

Pre-Service Turkish Teachers' Attitude Towards the Lesson of Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL)

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Abstract: Turkish is a critical valued language which is necessary for foreigners to learn. Learning Turkish as a foreign language certainly increases the value of Turkey in the cultural and political world. For this reason, in the teaching of Turkish and in the education of Turkish teachers, practices are essential to foreigners. In this study, Turkish teacher's attitude towards this course was aimed to determine the Turkish teaching to foreigners. The sample of the study consisted of 123 teacher candidates from Atatürk University and Republic University's education faculty who studied in Turkish Department. In this research, candidates' attitudes towards Turkish Course with 18-item, 5-Likert-type "teaching Turkish lessons to foreigners attitude scale was collected." The data was obtained through a descriptive analysis which was conducted using SPSS 16.0 program. A result obtained from research showed Turkish teacher candidate's positive attitude towards this course.

Key words: Turkish Teaching • Teaching Turkish to foreigners • Attitude of Turkish Teacher candidates

INTRODUCTION

The provision of multiculturalism, the establishment of an international communication environment, the breaking down of cultural and linguistic barriers, the acquisition of new skills and the learning of a foreign language have all become very important in the formation of different identities and in terms of respect and tolerance [1-2]. Nowadays, knowing a foreign language is not enough, it is perceived that on the way to an intellectual profession, knowing both computer languages and foreign languages is essential in this modern era and it is must to catch its parallels [3]. On the other hand, as language teaching programmes are limited to a single language in the context of Europeanness, there must be a change in educational understanding [4]. With the increase in international relations globally, nations have proved to be insufficient with a population that can only speak their native language. This situation has led to nations, by necessity, learning each other's languages. The necessary element making foreigners learn a language is that all the politics of a country are carried out in that language, in addition to economics, trade and cultural

relations [5]. About 250 million people worldwide use the Turkish language. It is widely used and a demanding language for foreigners to learn [6].

Because of the acceptance of İslam by the Turks, teaching Turkish to foreigners with the purpose of not letting Turkish down needs to be on a par with the language of the Quran which is expressed in *Divanu Lügati't-Türk*. This was followed by the Persians and Turks comparing *Muhakemetü'l-Lügateyn*. During the Ottoman Empire, the demand of foreigners to learn the Turkish language was intense. Demircan [7] Europeans learned Turkish as a foreign language and they preferred to have political and commercial relations with the Ottoman Government. Erdem [6] stated the scientific purpose of learning the Turkish language and referred by many foreign scientists who learned Turkish and began working in the field of Turkology. Turkish is very important in the field of services, even with the honour of the first written Turkish sources of Orhan alphabet's analysis by W. Tohmsen. In the Republican period, the leadership of specific universities has attracted attention when it comes to teaching Turkish to foreigners. The first research on the teaching of Turkish to foreigners was

undertaken by Hikmet Sebüktekin from Boğazici University and Kenan Akyüz from Ankara University, both of whom pioneered this activity. In 1984, TÖMER was established at Ankara University as an organization for the learning of Turkish by foreigners. From 1980, with Turkey's openness in terms of the changing world, it became a necessity to teach Turkish to foreigners. As a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, especially in relation to the Central Asian Turkish Republics and other communities, cultural cooperation was initiated. Since 1993, the Turkish Republic has started work on the "Great Student Project"; it was planned that 10,000 higher education students from Turkey would attend, with around 7,000 first year students [8]. In the 1990s, teaching Turkish to the foreigners started to take place as academic studies. At present, however, not enough in the academic sense is being provided and a significant acceleration in teaching Turkish to foreigners is needed. However, today the work in the field of Turkology has become more cultural and historical, while the other resources considering the dramatic structure, have become quite divorced from the modern language teaching approaches in teaching Turkish to foreigners, both of which draw attention to the problematic structure [9]. The first important element is that the candidates for the teaching of Turkish to foreigners should be better, which has previously been mentioned as overcoming one problem. In this regard, Turkish teaching which is in use is undertaken by the Department of Education's undergraduate programme in the teaching of Turkish to foreigners course. This course is taught as a foreign language to Turkish teachers with practice. Recognition of Turkish around the world and Turkish teachers' attitudes towards the teaching language course in the determination of its contribution in the field is of increasing importance.

The aim of this study was to determine Turkish teacher trainees' attitudes towards foreigners in Turkish teaching courses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was done through a screening model using descriptive methods. The screening method examines the current situation and tries to find the answer to 'what are these?' questions. In order to arrive at an

overall judgment about the studied circumstance, this method allows depicting the conditions and specifications [10-11-12].

A sample of the research was selected from fourth year students, 2010-2011 (spring semester) studying at the Ataturk University and Republic University in the Department of Turkish Education. The study group consisted of 59 females and 64 males, with a total of 123 teacher candidates.

Data Collection and Analysis: In order to determine the attitudes of the candidate teachers from the research group towards the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, a Turkish teaching attitude scale prepared by the MEB (2006:2013) EARGED unit was used as a questionnaire with some adaptations and modifications. Some of the expressions like course name and other subjects were changed in the questionnaire. Two areas were excluded from the previous questionnaire. In questionnaire 18 items which relate to the different aspects of the teacher candidates were determined by a 5 point Likert system. "Completely agree", "Agree", "Undecided", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" and these five answer options were included in the questionnaire. These answer options carried values from 1 to 5.

