LANGUAGE LEARNING SKILLS RELATED PROBLEMS IN TEACHING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: THE CASE OF THE INTENSIVE COURSES OF LANGUAGES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TLEMÇEN, ALGERIA

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Abstract

Teaching the Turkish language in Algeria has its potential problems due to the lack of authentic language input. Algeria is a foreign language context, and this hinders learners in mastering the Turkish language in a short time (6 months). Moreover, other problems caused by poor instructional planning contribute to this process negatively. With these potential hindrances, the present study aims to seek what other challenges incapacitate intensive courses teaching/learning of Turkish conducted with 80 students between 23 and 65 years old. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview. Results show that poor institutional planning is the leading cause of challenges experienced by Turkish native teachers. Besides this, instructional and socio-cultural/economic problems are the other challenges for teaching Turkish.

Therefore, the utilization of visual and audial tools is useful in concretizing the learning process. Efforts to adapt some tools developed by the technology of our day to the class environment have become of greater importance. Simultaneously, the increase in the number of approaches to develop students’ skills of communication and cross-cultural interaction is an indicator that audial and written tools are essential for foreign language teaching. The utilization of visual and audial tools is useful in concretizing the learning process.

Keyword: Teaching Turkish as a foreign language, Intensive courses at Tlemcen University, challenges, effective learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Many linguists have studied the difficulties and problems of learning and teaching Turkish as a foreign language as they face failure during the teaching or learning process. Considering the failure of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, there are different reasons: insufficient number of instructional units offered in Turkish courses per week, linguistic difficulties of both languages, lack of appropriate teaching materials, lack of skilled native speakers (just one teacher), and lack of linguistic theoretical basis (Eryılmaz, 1996). Cotukesen (1983) also states that learners of Turkish as a foreign language have difficulty with suffocation, nominalizations, subject-verb agreement, adjective phrases, complex sentences, relative clauses, nominal cases, and derivational suffixes. Okutman, Jagiellonian Universities, Filoloji Fakültesi, Krakow suffixes.

There are other difficulties that the students also face mainly, with orthography, punctuation, intonation, pronunciation, pitch, and juncture. Aydın (1993) mentions the effect of positive and negative transfer, giving...
examples of the overuse of personal pronoun, lack of object-verb agreement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Turkish Language

The Turkish language has always been a significant language for historical reasons, and due to its political, geographical, and economic position in the world. Thereupon, many universities in the world have Turkish studies departments and more people encounter the language every day and want to learn. It is spoken among a large well-dispersed group of people in Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Cyprus, some Middle East countries, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Britain, and Australia. Nearly 125 million people speak Turkic languages across the world. Some of these languages are closely related to Turkish. Likewise, Turkish is the official language of the Turkish Republic, and spoken with its more than 80 million people in the country and additionally about 5.5 million people who live in European countries, USA, Australia, Russia and the Arab countries as well (Turkish Foreign Affairs data of 2015). Turkic world outstretches on a vast region like from Balkans to Mongolia. Thereby according to the data of UNESCO, Turkish is among the most commonly spoken language all around the world. (Ayşe DAĞ PESTİL ) 2016

The tradition of teaching, learning, and the use of the Turkish language and culture in Algeria date back to the establishment of the Ottoman period in Algeria in the 15th century. Throughout time, where Algerian and Turkish people married and shared the same culture. There are still many borrowed words from the Turkish language used in daily communication in the Algerian dialect. As an illustration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turkish Words</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chadi</td>
<td>Monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meryoul</td>
<td>Smutty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soukardji</td>
<td>Drunkard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gourbi</td>
<td>Hut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khourda</td>
<td>Flea market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheffar</td>
<td>Pickpocket</td>
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<td>Zzawalli</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>Regunta</td>
<td>Paste</td>
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<td>Dishes</td>
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<td>Also</td>
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<td>T9achær</td>
<td>Socks</td>
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<td>Bezzaf</td>
<td>A lot of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dolma</td>
<td>Meatballs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mengoucha</td>
<td>Earring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

As per the purpose of this exploratory study is to have a better understanding of the quantitative data results. We have collected the qualitative data via semi-structured interviews with volunteer students. Thus, we had an opportunity to provide a more in-depth analysis of the data by considering the students’ ideas and perceptions with their statements.

