hours in “Public Relations and Publicity” and 160 hours in “The New Media”.

It was also determined that there are 160 hours of practical classes in the “Visual Art Design” department at the Faculty of Communication of Üsküdar University and 156 hours in the “Advertising” department at the Faculty of Communication of Kadir Has University. It was observed that in the Faculty of Communication of Istanbul Bilgi University, the list of all optional classes includes 110 hours of practical classes and this situation has increased the number of practical classes at the Faculty. The findings from this Faculty are as follows: 160 hours of practical classes are in the “Performance Arts and Management” department; 145 hours in “Digital Game Design”; 127 hours both in “Photography and Video” and “Radio, Television and Cinema”; 125 hours in “Art and Culture Management”; 119 hours in “Visual Art Design” and “Advertising”; 114 hours in “Communication Design and Management”.

When the weight of practical classes in the 4-year course plans was evaluated in general, it was observed that practice class hours are insufficient at the communication faculties of the State Universities that were examined in this study. It was also observed that practice class hours are not equally shared among the departments within the compulsory and optional courses. It deserves attention that practice class hours are more intensive in the curricula of the communication faculties of Foundation Universities, where there are varied newly-opened departments, and they are equally shared within the departments. Of course, it will not be sufficient to make an evaluation on practical education only by looking at the weight of course hours in the curricula. There are many factors to increase the importance of practical education, such as the communication faculties’ being close to the media sector or having practical units offering students a chance to gain practice. Therefore, it is really significant for the communication faculties of the State Universities to revise their curricula to solve this unbalanced distribution of theoretical and practical class hours.

## Literature and Sources

- ATABEK, Ü., ATABEK, G.: İletişim Eğitiminde Farklı Perspektifler: Öğrenciler, Akademisyenler ve Meslek Mensuplarının İletişim Eğitimi Hakkındaki Tutumları. In *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 2014, No. 38, p. 148-163. ISSN 2147-4524.
- BAYRAKTUTAN, G. et al.: Gazetecilik Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Gözünden Yeni Medya Çağında Gazetecilik. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2018, No. 29, p. 224-241.
- CAN, S.: İletişim Eğitiminde Akademi ve Sektör Beklentileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma. In *Humanities Sciences (NWSAHS)*, 2018, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 57-73. ISSN 1308-7320.
- ÇELİK, M. U.: Radyo, Televizyon ve Sinema Bölümü Özelinde İletişim Fakültelerindeki Eğitime İlişkin Bir İnceleme. In *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2012, No. 1, p. 60-65. ISSN 2536-4758.
- DAĞTAŞ, E.: Üniversite Sanayi İşbirliği Perspektifinden Türkiye'deki İletişim Eğitimine İlişkin Bir Değerlendirme. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 32-48. ISSN 2619-9718.
- DAĞTAŞ, E., KAYMAS, S.: Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi Üzerine Öneriler. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 1998, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 93-110. ISSN 1301-7241.
- ERGEÇ, E. N.: Uluslararası Yükseköğrenim Trendleri Bağlamında İletişim Eğitimi Yeniden Düşünmek. In *Selçuk İletişim Dergisi*, 2014, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 5-31. ISSN 2148-2942.
- ÖZTÜRK, S.: İletişim Eğitiminin Hedefi: Yeni Bir Entellektüel Yaratmak. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 145-156. ISSN 2619-9718.
- ŞEKER, M., ŞEKER, T.: İletişim Eğitiminde Temel Sorunlar ve Açmazlar. In *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2011, No. 15, p. 99-118. ISSN 2619-9718.
- TILIÇ, D. L.: The Turkish Journalism Education Landscape. In TERZİS, G. (ed.): *European Journalism Education*. Bristol and Chicago : Intellect, 2009, p. 331-343.
- TOKGÖZ, O.: Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi: Elli Yıllık Bir Geçmişin Değerlendirilmesi. In *Kültür ve İletişim*, 2003, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 9-32. ISSN 1301-7241.
- TOPUZ, H.: *100 Soruda Başlangıçtan Bugüne Türk Basın Tarihi*. İstanbul : Gerçek Yayınevi, 1996.
- UZUN, R.: İstihdam Sorunu Bağlamında Türkiye'de İletişim Eğitimi ve Öğrenci Yerleştirme. In *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 2007, No. 25, p. 117-134. ISSN 2147-4524.
- YETKİNER, B.: Radyo, Televizyon ve Sinema Bölümlerinde Sinemayla İlgili Verilen Ders İçeriklerinin Araştırılması. In *İnif E-Dergi*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 83-99. ISSN 2528-9519.

## Authors



***Assoc. Prof. Gürsoy Değirmencioğlu, Ph.D.***

Kocaeli University  
Faculty of Communication, Department of Journalism  
Umuttepe Campus  
Izmit – Kocaeli  
TURKEY  
gursoyd@gmail.com

Gürsoy Değirmencioğlu graduated from Marmara University (the Department of Journalism, the Faculty of Communication) in 2000. He completed his master's degree in Marmara University, the Institute of Social Sciences, Department of General Journalism in 2004. He gained his PhD. in the Department of Journalism at the Institute of Social Sciences of Istanbul University in 2011 with his thesis entitled "The Phenomenon of International News Imbalance and the Effects of New Media on the News Flow Process". His research interests are Journalism, Communication Technologies, New Media, Digitization and New Types of Journalism. He currently continues in his academic studies at Kocaeli University Faculty of Communication, the Department of Journalism. .

***Assoc. Prof. Mert Gürer, Ph.D.***

Kocaeli University  
Faculty of Communication, Department of Radio, Television and Cinema  
Umuttepe Campus  
Izmit – Kocaeli  
TURKEY  
mertgurer@gmail.com



Mert Gürer was born in Ankara in 1980. He completed a master's program in Communication Sciences at the Department of Communication Sciences of the Institute of Social Sciences of Kocaeli University. In 2012, he received a PhD. degree from Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Radio and Television Cinema. He works on television broadcasting and programming. Currently, he is an associate professor at the Department of Radio, Film and Television at the Faculty of Communication of Kocaeli University.