THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON LANGUAGES USED OTHER THAN THE TARGET LANGUAGE IN THE COURSES OF TEACHING TURKISH TO FOREIGNERS

Research Article

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Abstract: Foreign language teaching encompasses concepts, such as mother tongue, target language, and mediator language. There have been ongoing debates about which language should be used in foreign language teaching, for what purpose and when, whether it is sufficient to use only the target language, and the benefits or drawbacks of using the students' mother tongue. Teaching Turkish to foreigners involves instructing individuals whose mother tongue is not Turkish. This study aims to determine the roles of languages other than the target language in the classroom while teaching Turkish as a foreign language, and obtain the opinions of students and teachers. This study is conducted using phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs. In the present study, the opinions of 20 Turkish language teachers working at TÖMER, which is affiliated with a state university in 2024, and 20 students who learn Turkish as a foreign language are sought about regarding the roles of languages other than the target language in the classroom while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The opinions are collected through a semi-structured interview form, and the data are analyzed by content analysis. The findings revealed different perspectives on using other languages besides the target language in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. It was concluded that maintaining a balance between exposure to the target language and fostering comprehension is essential for effective Turkish language teacher.

Keywords: Foreign language teaching, mediator languages, mother tongue, target language, teaching Turkish to foreigners.

YABANCILARA TÜRKÇE ÖĞRETİMİNDE HEDEF DİL DIŞINDA KULLANILAN DİLLERE İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN VE ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞLERİ

Araştırma Makalesi

Özet: Yabancı dil öğretimi; ana dil, hedef dil ve aracı dil gibi kavramları içerir. Yabancı dil öğretiminde hangi dilin hangi amaçla ve ne zaman kullanılacağı, yalnızca hedef dilin kullanımının yeterli olup olmadığı ve öğrencilerin ana dillerini kullanmalarının ne tür yarar ya da zararlar doğurabileceği üzerine tartışmalar devam etmektedir. Yabancılara Türkçe öğretmek, ana dili Türkçe olmayan kişilerin iletişim aracı olarak Türkçe öğrenmelerine yardımcı olmayı amaçlayan bir süreçtir. Bu çalışma, yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretirken hedef dil dışındaki diğer dillerin sınıfta oynadığı rolleri belirlemeyi ve öğrenciler ile öğretmenlerin görüşlerini almayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, nitel araştırma tasarımlarından biri olan fenomenoloji kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada 2024 yılında bir devlet üniversitesine bağlı TÖMER'de çalışan 20 Türkçe öğretmeni ve Türkçeyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen 20 öğrencinin, Türkçenin yabancı dil olarak öğretiminde sınıfta hedef dil dışındaki diğer dillerin kullanımına ilişkin görüşleri alınmıştır. Görüşler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu ile toplanmış ve veriler, içerik analizi ile incelenmiştir. Bulgular, yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretiminde hedef dilin yanı sıra diğer dillerin kullanımına ilişkin farklı bakış açılarını ortaya koymuştur. Etkili Türkçe öğretimi için hedef dile maruz kalma ile anlama becerisinin geliştirilmesi arasında bir denge kurulmasının gerekli olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ana dili, aracı diller, hedef dil, yabancı dil öğretimi, yabancılara Türkçe öğretimi.

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Introduction

Language is a set of symbols, signs, and rules, through which people communicate, unite, learn, express, and share their experiences. It is a tool that unites people and creates a common world of meaning. It both facilitates understanding and determines the dynamics of communication. Language is a tool that meets the needs of people to know and communicate (Buran, 2006). Language is an element that people use in their social relations with each other at every point in life. Human beings acquire language with a certain effort. Actions, such as hearing, noticing, perceiving, and thinking at the beginning of these efforts, are reinforced by education (Banguoğlu, 2007). Language and learning are inextricably linked (Güneş, 2014). A good learning process requires strong language skills, and strong language skills enable better learning.

The mother tongue, foreign languages learnt, and common languages used are language structures that enable communication. The teaching and communication languages used by teachers and students in language teaching include the foreign language, the target language, and the mediator language. To ensure conceptual clarity, the meanings of these terms will be clarified first.

Foreign language is defined in the Main Dictionary of Science and Art Terms (2023) prepared by the Turkish Language Association as "A language taught to students outside their mother tongue to contribute to their academic, social, and professional development, such as French, German, and English." As Durmuş (2019b) states the term foreign language can be used for teaching purposes in a country where the target language is not spoken as a mother tongue. Foreign language learning means meeting another language and culture other than one's mother tongue (Barın, 2004). Learning a foreign language largely means thinking in that language. The fact that the elements heard or read can be understood only after being translated into the mother tongue shows that the foreign language has not been comprehended (Başkan, 2006).

The target language is the language that the learner learns as a foreign or second language (it can be three or more languages) (Durmuş, 2019b). The target language can also be defined as a specific language an individual wants to learn, use or work on. The use of the target language in the context of language teaching methods has still been widely discussed in the literature. Although learners of a language have different goals in learning the target language, each learner should have enough command of the target language to be able to communicate at a basic level. In other words, using the skills of comprehension by listening and reading in the target language, using the skills of expression by speaking and writing, and communicating with people at a basic level should be the primary goal of everyone who learns a language (Doğan, 2014).

Mediator language is the language used for a specific purpose. Mediator language is defined as 'the language that functions as a communication tool for teachers and learners' (Durmuş, 2019b). In language teaching, an instructor who is a native speaker of the target language may need a common language other than the target language to communicate effectively, since not all learners in multilingual classes may share the same mother tongue. In this context, the

lingua franca plays a critical role as a learning or communication tool even though it is not the primary target language. In teaching methodology research, there are a significant number of studies that recommend to use a target language in the learning process and also prove its necessity (Adıgüzel et al., 2017; Crawford, 2004; Çelik, 2008; Denizer, 2017; Durmuş, 2018; Eldridge, 1996; Kayaoğlu, 2012; Kurt & Kurt, 2015; McMillan et al., 2011; Nazary, 2008; Şavlı & Kalafat, 2014; Şimşek, 2010; Turhanlı, 2018; Üstünel et al., 2005; Yavuz, 2012).

The link between language and education stems from the fact that language is the basic element of access to education. Language is used as an active tool in the learning process, and this process continues throughout a person's life. Language also plays an important role in mental activities, such as thinking and questioning (Zeyrek, 2020). Given the fundamental role of language in both education and cognition, it is essential to examine how these functions are reflected in contemporary language teaching methods and approaches. Looking at language teaching methods and approaches, three distinct perspectives emerge in this field (Ünver, 2020). The first view argues that foreign language learners should only be exposed to the target language to develop their communication skills. The second view states that using only the target language will not be sufficient in language teaching and that using the student's mother tongue or another mediator language will make learning more efficient. The third view states that the amount of use of the target language in foreign language teaching and the situations in which it is used should vary.

