

## Teaching case suffixes with the aid of the usage of Turkish folk literature in teaching Turkish to the foreign students

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### Abstract:

*When teaching a foreign language, grammar is important because it helps to develop other language skills. Avoidance of the classical ways of teaching grammar is vital in none having a dull lesson. The main point of this paper is that the usage of Turkish folk literature in teaching grammar topics to foreigners will make the lessons more entertaining and memorable.*

*Scanning method was used in choosing the works of the folk literature. Besides it includes the experience of the researcher who has taught Turkish to foreign students for a long time.*

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*When you teach a foreign language you actually transfer a culture, which means that the person who is learning a particular foreign language, it stands for that the students would get knowledge about the culture of those people to some extent.*

*This study includes only folkloric examples regarding case suffixes of Turkish Language. Also, ways of using tongue twisters, riddles, singing ditty, proverbs and idioms in the lesson have been discussed. Some of the properties that make folkloric works suitable for teaching Turkish are: ability to be sung in a tune (melody), laconism (having short sentences) and applicability in the classroom as well.*

**Key words:** Turkish Folk literature, case suffixes, folkloric works, culture, teaching Turkish, Foreign students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of knowing at least one foreign language is well known by everybody nowadays. The advancement of technology has had a key role in strengthening the relationships between countries. It is a well known fact that countries do collaborate with each other in different areas like: education, economy, politics and tourism. For that reason, the communication tool has to be their own language or English.

One of the most important features of language is that besides being a communication means, it also serves the function of transporting and transferring a culture. A good communication is at the same a factor that will introduce the country together with its culture to those language learners.

The teaching of a foreign language is known as teaching of the culture, which means that learning a foreign language is learning and getting to know a new culture. When teaching a language, we teach the cultural elements, traditions, historical events and lifestyle of that nation. Since the given examples belong to that foreign language the learner will also partially learn that particular culture to some extent. A good teaching/

learning can be an effective way in building bridges between countries. Kutlu expresses his opinion about the importance of cultural elements in learning a language as follows:

“In order to understand a language and fluently speak it, you need to be able to think in that language and be competent of the notional and figurative elements. To complete this you need to learn the culture and cultural elements that serve as a mirror to that language. This way a learner will be able to understand the key points of the target language and will be able to think in that language”(Kutlu, 2015:698).

The word “culture” is defined in the dictionaries as: firstly; the ideas, customs and social behavior of a particular people of society”, secondly; “the arts and manifestation of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively (TDK, 2010: 1558).

It is possible to say that teaching Turkish to foreigners all around the world has been broadened especially last thirty years. Together with Turkish teaching it has been essential to work in order to develop new lesson materials and teaching techniques.

Teaching Turkish culture has not been the direct intention of that work. The real intention has been making Turkish teaching colourful and entertaining by offering cultural examples and encouraging the respective students in the participation of the lessons. The usage of Turkish culture has been useful especially in teaching grammar topics. As a result, students have also been taught some elements of Turkish culture.

The researcher has observed positive results of including folklore literature while teaching Turkish to foreign learners of secondary and high schools. The contributions of using folklore in teaching Turkish to foreigners can be listed as follows:

- It helps in breaking the monotony during the lesson and helps to increase the students` motivation.

- It contributes in making the lesson memorable thanks to their applicability during the lesson.

## 2. LITERATURE SCANNING

Materials for teaching Turkish to foreigners throughout history date back to a long time. Many academicians consider 'Divanü Lügati't-Türk' by Kaşgarlı Mahmut as the very first work in this field (Barın, 2010: 122).

The positioning of Ottoman Empire among the most powerful nations has increased the interest toward Turkish language. Therefore, countries that were willing to have warmer relations with the Ottomans had opened schools to prepare people who could speak Turkish. Related to this topic, Ağildere says; 'The relationships of the turks with other countries have increased during the time of Ottoman Empire. Countries that had an interest in collaborating with the Ottomans in business, politics or military issues had been keen in learning Turkish (Ağildere, 2010: 694).

