

PROTOCOL VISIT FROM IGU TO BAKIRKÖY MUNICIPALITY

Istanbul Gelişim University carried out a protocol visit to Bakırköy Municipality within the scope of university-municipality collaborations. IGU Rector Prof. Dr. Bahri Şahin, Dr. Tayfun Timuray from the Faculty of Applied Sciences Banking and Insurance Department and Lect. Ebru Cengiz from the Vocational School of Health Services Health Institutions Management Department met with Bakırköy Mayor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Özdemir Ovalıoğlu and Deputy Mayor Nurcan Alan.

During the visit to Bakırköy Municipality, an agreement was reached on various issues within the scope of university-municipality collaborations. In the protocol, it was discussed that certificate programs will be organized for the employees of Bakırköy Municipality within the IGU Continuing Education Center (SEM). Programs to be held within the scope of "2024- Year of Retirees" in areas such as digital literacy, financial literacy, nutrition, first and emergency aid for pensioners were also discussed within the scope of the protocol.

During the visit to Bakırköy Municipality, an interview was held to employ students who will complete the 'Cyber Academy Project', which will last for 4 months, on topics such as artificial intelligence algorithms, programming languages and cyber security protocols organized in cooperation with the Istanbul Development Agency (ISTKA) within the body of Istanbul Gelisim University, in Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.

EXPERT INSIGHTS: ANYONE CAN LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE WITH THE RIGHT CONDITIONS!

We've all heard people say, "No matter what I do, I just can't learn English." Addressing the challenges of language learning, Translator and Research Assistant Serhat Kahyaoğlu explains, "With patience, perseverance, determination, and motivation, anyone can learn a foreign language, regardless of age."

While Kahyaoğlu, an academic member of the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies at IGU, partially agrees with the common belief that "there is no age limit for learning a language," he emphasizes, "Early education is generally more effective and efficient than starting in adulthood. Researchers in foreign language education particularly highlight the pre-adolescent period. Studies have shown that our minds are more receptive to language learning at a younger age. Beyond this natural predisposition, early learning habits can significantly aid in mastering multiple languages later in life. Given the increasing responsibilities and time constraints in adulthood, starting language learning early is undeniably advantageous."

"Theory must be put into practice"

Many people in our country struggle with learning English. Kahyaoğlu notes, “Our English curriculum often faces criticism for its heavy focus on theory. This approach can create a gap between what we learn in the classroom and how we apply it in real-life situations. For example, our struggles with speaking English often stem from a lack of practical speaking opportunities and insufficient exposure to the language outside the classroom. Expecting our educational institutions to resolve these gaps with just a few hours of classes each week is unrealistic. It’s up to students to bridge this gap through extracurricular activities. However, we shouldn’t overlook the positive aspects of our theoretical curriculum. In today’s world, much communication is written, and exams like YDS, TOEFL, and IELTS require a solid understanding of theoretical knowledge. Language learning isn’t a one-sided process; students’ efforts outside the classroom play a crucial role in their success.”

"Universities are emphasizing practical language learning"

Kahyaoğlu highlights the steps universities are taking to address these shortcomings by focusing on the practical side of language learning. “Universities are making great strides by offering activities like English-speaking clubs, debates, and presentations. The fact that some departments offer courses entirely in English is a significant step toward sharpening students’ language skills. Moreover, universities are now incorporating second-language courses into their curricula, providing students with the opportunity to learn languages beyond English. Given that English is the global lingua franca, these initiatives allow students to apply the theoretical knowledge they’ve gained throughout their primary and secondary education. International exchange programs like Erasmus further underscore the importance of applying these skills in real-world contexts. As mentioned before, students’ extracurricular involvement is a key factor in their language learning journey.”

"Learning a foreign language is achievable"

Kahyaoğlu reassures that learning a foreign language is within reach for anyone who meets certain conditions. “With patience, perseverance, determination, and motivation, anyone can learn a foreign language. It’s essential for individuals to take charge of their learning journey. By creating a personalized learning plan and leveraging their strengths—whether through experiential, visual, or auditory methods—learning a foreign language becomes an attainable goal.”

"Lack of motivation is the biggest obstacle"



Kahyaođlu reiterates that motivation is the cornerstone of successful language learning. "Without motivation, no technique or method will be effective. The biggest hurdles to language learning are lack of motivation, fear of making mistakes, limited access, time constraints, and irregular practice. Therefore, it's crucial for individuals to clearly define why they want to learn a foreign language and take steps aligned with that purpose. I believe that setting small, realistic goals can lead to significant progress. Learning a language from scratch to mastery in a short time isn't realistic, but with the right goals and dedication, these obstacles can be overcome."