In foreign language teaching, the language used/to be used by teachers and students has not been fully decided. There have been ongoing debates about which language should be used, for what purpose and when, whether it is sufficient to use only the target language, and the benefits or harms of using the students' mother tongue. In addition, whether it is correct to use an intermediary language other than the mother tongue and the target language are questions that teachers and students are curious about (Ünver, 2020). Many studies have been conducted both internationally and nationally, on the choice of language in foreign or second language teaching, including the reasons, extent, context, and effects of using the target language, the learner's mother tongue, or a mediator language (Adıgüzel et al., 2017; Crawford, 2004; Çelik, 2008; Denizer, 2017; Durmuş, 2018; Eldridge, 1996; Kayaoğlu, 2012; Kurt & Kurt, 2015; McMillan et al., 2011; Nazary, 2008; Şavlı & Kalafat, 2014; Şimşek, 2010; Turhanlı, 2018; Üstünel et al., 2005; Yavuz, 2012)

In language teaching classes, when, how often, and in what order to use the target language, the mediator language, and the mother tongue depending on the levels and teaching contexts are an important challenges in developing the pedagogical reasoning skills of the instructors and managing the teaching process (Durmuş, 2019a). When international studies are examined, it is observed that the use of mother tongue in foreign language teaching can have both beneficial and limiting effects. In general, controlled and limited use of the mother tongue contributes to foreign language development, especially at beginner and intermediate levels. The native language is particularly effective for explaining complex topics, giving instructions, increasing motivation, and building a sense of confidence in the classroom environment. However, frequent and unplanned use of the native language may hinder the development of the target language and has negative effects on the learning process. For this

reason, it is emphasized that the use of a balanced approach to mother tongue should be adopted. It has been proven that the use of the combination of native and target language by teachers and students in accordance with the classroom environment strengthens communication and facilitates learning processes (Ünver, 2020). Generally, instructors' attitudes toward the use of the mother tongue are seen as "banning it completely", "using it as little as possible", or "consciously legitimizing its use in certain situations". For nearly a century, there has been a widespread theoretical view that the use of the mother tongue in classroom communication should not be permitted. Eldridge (1996) argues that this restriction aims to increase learning efficiency by maximizing time spent in the target language. However, there is no empirical evidence to support the claim that limiting mother tongue use necessarily enhances learning efficiency.

Studies suggest that the use of mother tongue in a selective and controlled manner can be beneficial rather than implementing a complete ban (Adıgüzel et al., 2017; Crawford, 2004; Çelik, 2008; Denizer, 2017; Durmuş, 2018; Eldridge, 1996; Kayaoğlu, 2012; Kurt & Kurt, 2015; McMillan et al., 2011; Nazary, 2008; Şavlı & Kalafat, 2014; Şimşek, 2010; Turhanlı, 2018; Üstünel et al., 2005; Yavuz, 2012). Using the mother tongue as a tool that contributes to the development of the target language can lead to more productive results for both students and instructors. Especially until proficiency in the target language is achieved, the mother tongue can be used as a supportive tool in foreign language teaching.

The Turkish language has become an important language learnt and demanded by foreigners at home and abroad (Büyükikiz, 2014). One of the studies on teaching Turkish as a foreign or second language in the national context was conducted by Ergin (2013), which concluded that the use of a language other than the target language, especially the native language of the learners, is essential in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. But since learners have difficulty in understanding, when they experience a hard a situation, that will cause confusion and dislike of the lesson (Ergin, 2013). In another study, Biçer (2017) stated that using the mother tongue as an auxiliary tool is useful in explaining beginner-level and abstract topics. Although there are different discussions about the role of mother tongue in foreign language teaching, it cannot be denied that it has an important place in this process. Individuals who think in the world of their own language perceive foreign languages within a similar cognitive framework.

1. The Purpose of the Research

This study aims to determine the perspectives of teachers and learners on the languages other than the target language used in the classroom during teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In the literature, there are various discussions on the role of different languages (e.g., target language, students' mother tongue, and lingua franca) used in the classroom during foreign language teaching. The aim of this study is to determine the functions of languages other than the target language used in the classroom during foreign language teaching and to collect the views of teachers and students on this issue. Internationally, numerous studies have examined the use of target languages in language teaching (Atkinson, 1987, 1993; Cook & Hall, 2013;

Cook, 2001; Cummins, 2007; Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Harbord, 1992; Krashen, 1985; Macaro, 2001, 2009; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Schweers, 1999; Willis, 1997).

However, there are few studies in Turkey. While most existing studies in Turkey address general language teaching practices or classroom communication patterns, very few address the systematic teaching of the target language in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. This study stands out because of how and to what extent it directly examines the target language in Turkish-medium classrooms. Thus, this research can provide valuable insights into the roles of languages used in the classroom during the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language. The problem statement of this research was determined as "What is the use of the target language and the functions of languages other than the target language in teaching Turkish as a foreign language?"

2. Method

This part includes information about the research model, the teachers and students who comprise the study group, the data collection tool used in the research, the procedures for data collection and analysis, and the measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research.

2.1. Research Design

Qualitative research has been emphasized as an approach that highlights participants' perspectives, facilitates exploration and fosters understanding, and utilizes qualitative data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. As stated by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021), qualitative research has been defined as an effort to investigate and comprehend social phenomena within their natural context.

In this study, the phenomenology method, one of the qualitative research methods, has been employed. Phenomenology was first defined by Kant, and the earliest significant studies in this field have been carried out by the philosopher Edmund Husserl (Moran, 2000). Phenomenology has been described as an approach developed to understand the differences between the apparent and the essential. Its main aim is to understand universal experiences and to analyze the meanings of these experiences. Originating from psychology and philosophy, phenomenology has enabled researchers to examine the shared experiences of individuals regarding a particular phenomenon. In this study, by analyzing the experiences of a small number of individuals, the researcher aims to understand the essence under investigation through the data obtained (Giorgi, as cited in Creswell, 2014). The phenomenological method has been preferred in this study to determine the perspectives of teachers and students on the use of mediators and mother tongue while learning Turkish as a foreign language and to reveal the meanings of these experiences.

2.2. Participants

This study was conducted in 2024 with Turkish language teachers working at TÖMER, affiliated with a state university, and foreign students who learn Turkish in that institution. For the present study, the opinions of 20 Turkish language teachers and 20 students were taken. Participants were selected randomly.