3.2. Participants

This study included 80 students in a Turkish language learning program divided into two groups for beginners, one for elementary, and the last group for intermediate. The study lasted six months, and for those who want to improve their language skills, they can add 80 hours as an internship in Istanbul (i.e., one month) with native teachers. The participants were male and female; their age was between 23 to 65 years. They had no previous experience with the Learning of the Turkish language.

3.3. Sample of the Research

The sample of the study has been prepared by the teacher under the framework of vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing taught in the 12 chapters of Lale Türkçe Ders Kitabi 1 Course Book (Öztürk& Akçay, 2011).
The teacher used some traditional reading, question/answer approach, and Pair work questions. As an illustration, this is a dialogue completion. It was demonstrated that the experimental group students could remember the text learned by performing could be recollected well even after one week, especially those for greetings in the first chapter.

Asagıdaki boşlukları diyaloga göre doldurunuz.

A: Hos geldiniz.
B: ........................................
A: .........................................?
B: ........................................ Osman.
A: ......................................... ne?
B: Soyadım Kara. HOŞ GELDİNİZ

A Dinleyiniz ve işaretleyiniz.
1. A: Merhaba
2. B: Merhaba
3. A: Adın ne?
4. B: Adım ............

A) Ayşe
B) Ebru
C) Sevgi

Besides, It has been demonstrated that performing dialogues have increased the motivation of the advanced group of students, and their self-confidence also increased since those students collaborate to compose a dialogue, which can later be performed for the entire class. They managed to speak the language they are learning while performing some during the warm upstage. While conducting some dialogues, the students could express themselves freely. This will facilitate the development of their speaking skills on a more advanced level of Turkish. The teachers were very impressed. Almost, they should prepare and hold lively and engaging activities to remove the monotonousness and attract their students’ attention like visual aids. Learning can be reinforced with different teaching/learning resources because they stimulate, motivate, and focus learners’ attention for a while during the instructional process. Visual aids arouse the interest of learners and help the teachers to explain the concepts easily. Visual aids are those instructional aids that are used in the classroom to encourage the teaching-learning process. As Singh (2005) defines: "Any device which by sight and sound increase the individual s’ practice, outside that attained through reading labeled as an audiovisual aid."

Turkish teachers should use visual aids that help the teacher to clarify, establish, and correlate and co-ordinate precise conceptions, understandings, and appreciations and support him to make learning more actual, active, motivating, encouraging.

These devices help the teacher clarify, establish, and correlate and co-ordinate precise conceptions, understandings, and appreciations and support him to make learning more actual, active, motivating, encouraging, significant, and glowing. Indeed visual aids help students to acquire an accurate image when they see and hear correctly.

The correct use of visual aids helps to retain more concepts permanently and avoid misusing them.

Visual aids provide a complete example of conceptual thinking.

Visual aids create an environment of interest for the students.

Visual aids help to increase the vocabulary of the students.

Visual aids help the teacher to get some time and make learning permanent.

Visual aids provide direct experience to the students. (Ghulam Shabiralyani, 2015)

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process. As Singh (2005) defines: “Any device which by sight and sound increase the individual s’ practice, outside that attained through reading labeled as an audiovisual aid.”

4. THE DIFFICULTIES OF TEACHING THE TURKISH LANGUAGE

There are a lot of challenges encountered in terms of the learners. According to Ercil (2003), a Turkish language instructor categorizes the problems in four groups:

1. shortage of instructional materials, such as course textbooks and digital instructional materials.
2. individual differences among students.
3. students are learning activities outside the classroom.
4. Organization of the Turkish classes.

On the other hand, Turkish is different from their native language. In fact, it is an agglutinative Ural-Altaic language, which has different phonetics and structural characteristics (O òzyûrek 2009). For example, in Turkish, the verb is at the end of the sentence, and there are many suffixes. Although it might be very hard to learn for students who are not familiar with this type of language structure, many people in the world are increasingly learning and speaking Turkish (Ozyurek 2009)

5. CONCLUSION

The results show that Turkish teachers, while aware of the achievements, observe many difficulties in implementing some methods in their classrooms. These difficulties stem from three directions: the teacher, the students, and the educational system. The results suggest that despite showing a keen interest in change, Turkish teachers are not somewhat optimistic about the complete adoption of new methods, and thus feel that only by overcoming some difficulties and by establishing more favorable conditions for the implementation of new strategies.

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