Teaching Turkish to foreigners is a matter that has not been paid much attention to during the Republican times (in new Turkey). It is possible to say that till the 1980's only personal materials have been prepared. Turkish Teaching Center (TÖMER) opened near the University of Ankara in 1984.

The 90's can be considered as a new beginning in teaching Turkish to foreigners. Turkish has spread all around the world through Turkish schools and Yunus Emre culture centers.

Nowadays Turkish books and teaching sets are present for foreigners who want to learn Turkish. These books are prepared according to modern language teaching techniques and they also include cultural elements. It is not possible to say that this is enough, though. Even Kalfa expresses that the space the cultural elements take in the Turkish teaching books

is not. He, in his work, Turkish course books for New Hittites claims:

“It is clear that in the three course books of medium and high level prepared by TÖMER of the University of Ankara there are only 5 texts out of 168 that are directly related to Turkish culture. It is clear that the books that are prepared in this way deny the claim that teaching a language means teaching a culture” (Kalfa, 2013: 173).

### **3. THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE WORKS FROM TURKISH FOLKLORE**

The definition of Turkish folkloric literature whose products/producers are partially known was determined in the dictionary of “The terminology of Turkish folkloric literature” as; “it is named as its product are based on the folks, including poetic and prosaic works, compiling the relevant works, scoping the relevant works, analyzing the relevant works and synthesizing accordingly in the literature overall” (Kaya, 2010:354).

When the folkloric literature was taken into account, the products of it are known as; the some of them as unknown producers, giving advice conditionally, making the people think conditionally, entertaining conditionally, or reminding like those mentioned utterances or phrase of utterances. First and foremost, rhymes with counting numbers, tongue twisters, children songs and riddles are coming to the mind. We believe to remind herein; the children songs taking place in the folkloric literature are still open to question whether it should take place in the literature or not? but the researcher used the children songs due to their teachability.

In the study, in brief, we would like to give the definitions and usages of folkloric literature works that are used in the present paper.

Folklore being mentioned, the literary pieces we have inherited from the past come to mind together with their

peculiarities: they have no author, some give advice and some make us think or entertain. The first folklore pieces one can mention are tongue twisters, clearance in the children`s game, children songs and riddles. It is worth specifying that: discussion regarding the place of children songs in the folklore is still going on. However, I included them in my work because of their ability to easily be taught. I want to briefly define these types of folkloric works and give short information of the areas they are used.

### **Tongue twisters**

The rhymes that take place at the beginning of the tales as the element of humour, partially meaningful, partially meaningless, rhymed, stereotyped, preliminary utterances (Bayar, 2007:1045) and those are taking significant places in the Turkish culture. It is possible to say that the rhymes mainly are taking place in the plays of the children and used accordingly. The rhymes taking places in the letters appear remarkably. Even though they have poetical features, they stay away the number of words, therefore there is no hesitation for the number of syllables, reducing rhymes in it.

### **Rhymes with counting numbers**

The definition in the dictionaries is: ‘the appointment of the game leader in children games counting numbers’ (TDK, 2010: 2049). Saying these Rhymes with counting numbers by heart is important in choosing the leader. Since these rhymes with counting numbers are used by children they do reflect their inner world strengthens their ability to learn by heart. Other specifics are that they do not have to contain meaningful words and are said fast and rhythmically.

### **Children songs**

These are lively pieces that are meant to influence children`s inner worlds and are said in a tune. Besides entertaining children, they are also taught some values in the meantime.

## **4. WORKING METHOD**

Since it is the main topic of our work the topic of case suffixes was chosen. There were chosen texts from folklore which suit our topic. The definitions of the tongue twisters, sayısmaca (rhymes with counting numbers?), children songs and riddles were given. Information about the characteristics of the folkloric pieces that could be used in the lesson was given. Their contribution to the ways of explaining the hal ekleri topic was mentioned. Lastly suitable examples from folkloric works that can be beneficial in explaining case suffixes. Besides, the scanning method is used to choose the examples in this.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

The researcher aims to comment on the folkloric works for better teaching Turkish language to the foreigners and at the same time how valuable contribution are offering those folkloric works in the teaching Turkish. Naturally, the researcher saw that his personal experience could help him to exhibit fruitful contribution to the present study.