Data on the characteristics of the teachers participating in the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants (Teacher)

		f	%	Total Number
Gender	Male	4	20	20
	Female	16	80	
Age	22-30	15	75	20
	31-40	3	15	
	41 and above	2	10	
Educational Background	Bachelor's degree	6	30	20
	Graduate degree	14	70	
TÖMER Experience	year	11	55	20
	2-3 year	5	25	
	4 and over	4	20	
Participants	***Levels of Experience***	***Skills Taught***		
T1	A2-B2	Listening - Speaking		
T2	A1-A2-B2-C1	Listening- Speaking- Reading- Writing		
T3	A1-B1	Speaking		
T4	A1-B2	Listening - Writing		
T5	A2-B1-B2-C1	Academic Turkish-Listening-Speaking-Reading		
T6	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing		
T7	A2-C1	Writing		
T8	A1-A2-B1-C1	Listening- Speaking- Reading		
T9	A1-A2-B1-B2	Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing		
T10	A1-B1-B2	Listening-Speaking-Reading		
T11	B1-B2	Speaking		
T12	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking-Writing		
T13	A1-A2-B1-B2	Grammar-Writing-Speaking		
T14	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking		
T15	B1-C1	Grammar		
T16	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing		
T17	A1-B1-C1	Listening-Reading-Writing		
T18	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing		
T19	A1-B1	Writing		
T20	A1-A2-B1-B2-C1	Grammar-Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing		

When examining the demographic and professional profile of the 20 faculty members who participated in the study, it was found that 80% of the group were women, 75% were young educators aged 22-30, and the vast majority of participants (70%) held a postgraduate degree. In terms of professional experience, 55% of the participants had 1 year of TÖMER experience, while 45% had 2 years or more. Participants (T1-T20) taught at different course levels ranging from A1 to C1, covering the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. In this context, some educators teach all skills in an integrated manner, while others (such as T3, T7, T11) focus only on specific skill areas.

Data on the characteristics of the students participating in the study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Characteristics of Participants (Student)

		f	**%**	**Total Number**
Gender	Male	11	55	20
	Female	9	45	
Age	18-21	17	85	20
	22-25	3	15	
	26 and above	0	0	
Educational Background	High School	3	15	20
	Associate Degree	1	5	
	Bachelor's Degree	16	80	
Country	Azerbaijan	1	5	20
	Indonesia	5	25	
	Morocco	2	10	
	Palestine	2	10	
	Kazakhstan	3	15	
	Egypt	1	5	
	Sudan	1	5	
	Yemen	5	25	
Level	B2	13	65	20
	C1	7	35	

When examining the demographic profile of the 20 students who participated in the study, it was found that 55% of the participants were male and 45% were female, and that a large majority of the group (85%) were between the ages of 18 and 21. In terms of educational background, 80% of the participants were at the undergraduate level. There was diversity in the country distribution, with Indonesia (25%) and Yemen (25%) having the highest representation rates, followed by Kazakhstan (15%), Morocco (10%), and Palestine (10%). In terms of language proficiency, 65% of the students are at the B2 level, while 35% are at the C1 level.

2.3. Data Collection Tool

In this study, data were collected through a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews are described as instruments designed to elicit in-depth and comprehensive information (Akman Dömbekci & Erişen, 2022). This research focuses on obtaining the opinions of instructors and students regarding the use of languages other than the target language in the classroom while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The interview questions were prepared to elicit appropriate responses to the main research questions. The interviews were conducted face-to-face. The data collection process lasted for two weeks. All interviews were transcribed on a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher. Ethical principles were meticulously observed throughout the research. Informed consents of all participants were taken, and the purpose, scope, process, and potential implications of the study were clearly explained to them. Participants took in the study voluntarily and were informed that they could withdraw from the research at any time. The study utilized a semi-structured interview form, a literature review, and relevant methodological procedures. To enhance the scope and clarity of the interview items, the draft form was presented to two field

experts for review, and necessary adjustments were made based on their feedback. To test the effectiveness and clarity of the focused interview, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of participants who were not included in the actual study sample. The clarity of the questions were assessed during the pilot study. Some sentences were simplified based on the results obtained. The form was further strengthened through a joint evaluation of the development process and the pilot findings. For reliability, the same question structure was meticulously maintained throughout the interviews, avoiding leading statements, and ensuring consistent implementation during the entire interview process. Furthermore, to ensure consistency in coding during data analysis, a second researcher conducted an inter-coder agreement check, and a high level of agreement was achieved. These practices ensured that the research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards.

2.4. Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2012), data analysis in qualitative research began with examining the data to construct an overall understanding. The data need to be evaluated so that the researcher can determine whether additional information is required to support the dataset. The next stage is the coding of the data. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021), the main purpose of content analysis is to identify the concepts and relationships necessary to explain the collected data. In content analysis of the present study, data were examined in detail. Accordingly, coding was carried out on the semi-structured interview forms completed by Turkish language teachers and foreign students learning Turkish, and the data were subjected to content analysis. The coding process was conducted manually. During the analysis phase, all interview transcripts was read in detail, after which initial codes have been generated.

Data from a total of 40 participants — 20 students and 20 teachers — were analyzed. To enhance the reliability of the coding process, two researchers participated in the analysis, and the codes generated by both researchers were compared and cross-checked. Consistency between the codes was assessed, disagreements were resolved through discussion, and a common coding framework was established. This process ensured that the data analysis was both consistent and reliable. Purposive sampling was used in the sampling process; 20 students and 20 teachers were included to increase data diversity within the scope of the study. This approach strengthened the validity and depth of the analysis. Themes were categorized based on topics frequently emphasized by the participants.

2.5. Validity and Reliability

To ensure that the scope of the meeting was maintained, summary questions were presented to two field experts. Written feedback from the experts was collected and comprehensively evaluated, including comments on clarity, alignment with the research purpose, and structural development. Several questions were revised based on the experts' suggestions, and the form was finalized accordingly.

To ensure inter-rater reliability, the coding process was carried out independently by two researchers, after which the codes were compared and consensus was established. Differences in coding between the researchers were reconsidered based on the relevant data items, and a

consensus decision was reached regarding the logic of maintaining and retaining themes. This process strengthened the reliability of the content analysis.

3. Findings

Content analysis of findings from semi-structured interviews revealed three main categories reflecting teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of languages other than Turkish in foreign language classrooms. These titles were categorized as follows: (1) those who prefer to speak only in the mother tongue, (2) those who state that another language can be spoken besides the target language in necessary/essential situations, and (3) those who do not see any problem in using another language besides the target language. It is seen that the teachers and students gave various answers to the question about which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom while teaching/learning Turkish as a foreign language. In this section, teachers' perspectives are presented first, followed by students' views for each question.

3.1. Teachers' Insights

3.1.1. Those Who Prefer to Speak Only in Their Mother Tongue

6 teachers support exclusive use of the mother tongue. The teachers generally gave answers to the question 'Which languages can be used?' with limitations at various levels. Some instructors (T6, T12, T16) argued that only Turkish should be used in the classroom and rejected the use of other languages stating that doing it might negatively affect students' Turkish thinking skills. The teachers gave various answers to the question "How often can it be used?". When the opinions are analyzed, T6 and T16 have a clear line that foreign language should not be used at all. When the opinions of the teachers about the situations in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, T6 showed a definite attitude by saying "It should not be used at all."

When examining the opinions of the teachers about at which levels other languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language; "T6: should not be used at all" and continued to maintain his/her clear attitude. Participant T1 suggested focusing entirely on the target language at the B2 and C1 levels. Participants, such as T11 and T10, agreed that other languages other than the target language should not be used after B1 level. When examining the opinions of the teachers about the positive aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, T6 states that the use of another language slows down the learning of the target language: "The more the student uses the language they know, the less they use the target language." Similarly, T16 stated that the use of a different language hinders thinking in Turkish and therefore argued that thinking in the target language requires constant encouragement. T10, on the other hand, took an even stronger stance emphasizing that only the target language should be used in the classroom: "The lingua franca gives students confidence and distances them from the target language."