For a positive attitude sentence, the scoring was from 5-1. For a negative attitude sentence, the scoring was reverse-coded and listed from 1-5.

In order to ensure the validity of the attitude of the items on the questionnaire, expert opinion (n=5) was garnered. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient formula was used in the calculation of the attitudes in the questionnaire. As a result of the reliability analysis, the reliability coefficient was 0.88. For the teachers' questionnaire in the study group (for each attitude item) the item score range was encoded according to the options on the level of participation (SKPA = (5-1 = 4), (4/5 = 0.80) was determined by the formula. Accordingly, "Completely Agree" 4:21 to 5:00, "I agree" 3:41 to 4:20, "Undecided" 2.61-3.40, "Disagree" 1.81-2.60 and "Strongly Disagree" were considered to be among the preference values of 1.00-1.80. The questionnaire surveys were distributed and collected by hand in the same manner. The data obtained from questionnaires were used to calculate the standard deviation values using the SPSS 16.0 average.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pre-service Turkish Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching of Turkish to Foreigners (TFL)

		\bar{x}	Ss
1	TFL is an entertaining lesson for me.	4,1382	1,2031
2	Normally I get bored in TFL lesson.	4,4390	,90668
3	I must allocate more time in TFL lessons.	4,1789	1,0007
4	You don't need to separate time to study outside of the lesson for TFL	4,4797	,87168
5	I wait eagerly for the TFL lesson.	3,6829	1,4440
6	I enjoy doing homework related to TFL.	3,8780	1,3520
7	As compare to other lessons, I work fondly for the TFL.	3,9431	1,1894
8	Normally I become restless in the TFL classes.	4,2683	1,1452
9	I become happy after discussing topics related to TFL lesson.	3,5935	1,1933
10	I think TFL is a useful lesson.	3,5285	1,4565
11	TFL lesson is essential for teaching Turkish.	4,5041	,89051
12	In comparison to other exams, I become uncomfortable in TFL.	4,2439	1,0734
13	None of the lesson is as boring as TFL.	4,5528	,3980
14	In future I would like to choose TFL as a career.	4,7398	,55571
15	I want to separate most of my free time for TFL lesson.	4,1870	1,0198
16	I take part in symposium, congress, conference etc. related to TFL.	3,5447	1,2021
17	I don't want to miss Programmes broadcasted on radio and television related to TFL.	4,8455	,57306
18	Works done on the TFL lesson is exciting.	3,6423	1,4096
19	I would like to follow books, publications, magazines etc. related to TFL.	3,9801	,50938
	Total	4,1382	1,2031

Given below is the Turkish teachers candidate attitudes towards Teaching of Turkish to foreigners, grouped according to their levels.

- “TFL lesson is essential for teaching Turkish.”
- “Further, in the future I would like to choose TFL as a career”.
- “I must allocate more time to TFL lessons.”
- “I don't want to miss programmes broadcast on the radio and television related to TFL.”
- “I completely agree with the situation of level in the articles.”
- “TFL is an entertaining lesson for me.”
- “I must allocate more time in TFL lessons.”
- “I wait eagerly for TFL lessons.”
- “I enjoy doing homework related to TFL.”
- “Compared to other lessons, I enjoy the work for TFL.”
- “I enjoy discussing topics related to the TFL lesson.”
- “I think TFL is a useful lesson.”
- “I want to allocate most of my free time for TFL lessons.”
- “I take part in symposiums, congresses, conferences, etc. related to TFL.”
- “Work done during the TFL lesson is exciting.”
- and “I would like to follow books, publications, magazines, etc. related to TFL.”

I completely agree with the situation of level determined in the articles.

In the analysis of the articles with negative content;

- “Normally I get bored in TFL lessons.”
- “You don't need to allocate separate time to study outside of the lesson for TFL.”
- “Normally I become restless in the TFL classes.”
- “I completely disagree with the situation of level determined in the articles.”

In general, I agree that Turkish teachers' attitudes towards TFL are determined at the level of ($x=4,14$). With regard to this finding, teaching Turkish as a foreign language teacher candidates seemed to accept TFL warmly and it seemed to be a part of their daily lives and careers.

CONCLUSION

Turkish is a deeply rooted and widely spoken language by more than 250 million people worldwide.

Turkish languages' very long histories, Turkey's geographical importance and its active role in world politics, in addition to the preference of Turkey in terms of visits by foreigners and Turkey's trustworthy image, all increase the demand for learning the Turkish language.

In this context, in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language there must be necessary arrangements made and topics created which have the correct

objectives and particular attention should be paid to in what way and by whom the Turkish should be taught.

The undergraduate programmes applied in *teaching Turkish to foreigners* can be seen as a result of this requirement. In this lesson, Turkish language teacher candidates learn how to teach Turkish to foreigners. As previously mentioned, this research aimed to determine teaching Turkish candidates' attitudes towards the course "teaching Turkish to foreigners".

Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards teaching of Turkish to foreigners has been determined by "I totally agree" and "I Agree", while in general the level of attitude was "I agree". Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards this course are in the positive direction.

Further works conducted in the new research field of teaching Turkish to foreigners, such as programme arrangements, motivation and self-efficacy evaluation, can also be found in the descriptive and experimental findings.

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