### **5.1. The contribute of folkloric works in the explanation of case suffixes**

#### **The quality of motivating and breaking the monotony**

The usage of folkloric Works in the lesson will increase students` interest towards lesson. The students start showing signs of boredom after a certain point of the lesson. Here it is the moment when using folkloric Works becomes very

important to attract their attention . An indoor activity can save the lesson and bring students attention back.

### **The quality of applicability and the suitability to perform an entertaining lesson**

It is important to pay attention to the folkloric Works that can be taught besides grammar topics. Especially choosing pieces that can be performed in the classroom will make the lesson more colourful and enjoyable.

### **The quality of being memorable and reinforcing**

The main purpose of this work is to make it possible that the students learn the topics taught in the lesson and not forget them. The topics will be reinforced with the examples chosen from the folklore. It is possible to say that melodic pieces like tongue twisters, lullabies and rymes with numbers are much easier to memorize.

### **Some games can be accompanied with visual material**

It is of great significance to offer visual materials for the folklore pieces which will be explained. The teacher can prepare extra materials that suit his/her grammar topic. Since only a simple explanation will not be effective enough, the teacher can opt for videos or voice recordings to add more colour to the lesson.

## **5.2. The characteristics that the folkloric Works should have to be used in the lesson.**

### **Ability to be sung in tune**

'Tune is defined like this in dictionaries: a melody which is adjusted according to specific rules.' (Bayar, 2007:341). A teacher is responsible for making a lesson colourful and productive. It is quite difficult to explain to students with different levels at the same time and make it possible that they all understand the lesson. Melodic folkloric pieces play a great



role in explaining difficult and confusing topics. They especially play a key role in breaking the monotony and save the lesson from being boring.

### **Ability to be memorized**

The second characteristic of the pieces used in the lesson is their ability to be memorized. The chosen ditty, tongue twister, lullaby etc has to be short and memorable.

### **Having few grammar rules**

The chosen folkloric work has to provide an example specific to the grammar topic. Other grammar rules should not be present or be at a very low number. The following examples can be used in explaining singular/plurals and case suffixes. Also, it is a good way to make a preparation for the coming topic.

### **Having few words (laconism)**

It is especially important to choose folkloric pieces with a variety of usages. It will be easier for both students and teachers to deal with texts that have are limited in the number of words and include well known phrases rather than unfamiliar ones.

### **Applicability in the classroom**

It is particularly important for the folkloric pieces to be applicable in the classroom. The following piece is said in the children songs. If a game is played in the lesson students will not easily forget it. If possible the texts can be accompanied with videos and afterwards games can be played outdoors e.g. school yards.

## **5.3. Examples of folkloric Works that can be used in teaching case suffixes**

Information about teaching case suffixes to foreigners will be given in this section and then examples will be provided. Case

suffixes are one of the first topics the foreigners are taught when they start to learn Turkish. Case suffixes are the affixes which are derived from nouns and added to the nouns in order to create the other nouns, verbs and take the responsibility to connect the prepositions and determining the duties of nouns in the sentences, the cases in the sentences and also determining to whom they belong.

The aim of grammar lessons is not teaching students theoretical knowledge. On the contrary it is to help them overcome their obstacles in learning and teaching the language and be competent in using it. Attention should be paid so that the techniques used in teaching serve this purpose also (Taşdemir, Ercan; Bilkan, Nesrin; Can, Hüdayi, 2003:99).

Compared to lessons with reading, listening and speaking activities the grammar lessons make students more vulnerable to distract from the lesson. In order to avoid such situations, a teacher should keep the lesson lively (Yılmaz, 2013:173).