When analyzing the opinions of the teachers about the negative aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it was found

that several teachers viewed such use as a barrier to effective language learning. T6 stated that the use of languages other than Turkish in the classroom slows down individual progress in learning Turkish and limits the interaction in the classroom. In this regard, T6 emphasized the lack of social cohesion by saying "Students with the same language can group among themselves, which reflects negatively on the classroom." Similarly, T11 argued that the target language cannot be learnt without exposure and that the use of other languages would negatively affect the teaching process. Several teachers stated that the use of other languages in the classroom could lead to laziness and the lack of effort in the long run. T1 emphasized that students' get used to the ease of using the language they know may cause inadequacy in the target language. She supported this view by saying, "Because it is easier, they will use the language they know, and the frequency of using the target language will decrease." T15, on the other hand, stated that the use of other languages may cause boredom and loss of motivation among the students, and especially in classes with a dense language group, time loss may increase.

3.1.2. Those Who Stated That another Language Can Be Spoken Besides the Target Language in Necessary/Essential Situations

10 teachers support that, in necessary situations, the use of another language can be allowed at beginner levels, for explaining abstract or complex concepts, and for enhancing motivation or facilitating comprehension.

In response to the question "Which languages can be used?" the teachers generally answered "languages that can be considered more universal, such as English and Arabic." Teachers, such as T14 and T15, stated that major languages such as English or Arabic may be used when students have difficulties in understanding, especially in A1 and A2 courses. As an example, T3 remarked: "I don't think it is right to use a language other than the target language in the classroom. I think it is difficult to find a common language that both the teacher and all students know. However, when it is necessary to use it, the language known by the majority can be used."

The teachers gave various answers to the question 'How often can it be used?'. When the opinions are analyzed, most of the teachers believe that the frequent use of other languages may negatively affect the development of proficiency in the target language, while a few supported conditional uses when necessary. Some participants, such as T4 and T13, stated that other languages can rarely be used to explain abstract concepts or to help at basic levels. T18 emphasized that such use should be kept at minimum, and similarly, T17 stressed that the extent to which another language is used should not limit the opportunity to practice in the target language. T10 and T12 further emphasized that even at beginner levels, such usage should be approached with caution.

The opinions of the teachers about the situations in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language highlight the need for a carefully planned and balanced approach. Most of the teachers adopted the view that other languages should be used only in compulsory situations and in moderation. Some of them, such as T6 and T14, stated that other languages may be helpful for explaining abstract

concepts or when students have difficulty understanding. Similarly, T7 and T1 emphasized that using other languages in specific cases, such as teaching complex grammatical structures and idioms, can be useful. T8 stated that other languages may be used to save time "when body language and visual materials are insufficient." On the other hand, T13 stated that some words could be used humorously to make students feel that they belong to the lesson. The focal points of the teachers were that the use of other languages should be limited and moderate (e.g., T10 and T20), for students at beginner levels, such as A1 and A2. Finally, T2 and T3 emphasized that other languages can be used in cases where visual materials are insufficient or to convey the meaning of words more easily and accurately.

When examining the opinions of the teachers about the skills in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, some of the teachers emphasized the importance of limiting the use to certain skills, T16 stated that it may rarely be used in abstract situations and subjects. Some of the teachers also focused on specific skills. For example, while T14 and T15 emphasized grammar-related skills, T4 and T5 stated that the use of other languages can be beneficial for developing reading and listening skills.

When investigating the opinions of the teachers the proficiency levels at which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, T17 stated that these languages should be used across all levels, but very carefully and strategically. Finally, T8 suggested a more intensive use at beginner levels (A1- A2) and a decreasing frequency at advanced levels (B1- B2- C1). T4, on the other hand, stated that students may translate from other languages, but the teacher can make use of other languages (e.g., English) only at levels B1 and above. Participants, such as T9, T12, T15, and T20 stated that at the beginner levels (A1 and A2), language learners may have difficulties in understanding the basic structures and therefore supportive languages may be useful at these stages.

When we look at the opinions of the teachers about the positive aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the opinions reflected a diversity of perspectives similar to those in the previous questions. While some instructors find the use of another language beneficial others mention its potential negative effects. However, some teachers such as T15, found the use of other languages useful, especially in explaining difficult subjects, and stated that this approach could enhance students' motivation levels. T15 stated: "If the student cannot answer the question because he/she does not understand the question asked, we can explain the question in another language. In this way, the student relaxes and his/her interest and motivation in the lesson does not decrease. The hesitation and thought of 'I am falling behind my friends' decreases. In addition, the students like it when the teacher rarely says simple expressions, such as 'Good morning, good day, thank you' in one or two words from the language of the students. It strengthens the bond between the teacher and the lesson. His/her interest increases." He also supported this view by using his expressions. T18 stated that the use of another language when teaching certain concepts can help the concept to be remembered better. This is especially true for abstract concepts or structural differences between Turkish and other

languages. T9, who adopted a pragmatic approach, emphasized that other languages should be used only in critical situations and in a limited manner.

When examining the opinions of the teachers about the negative aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it is stressed that the use of other languages can be tolerated especially at certain levels (A1 and A2), but should be strictly limited at advanced levels (B1 and above). T7 illustrated this perspective, stating: 'It can be used at A1 level, but I do not find it meaningful to integrate it into the lessons.' T18 stated that teaching the formal and semantic differences of the target language based on other languages may cause misunderstandings in the long run.

- Positive Aspects: Other languages can support comprehension at beginner levels (A1–A2) when students struggle with basic structures or abstract concepts (T14, T15, T9, T12, T20). They help clarify difficult subjects and enhance motivation and engagement (T15). Occasional use can strengthen teacher-student rapport and facilitate understanding when visual aids or body language are insufficient (T8, T15, T18).
- Negative Aspects: Frequent or unplanned use may hinder target language proficiency (T7, T10, T17, T18). Overuse can reduce opportunities for practicing Turkish and may cause misunderstandings, especially at advanced levels (B1 and above). Integration of other languages at higher levels is generally discouraged, except in critical situations.
- Conditional / Strategic Use: Supportive use is recommended at beginner levels and in specific skills such as grammar, reading, or listening (T4, T5, T14, T15). Use should be moderate, carefully planned, and limited to necessary situations to avoid dependency on other languages. Progressive reduction is suggested as proficiency increases: more use at A1–A2, decreasing at B1–C1 levels (T8, T4, T17).

