

## Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language and its Issues

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**Abstract.** the study highlights the need for further research and development in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language to English as a foreign language learners. By addressing the concerns and suggestions of pre-service teachers, policymakers and educators can work towards improving the quality and effectiveness of Turkish language education for EFL learners. Incorporating more practical experiences, such as internships or volunteer opportunities, to better prepare pre-service teachers for teaching Turkish as a foreign language to learners is suggested. The participants also emphasized the importance of developing age-appropriate materials and approaches for teaching Turkish language.

**Key words:** Teaching Turkish, foreign language learning, curriculum, multi-cultural classes, language and culture.

Teaching a foreign language unquestionably indicates considerable variations concerning the age and other characteristics of the learners. Some researchers (Ellis & Matsuoka & Smith, 2008) claimed that the main differences lie in the individual differences, whereas some others claimed that the developmental characteristics of learners (Harmer, 2007) play a critical role in teaching a foreign language to different age groups. For instance, emphasizing the role of developmentally appropriate instruction for children, Linse (2005) suggests that teachers should be aware of developmentally appropriate teaching activities for learners.

The new methodological principles and new directions of research interest in modern times have been reflected both in linguistics and in the history of literature and the teaching of Turkish. The opinions obtained from long-term, experienced lecturers of Turkish language in private and state institutions and their analysis must take into account a number of factors, namely, the Turkish language can not rely on the exclusive knowledge of either spoken language or official language, as the differences between the two are quite substantial: just as there is a difference between proficiency in oral and written language perhaps there is also a difference in writing as well as understanding the language and, between its understanding and ability to translate the text and to refer to the underlying textual messages.

Therefore, it is important for Turkish language teachers to receive proper training and professional development to effectively teach Turkish as a foreign language to young learners. This includes not only language proficiency and knowledge of grammar and syntax

but also pedagogical skills and strategies for teaching EFL learners.

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language to young learners presents unique challenges and requires specialized approaches and materials. By addressing the concerns and suggestions of pre-service teachers and improving the quality of textbooks and teacher training, policymakers and educators can work towards providing effective and engaging Turkish language education EFL young learners.

The teacher should not forget that foreign language teaching involves an interdisciplinary field (Karababa, 2009) that is why s/he needs to plan her/his teaching, application, and assessment and define the items which have to do with linguistics, educational sciences and, at the next stage, search for solutions to problems s/he has encountered. S/he should be ready to do some remedial teaching when needed.

Teaching Turkish can be discussed under two main titles: The teaching of Turkish as a mother tongue and a foreign language. The teaching of Turkish as a foreign language has been discussed in this study and the problems encountered in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language have been evaluated under three titles:

1. The Curriculum Problem,
2. The Teaching Environment Problem,
3. The Problems Encountered by Students (Karababa, 2009)

The use of technology in language education can also be beneficial for teaching Turkish as a foreign language to young learners. Interactive and multimedia materials can make the learning process more engaging and enjoyable for students. Additionally, online platforms and tools can facilitate communication and collaboration between students and teachers, as well as provide opportunities for independent learning. Teaching Turkish as a foreign language to young learners requires a comprehensive understanding of the unique challenges and needs of this group of learners. By addressing these challenges through effective teacher training, appropriate teaching materials, and the use of technology, policymakers and educators can provide high-quality Turkish language education that meets the needs of EFL learners both in Turkey and abroad.

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language to young learners requires a holistic approach that takes into account their unique needs, challenges, and interests. By incorporating effective teaching strategies, appropriate materials, and technology, educators can create an engaging and effective learning environment that promotes language acquisition and cultural understanding. Ultimately, this will help young learners develop the skills and knowledge they need to communicate effectively in Turkish and engage with the rich culture and history of Turkey.

It is evident from the features and numbers of the abovementioned programs that teaching and learning of Turkish in the US faces many challenges. It is not certain and cannot be known how many of all the three types of programs described above are available in the US. While we may get information on the availability of the programs within the IHEs, it is hard to track those within community organizations and the ones for young children. The programs that can be accessed today will not match each other in terms of their curricula.

In conclusion, it should be born in mind that teaching Turkish as a foreign language is a

specific field that needs special attention of both government and academicians. The teacher education on TTFL should be encouraged by the policymakers and higher education institutions in contemplation of an advanced future for the field. Moreover, the stakeholders should give importance to TTFL to young learners, and the primary target of the field should be young learners. Thus, a wide range of actions, including developing age-appropriate materials, age-appropriate teaching methods, as well as educating teachers equipped with teaching skills on teaching young learners, should be planned instantaneously. As for a final suggestion, the researchers in the field should focus on Turkish as a foreign language to young learners since forthcoming empirical studies will surely contribute to the deserted literature on this field.

**Used literature:**

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