#### **Tongue twisters**

#### **Üşüdüm Üşüdüm**

Üşüdüm üşüdüm,  
Daldan elma düşürdüm.  
Elmamı yediler,  
Bana cüce dediler.  
Cücelikten çıktım,  
Ablama gittim.  
Ablam pilav pişirmiş,  
İçine sıçan düşürmüş.  
Ben bu pilavı yemem  
Vallahi de yemem,  
Billahi de yemem!  
Bir daha da gelmem...  
\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Yağ Yağ Yağmur**

Yağ yağ yağmur,  
Tekne**de** hamur,  
Bahçe**de** çamur,

Ver Allah'ım ver,  
Sicim gibi yağmur.  
\*\*\*\*\*

### **Pazara Gidelim**

Pazara gidelim  
Bir tavuk alalım,  
Pazara gidip bir tavuk alıp ne yapalım?  
Happuru şuppuru yiyelim.  
Pazara gidelim  
Bir kedi alalım,  
Pazara gidip bir kedi alıp ne yapalım?  
Happuru şuppuru yemiyelim.  
\*\*\*\*\*

### **Komşu komşu**

Komşu komşu !  
-Hu hu!  
-Oğlun geldi mi?  
-Geldi.  
-Ne getirdi?  
-İnci boncuk.  
-**Kime kime?**  
-**Sana bana.**  
-Başka kime?  
-Kara kediye.  
-Kara kedi **nerede?**  
-Ağaca çıktı.  
-Ağaç **nerede?**  
-Balta kesti.  
-Balta **nerede?**  
-Suya düştü.  
-Su **nerede?**  
-İnek içti.  
-İnek **nerede?**  
-Dağa kaçtı.  
-Dağ **nerede?**  
-Yandı bitti kül oldu.  
\*\*\*\*\*

### **The songs of children**

#### **Yağmur Yağıyor**

Yağmur yağıyor  
Seller akıyor  
Arap kızı

Camdan bakıyor  
\*\*\*\*\*

### Rhymes with counting numbers

#### Portakalı Soydum

Portakalı soydum,  
Başucuma koydum.  
Ben bir yalan uydurdum,  
Duma duma dum.  
Duma duma dum.  
Öğretmeni kandırdım, Kandırdım.  
\*\*\*\*\*

#### İğne Battı Canımı Yaktı

Oooo..  
İğne battı  
Canımı yaktı  
Tombul kuş  
Arabaya koş  
Arabanın tekeri  
İstanbul'un şekeri  
Hop hop altın top  
Bundan başka  
Oyun yok.  
\*\*\*\*\*

#### Dolapta Pekmez

**Dolapta** pekmez yala yala btmez  
On kilo **sana** yirmi kilo **bana**  
Ayşecik cik cik cik  
Fatmacık cık cık cık  
Sen bu **oyundan** çık  
\*\*\*\*\*

#### Hanım Kızı

Çan çan çikolata,  
Hani **bize** limonata?  
Limonata bitti,  
Hanım kızı gitti.  
**Nereye** gitti?  
İstanbul'**a** gitti.  
İstanbul'**da** ne yapacak?  
Terlik pabuç alacak.

Terliği pabucu ne yapacak?  
Düğünlerde,  
Şingir mıngır oynayacak.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Kutu Kutu Pense**  
Kutu kutu pense  
Elmamı yese  
Arkadaşım Ayşe  
Arkasına dönse!  
\*\*\*\*\*

## 6. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The texts chosen to teach cultural elements are of a high importance. It is especially important to choose suitable texts for student taking into consideration their age and language level. The main purpose of this work is teaching case suffixes. Consequently, it will have modestly been contributed in teaching grammar topics. Grammar topics have to be taught properly without being underestimated because in order to communicate correctly one needs to build a sentence correctly.

A grammar teacher must do different activities in the lesson to save it from being boring. It is up to the teacher to make the lesson colourful and spirit it up. A lesson will surely be productive if the teacher prepares the lesson plan and the activities he/se will use beforehand. The researcher has taught Turkish in different countries for a long time. This has helped him gain experience and know how to deal with the difficulties of teaching grammar. He has used the folkloric works as a useful source for explaining grammar. He thinks that keeping in mind the students' age is necessary. He has also used his experience as a tool to help understand this topic better.

It is possible to classify the contribution of folklore in explaining grammar and especially hal ekleri in this way:

- a) It is motivating and helps spirit up the
- b) It is an applicable and entertaining teaching

- c) The activities inside the lesson can be taught through
- d) It is easily memorized and reinforces the
- e) Some of the games have got visual elements

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