3.1.3. Those Who Do Not See Any Problem In Using Another Language Besides The Target Language

When exploring the opinions of the teachers about which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, T1, T15, and T18 respectively stated: "English, because it is the common language. Almost all students know it." "English, which is a global language, or common languages (Arabic, French, Indonesian) that most of the class knows." "The second language (e.g., English) that most of the learner group uses in common - the second language that they know (e.g., English).". Supporting that the active use of languages other than the target language and stating that the use of languages, such as mother tongues or common languages, will have pedagogical benefits.

When reviewing the opinions of the teachers on how often languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, some teachers stated that the frequency of use may vary depending on students' proficiency levels. For example, T19 and T20 adopted the view that other languages can be used more, especially in the beginning units of A1 and A2 courses. Regarding the teachers' opinions on situations in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign

language, the focal points of the teachers are that the use of other languages should be more frequent for students at the beginner levels, such as A1 and A2 (T10, T20).

When considering the opinions of the teachers about the skills in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, some of the teachers stated that other languages may be employed across all skills. Teachers who adopted a more flexible approach, such as Teachers like T1 and T13 with a more flexible approach, stated that other languages can be used for all skills. In addition, T2 argued that some complex concepts in writing skills can be taught through translation and considered this especially useful for advanced levels. T18 and T19 stated that other languages can play a supportive role, especially in the development of speaking skills. When examining the opinions of the teachers on the levels at which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, many teachers suggested that languages other than the target language should be used at the beginner levels. For example, T18 highlighted the positive effects of using languages other than Turkish in situations, such as meet, get to know each other or teaching rules. Some instructors argued that using these languages at an intermediate level with a certain frequency would bring more benefits to students. Participant T1 described the use of other languages from A1 to B1 levels as supportive.

Looking at the opinions of the teachers about the positive aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, T5 argued that other languages could be functional in teaching in terms of creating a bridge between the target language and the learner's mother tongue and explained his perspective as follows: "From the point of view of the teacher, there may be situations where we have great difficulty explaining the meaning of a word. At those moments, the use of the other language provides convenience for the student. At the same time, it also provides an advantage in terms of acculturation of the teachers from the learner's point of view; it makes the language teaching process easier and provides a strong bridge between the target language and the mother tongue." T19 stated that he supported the use of the language to save time. T7, who has a similar opinion, stated that students' mother tongue can be utilized in teaching traditions and customs.

When examining the opinions of the teachers about the negative aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, teachers primarily emphasized that this process prevents the progress of learning the target language. Insufficient exposure to the target language is considered one of the main factors that delay the learning process. For example, T10 noted that the use of a common language reduces the student's active use of the target language by saying "The student does not use the target language with the support of the common language and delays learning." In addition, teachers argued that students' orientation toward their mother tongue leads them to develop a translation-oriented learning style. T8 emphasizes that a lack of ability to infer meaning from context may negatively affect the language competence of the students by saying, "Students getting used to translating all the time brings along risks, such as not bothering to extract the meaning of the word from the context." Teachers also noted that the social dynamics in the classroom and the learning environment could be negatively affected. T6 explained, "Students

who have the same language can group among themselves. This reflects negatively on the classroom." Pointing out that relying on a common language might lead to groupings and fragmentation within the classroom, particularly among students with the same mother tongue. T15 supported this view saying, "Other students may get bored while making explanations in languages of nationalities that are densely present in the class. This situation also causes loss of time in the lesson."

3.2. Students' Opinions

3.2.1. Those Who Prefer to Speak Only Their Mother Tongue

When it comes to the opinions of the students in response to the question "Which languages can be used?", S1 and S15 argued that only Turkish should be used in the classroom. Considering the opinions of the students in the face of the question "How often can it be used?", S1 and S15, with a conservative approach, shared the view that other languages should never be used in the classroom. When the students' views on when languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed, S1 stated that other languages should not be used in the classroom at all. When it comes to their views on the skills in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the students did not display a clear or consistent stance on this issue. When examining the students' views on the levels languages other than Turkish that can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it was observed that students moved away from their earlier stance of supporting the exclusive use of the mother tongue and did not maintain their determination in this direction. Some students stated that it should not be used almost at all in advanced levels. S11 emphasized that at the advanced level, students should completely focus on Turkish.

When the students' opinions about the positive and negative aspects of using other languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language were analyzed, the students who advocated the use of only mother tongue accepted the use of other languages, albeit at a minimum level. S5 expressed a concern, stating that "It is negative because it may prevent learning Turkish." Similarly, S8 highlighted the importance of consistent practice in language learning, "It is negative because it prevents us from practicing Turkish."

3.2.2. Those Who Stated That another Language Can Be Spoken Besides the Target Language in Necessary/Essential Situations

In response to the question "Which languages can be used?", the majority of the students stated that especially English and Arabic are the most appropriate languages to explain the subjects they do not understand. Regarding the question "How often can they be used?", the students' opinions appeared more diverse than those of the teachers and in some cases, there were views that use a more flexible approach compared to the teachers' views. Participants, such as S5 and S14 stated that they found this type of use appropriate only when explaining word meanings or clarifying topics that were not understood. S11 emphasized that most of the lessons should be conducted in Turkish, but it would not be a problem to use other languages

when needed. S2 and S12 stated that the use should not exceed 10-20% of the lesson duration. On the contrary, some students, for example, S19 and S4 suggested that this use should be less frequent, for instance, only once a month.

When the students' views on the situations in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are examined, it appears that they adopt a more flexible and need-based approach. While S20 stated that he needed to use other languages "when he did not understand Turkish", students, such as S5 and S12, argued that other languages facilitated learning in challenging situations or when instructional explanations are insufficient, S11 thought that other languages could facilitate the learning of learning new concepts and complex grammatical structures. S2 argued that confusion might occur during the teaching of abstract concepts and that other languages could be used in such cases. Some students said that making cross-linguistic comparisons would be beneficial, especially in grammar lessons (S15). S4 stated that other could serve a supportive role when they could not grasp the meaning in listening and reading activities.

When the students' views on the skills in which other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language were analyzed, they again displayed a pragmatic and supportive stance. Although S2 stated that time could be allocated to other languages in listening and speaking activities when clarification or comprehension difficulties arose, S1 emphasized that it should be at a minimum level and argued that other languages could be used in a limited way, for example to support speaking skills. When we look at the opinions of the students regarding the levels at which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, although the opinions of the students are largely similar to those of the teachers, there diversify more in terms of language use, especially regarding language use at advanced levels. Some students stated that languages other than the target language should be used less frequently at intermediate levels. S11 supported the use of other languages at beginner and intermediate levels. Some participants, such as S14, adopted the idea that non-target language use should be focused on certain levels.

When the students' opinions about the positive aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed, S15 stated that other languages could help him when she/ he had difficulty understanding grammar rules. While S19 emphasized the importance of understanding the subjects with the help of his/her friends, S1 suggested that other languages should be limited to specific purposes and emphasized that it should not become overly frequent. When the students' views on the negative aspects of using other languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed, their opinions are generally parallel with those of the teachers. While S20 stated that the use of other languages in the learning process might delay his acquisition of Turkish, might delay his acquisition of Turkish, S11 stated that the constant use of other languages might reduce opportunities to practice Turkish and prevent the development of fluent learning. Some students also stated that the use of other languages in the classroom negatively affected social interaction and slowed down the overall pace of learning. S7 supported this situation with the following words: "Yes, there is that too; it can reduce the use

of Turkish. Because when this happens, students usually do not use Turkish in the classroom." Similarly, S2 expressed concern that excessive exposure to other languages might decrease learning motivation and reduce opportunities for practicing Turkish.

3.2.3. Those Who Do Not See Any Problem in Using Another Language Besides The Target Language

When it comes to the opinions of the students in response to the question "Which languages can be used?" English was defined as an 'international language,' while Arabic language emerged as a language that that students most frequently use to aid comprehension. Regarding the students' views on how often languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, some students thought that other languages should be used more frequently in the classroom. For example, S13 and S17 supported the use of other languages in every lesson. When we look at the opinions of the students about the situations in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, some students thought that other languages should be used more frequently to facilitate the comprehension of concepts they found difficult to understand.

When their views on the skills in which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed, most of the students stated that the use of other languages facilitated the learning process in certain skills. While S20 suggested incorporating other languages into grammar and listening activities, participants, such as S12 and S15, similarly reported that other languages had a facilitating effect on grammar teaching. Some participants, such as S16 and S19, stated that it would be very useful to include other languages in listening and speaking skills in addition to grammar. Displaying a more comprehensive perspective, S13 and S14 supported using other languages in all skills including speaking, writing, listening, and reading, while S11 emphasized speaking and listening skills in particular.

When examining the students about the levels at which languages other than Turkish can be used in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, many students supported the use of languages other than the target language at A1 and A2 levels. For example, S8 stated that these languages would facilitate learning at the A1 level. Similarly, S19 stated that he considered this use "necessary" at the A1 and A2 levels. Students, such as S2 and S5 stated that even at the C1 level, the use of other languages is definitely useful. S3 emphasized that supporting languages can be used at all levels. When the students' opinions about the positive aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are analyzed, the opinions are mostly concentrated on the fact that the use of languages other than Turkish in the classroom creates a more comprehensible classroom environment. S14 and S20 stated that students can understand the topics more easily through their mother tongue or a common language. S11 made the following comment: 'It facilitates comprehension, it helps me to understand complex subjects better.' These views reveal that students feel more at ease with the use of other languages and are more active in the language learning process. S2 emphasized that the use of other languages could increase students' self-confidence and provide advantages in terms of more efficient use of time. It is one of the

common views of the students that these languages facilitate classroom participation and increase motivation.

When their views on the negative aspects of using languages other than Turkish in the classroom in teaching Turkish as a foreign language were analyzed, S12, S14, and S16 stated that they did not see any problem in using another language besides the target language by saying "None."

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of this study shed light on how both instructors and learners perceive the role of other languages in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The results point to clear differences in belief and practice, shaped not only by pedagogical orientations but also by cognitive, emotional, and contextual factors that influence classroom interaction.

Some teachers and students argue that only Turkish should be used in the classroom. According to this perspective, the use of other languages reduces students' exposure to the target language, negatively influences their cognitive processing, and slows their overall language development. It is also suggested that relying on a common language may produce undesirable outcomes such as the formation of student clusters, loss of motivation, and reduced academic effort.

Another widely shared view among teachers and students is that other languages may be used in a limited and controlled manner, particularly at beginner levels (A1–A2), to explain abstract concepts, teach complex structures, and provide motivation. Supporters of this approach indicate its benefits in terms of saving instructional time, facilitating conceptual clarity, and reducing learner anxiety. However, they also note that excessive use of non-target languages may restrict opportunities for target language practice.

A third group of teachers and students views the use of learners' native languages or a shared intermediary language as beneficial, treating all languages as resources. This group argues that such practices enhance comprehension, strengthen learners' broader linguistic repertoire, and bolster motivation. They also highlight the positive contributions of cultural factors and teacher–student interactions to the learning process.

The findings of this study show that there is a distinct divergence between teachers and students regarding the use of languages other than the target language in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The attitude of teachers prioritizing full exposure to the target language is based on the principle of 'as much target language input as possible', which is one of the fundamental assumptions of foreign language teaching. On the other hand, the students' defense that other languages can be used as a functional tool, especially in meaning-making processes, which reveals that they approach the learning process from a more pragmatic and cognitive perspective. This divergence stems not only from pedagogical preferences but also from broader constructs such as learners' affective needs, perceptions of cognitive load, linguistic backgrounds, and instructors' professional role definitions.

When the qualitative data are analyzed, the teachers' attitude towards limiting the use of mother tongue is observed to be in line with the traditional view that identifies language

teaching with target language mastery. However, this approach does not fully coincide with Cook's (2001) theoretical view that native language can be utilized not only as an inevitable but also as a strategic resource in foreign/second language classrooms. The students' tendency towards flexible use is in line with Byram et al. (1997), who argue that the 'language universe' that language learners construct in their minds is fed by the cognitive and cultural structures in their mother tongue. The findings also support Harmer's (2001) observation that 'students will use their mother tongue in the classroom no matter what is done' because students consciously or unconsciously turn to their mother tongue in the stages of making sense of abstract concepts and analyzing complex grammatical structures. From this perspective, the disagreement between teachers and students can be seen as a clash between the reality of communication in the classroom and the teaching ideal beyond pedagogical preferences. Although teachers' concerns that native language use will undermine target language acquisition are frequently discussed in the literature, the findings show that clarification of meaning for students facilitates the learning process rather than reducing exposure to the target language. This suggests that native language use is not a pedagogical threat but can be a tool to accelerate learning when planned appropriately.

Supporters of exclusive target-language use emphasize the importance of exposure in language acquisition, whereas supporters of contextual use of other languages highlight practical benefits related to comprehension and instructional efficiency. Meanwhile, those who see no issue with the use of non-target languages argue for a multilingual perspective that treats language learning as an interconnected process. These differing views underscore the importance of considering learner needs, the quality of instructional materials, and the dynamics of the classroom environment. A fundamental principle in language teaching is to ensure effective communication with the target audience. Teachers must first understand the conceptual frameworks underlying learners' native languages to ensure accurate comprehension of new concepts. Furthermore, in vocabulary instruction, it may be beneficial to begin with cognates or words common to both languages (Korkmaz, 2018). As Demircan (2013) notes, learners rely on their existing linguistic knowledge and skills when constructing new linguistic systems in a second language.

Those who support the use of only the target language highlight the importance of exposure in language learning, while those who support the use of another language when needed emphasize the practical and pedagogical benefits. On the other hand, those who see no problem in the use of other languages besides the target language argue that the language learning process should be approached from a multilingual perspective. These different approaches emphasize the importance of considering the needs of learners, the quality of teaching materials and the dynamics of the classroom environment. The most basic principle in language teaching is to ensure effective communication with the target audience. First, the teacher should understand the thinking system of the learner's mother tongue and ensure that the concepts he/she will convey are correctly recognized. In addition, it is predicted that it will be helpful to start with the words common to both languages in the breadth of vocabulary teaching (Korkmaz, 2018). According to Demircan (2013), in second language learning,

learners rely on their existing linguistic knowledge and skills when constructing new linguistic systems in a second language.

One of the most common challenges faced by foreign language teachers is the question of intermediary language use. In multilingual classrooms, this often refers to a shared language among learners; most commonly English. The pedagogical appropriateness of such a medium has long been debated. When instructors lack knowledge of learners' native languages and linguistic structures are not sufficiently transparent, misunderstandings can arise, instructional clarity may suffer, and learners may question the teachers' proficiency. During the language-learning process, learners inevitably draw connections to their native language; without the support of their first language, they may struggle to fully grasp new linguistic structures. Nevertheless, even when instruction shifts entirely into the target language at more advanced levels, learners continue to reference their mother tongue during translation, comparison, and grammatical analysis (Yılmaz, 2022).

As Cook (2001) suggests, it would be more appropriate to consider the mother tongue as a valuable resource for developing authentic (natural) foreign/second language speakers rather than as an obstacle to be avoided at all costs. Learners' mother tongue shapes the foreign language universe they construct in their minds by influencing their use of the target language and their language learning skills (Byram et al., 1997). According to Harmer (2001), no matter what teachers say or do, there is no doubt that learners will use their mother tongue in the classroom. Overall evaluations reveal that both teachers and students agree on the necessity of balancing target language exposure with meaning facilitation in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. While teachers generally tend to keep this use to a minimum, students adopt a more pragmatic and flexible approach in this regard. Teachers predominantly aim to provide full exposure to the target language, whereas students argue that other languages can be used at many points to facilitate understanding and support the learning process. Teachers generally support careful use and limited to specific skills, whereas learners adopt a more flexible approach to facilitate comprehension and reduce effort in the language learning process. These findings suggest that classroom practices should be tailored to the needs and language levels of the learners. Achieving successful language teaching outcomes necessitates a carefully planned and measured approach to the use of non-target languages.

Recent scholarship in multilingual pedagogy expands the understanding of cross-linguistic interaction far beyond the traditional debates on monolingual versus bilingual teaching. Translanguaging theory, as developed by García and Li Wei (2014, 2017), conceptualizes language use not as the alternation of separate codes but as the flexible deployment of a unified linguistic repertoire. From this perspective, learners should not be viewed as managing discrete linguistic systems but as drawing on their full semiotic resources to make meaning, negotiate understanding, and engage in academic tasks. The findings of this study align with this view, particularly in showing that both instructors and learners use other languages strategically to clarify content, scaffold complex structures, and reduce cognitive load. Rather than interpreting these practices as deviations from "target-language purity," translanguaging theory positions them as legitimate and productive components of learning.

Similarly, frameworks of emergent multilingualism argue that learners' linguistic repertoires are dynamic and continually reshaped through interaction (Otheguy et al., 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018). The nuanced and context-dependent language choices observed in this study support this dynamic perspective, illustrating how learners actively develop new meaning-making practices rather than simply transferring skills from one language to another. An ecological perspective (van Lier, 2004; Douglas Fir Group, 2016) further emphasizes that language learning is embedded within a network of environmental, social, and psychological factors. The influence of classroom environment, teacher stance, peer interaction, and the pedagogical culture of Turkish language institutes observed in this research fits well within this ecological framing. Taken together, these contemporary frameworks help recontextualize the use of additional languages not as interference but as an essential component of a holistic, resource-oriented approach to language education.

Based on these findings, several practical implications for teaching Turkish as a foreign language emerge. First, limited and controlled native-language use at beginner levels may reduce learner anxiety, lessen cognitive load, and accelerate learning. Strategic use of support languages for abstract concepts, cultural content, and complex grammatical structures contributes to establishing well-structured meaning units in the target language. At advanced levels, both teachers and students generally agree that the dominance of the target language is essential for promoting fluency and natural communicative competence. However, the findings also highlight the need to increase instructors' awareness of multilingual pedagogies and underscore the importance of in-service training.

This study has certain limitations. The relatively small number of participants and reliance solely on subjective statements restrict the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the absence of classroom observations prevents the identification of discrepancies between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual instructional practices. Future studies incorporating data triangulation through classroom observations, comparisons among learners with different native languages, and experimental research investigating the impact of native language use on learning outcomes would enable a more comprehensive assessment of multilingual pedagogical approaches in Turkish language teaching.

When the results obtained from the study are evaluated in general, the following recommendations can be made:

- In the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it is suggested that in-service trainings should be organized for teachers in order to determine the languages used in the classroom functionally.
- Guidance materials should be developed for teachers to adopt a more conscious and controlled approach to the use of mother tongue and lingua franca in pedagogical decision-making processes.
- In order to increase students' use of the target language, it is recommended to include more communicative activities in classroom practices.

- In order to evaluate the contribution of different languages used in the classroom to learning in more detail, further mixed-method and observation-based studies can be conducted.
- Since this study is limited to a group of students at a certain level, generalizability can be increased by conducting similar studies with groups of different ages and proficiency levels.

In order to analyze student views in more depth, it is recommended that qualitative studies supported by audiovisual data be conducted.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Yabancı dil öğretimi; bireylerin ana dilleri dışındaki bir dili iletişim, eğitim, meslek veya kültürel etkileşim amacıyla öğrenme süreçlerini kapsayan çok boyutlu bir etkinliktir. Bu süreçte "ana dil", "hedef dil" ve "aracı dil" kavramları arasında dinamik bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Dil öğretiminde hangi dilin, hangi amaçla ve ne zaman kullanılacağına ilişkin tartışmalar, özellikle 20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren dil öğretim yaklaşımlarının merkezinde yer almıştır. Yalnızca hedef dilin kullanımı, öğrencilerin ana dillerinden tamamen uzaklaştırılması ya da sınırlı ölçüde aracı dil kullanımına izin verilmesi gibi konular; öğretimsel verimlilik, öğrencilerin motivasyonu ve anlamlandırma süreçleri açısından farklı sonuçlar doğurmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Türkçenin yabancı dil olarak öğretiminde de hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımına ilişkin kuramsal ve uygulamalı tartışmalar sürmektedir.

Araştırma, yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretimi sürecinde hedef dil dışındaki dillerin sınıf içi iletişimdeki rolünü belirlemek ve bu konuda öğretmen ile öğrencilerin görüşlerini ortaya koymak amacıyla yürütülmüştür. Çalışmada, hedef dil dışındaki dillerin öğretim sürecinde

nasıl, ne ölçüde ve hangi durumlarda kullanıldığı araştırılmış; ayrıca bu kullanımın öğretimsel, bilişsel ve duyuşsal etkileri değerlendirilmiştir.

Araştırma, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenoloji (olgubilim) deseniyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Fenomenoloji yaklaşımı, bireylerin yaşantılarından hareketle belirli bir olgunun özünü anlamayı amaçladığı için öğretmen ve öğrencilerin kişisel deneyimlerinin derinlemesine incelenmesine olanak tanımıştır. Çalışmanın katılımcılarını 2024 yılında bir devlet üniversitesine bağlı TÖMER'de görev yapan 20 Türkçe öğretim elemanı ve Türkçeyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen 20 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu aracılığıyla toplanmış; görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler içerik analizi yöntemiyle çözümlenmiştir. Analiz sürecinde veriler kodlanmış, temalar oluşturulmuş ve öğretmen ile öğrenci görüşleri karşılaştırmalı biçimde değerlendirilmiştir.

Elde edilen bulgular, öğretmen ve öğrencilerin hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımı konusunda üç ana eğilim sergilediğini ortaya koymuştur. Birinci grupta yer alan katılımcılar, yalnızca hedef dilin kullanılmasını savunmuştur. Bu görüşe göre yabancı dil öğretiminde hedef dile tam maruz kalma, öğrenme sürecinin en temel unsurudur. Diğer dillerin sınıf ortamında kullanımı, öğrencilerin hedef dilde düşünme ve iletişim kurma becerilerini engellemekte, öğrenme sürecini yavaşlatmakta ve bağımlı öğrenme alışkanlıklarını pekiştirmektedir. Bu görüşü savunan öğretmenler, öğrencilerin anlama güçlüğü çekseler dahi hedef dile maruz kalmalarının uzun vadede daha kalıcı öğrenme sağlayacağını ifade etmişlerdir.

İkinci gruptaki öğretmenler, gerektiğinde hedef dil dışındaki dillerin sınırlı ölçüde kullanılabileceğini belirtmiştir. Özellikle başlangıç düzeyinde (A1-A2) hedef dilin tamamen anlaşılmasının güç olduğu durumlarda, açıklama yapmak veya soyut kavramları somutlaştırmak amacıyla aracı dil (çoğunlukla İngilizce veya Arapça) kullanılabileceği ifade edilmiştir. Bu grup, hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımının öğrencinin anlam kurma sürecini kolaylaştırdığını, kaygıyı azalttığını ve motivasyonu artırdığını vurgulamıştır. Ancak bu kullanımın sınırlı, amaçlı ve pedagojik bir denetim altında olması gerektiği, aksi hâlde hedef dile maruz kalmanın azalacağı ve öğrenme sürecinin sekteye uğrayacağı görüşü öne çıkmıştır.

Üçüncü gruptaki öğretmenler ise hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımını pedagojik açıdan doğal ve faydalı bir süreç olarak değerlendirmiştir. Bu öğretmenler, çok dilli sınıf ortamlarında ortak bir dilin (Örneğin İngilizce) kullanılmasının iletişimi kolaylaştırdığını, karmaşık konularda zaman tasarrufu sağladığını ve öğrenciler arası etkileşimi güçlendirdiğini belirtmiştir. Ayrıca öğretmenin öğrencinin ana dilinden veya ortak dilden kısa ifadelerle yararlanmasının sınıf içi bağ kurmayı kolaylaştırdığı, öğrencilerin derse katılımını ve duygusal bağlılığını artırdığı dile getirilmiştir. Ancak bazı öğretmenler, bu yöntemin aşırıya kaçması hâlinde hedef dilin ikinci planda kalabileceğini ifade ederek ölçülülüğün önemini vurgulamıştır.

Öğrenci görüşleri incelendiğinde, öğretmenlerle paralel ancak daha pragmatik bir eğilim gözlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin bir kısmı yalnızca Türkçenin kullanılmasını savunurken, çoğunluğu gerektiğinde aracı dilin kullanılmasını desteklemiştir. Özellikle A1 ve A2 seviyesindeki öğrenciler, aracı dil veya ana dilin kullanılmasının dersi daha anlaşılır hâle

getirdiğini, soyut kavramların açıklanmasını kolaylaştırdığını ve özgüven kazandırdığını belirtmiştir. Bununla birlikte ileri seviyedeki öğrenciler, hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımının azaltılması gerektiğini vurgulamış; bu dillerin yoğun kullanımının Türkçe pratiğini ve akıcılığı olumsuz etkilediğini ifade etmiştir. Ayrıca öğrenciler, aracı dilin aşırı kullanımının sosyal etkileşimi sınırlayabileceğini ve öğrenme hızını düşürebileceğini de dile getirmiştir.

Araştırmadan elde edilen genel sonuçlara göre öğretmen ve öğrenciler, hedef dile maruz kalma ile anlamı kolaylaştırma arasında bir denge kurulması gerektiği konusunda ortak bir görüşe sahiptir. Etkili bir Türkçe öğretimi için hedef dilin sınıf ortamında baskın olması gerektiği, ancak gerektiğinde anlamı destekleyici dillerin ölçülü biçimde kullanılmasının öğrenme sürecini olumlu yönde etkilediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca aracı dil veya ana dil kullanımının özellikle soyut kavramların öğretiminde, karmaşık dil yapılarını açıklamada ve kültürel bağlamı aktarmada yararlı olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Bu çalışma, yabancılara Türkçe öğretiminde çok dilli yaklaşımın pedagojik açıdan stratejik biçimde kullanılmasının önemine dikkat çekmektedir. Öğretmenlerin hedef dil kullanımını merkeze alarak öğrencinin anlam kurma sürecini destekleyen bilinçli ve ölçülü aracı dil kullanımına yönelmeleri önerilmektedir. Bununla birlikte öğretmenlerin pedagojik muhakeme becerilerini geliştirmeleri, sınıfın dilsel çeşitliliğini yönetebilmeleri ve farklı düzeylerdeki öğrenci ihtiyaçlarına uygun öğretim stratejileri geliştirebilmeleri gerekmektedir.

Araştırma sonuçlarına dayalı olarak şu öneriler geliştirilmiştir: (1) Türkçe öğretmenlerine yönelik hizmet içi eğitimlerde sınıf içi dil politikalarına dair farkındalık kazandırılmalı, (2) aracı dil kullanımının sınırları ve yöntemleri konusunda öğretmenlere rehberlik edecek materyaller hazırlanmalı, (3) öğrencilerin hedef dili aktif biçimde kullanmalarını teşvik eden iletişimsel etkinliklere daha fazla yer verilmeli ve (4) farklı kültürel ve dilsel geçmişe sahip öğrenci gruplarıyla benzer araştırmalar yapılarak genellenebilir sonuçlara ulaşılmalıdır.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretiminde hedef dil dışındaki dillerin kullanımı konusunda öğretmen ve öğrenci algılarını sistematik biçimde ortaya koymakta, hedef dile dayalı öğretim anlayışını destekleyen ancak çok dilliliğin pedagojik katkılarını da reddetmeyen dengeli bir yaklaşım önermektedir. Bulgular, etkili Türkçe öğretimi için hedef dile yoğun şekilde maruz kalmanın yanı sıra anlam kurmayı destekleyen esnek bir dil politikası benimsenmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.