



Organization of Grammar and Content in Turkish Language Teaching According to Language Levels

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Abstract: The sequencing of grammar and content in the instruction of Turkish as a second language is crucial. Determining which topics and grammar rules will be taught at each level poses a challenge. The studies conducted so far on the subject have been carried out both institutionally and individually. Although some studies have been conducted in accordance with the levels specified in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Turkish should be considered separately from European languages due to its belonging to a different language family and structure. In this study, the case study model was used within the scope of qualitative research. The data were obtained through observation and document analysis and interpreted through content analysis. In light of the findings obtained, the grammar and subject teaching sequence of Turkish as a second language has been shaped according to appropriate levels. While creating this sequence, emphasis was placed on the logical relationship between language grammar content and topics. 25 (13 DBİ, 12 Kİ), A2'de 23 (9 DBİ, 14 Kİ), B1'de 18 (10 DBİ, 8 Kİ), B2'de 24 (19 DBİ, 5 Kİ), C1'de 22 (16 DBİ, 6 Kİ) ve C2'de (7 DBİ, 3 Kİ) it was observed that grammar and subject content headings stand out in teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

Keywords: Second language, Teaching Turkish, Grammar, Topic sequence

Introduction

A framework program has been prepared to determine which achievements will be taught and acquired at each level for languages, including Turkish, within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Since this is a framework program, complete success in achieving language skills cannot be expected in practice. The differences between the native language structure of the target audience and the structure of Turkish are the most fundamental point of this differentiation.

One of the most important issues encountered in teaching Turkish as a second language in the studies conducted so far is the organization of grammar and content according to language levels. Even among official institutions in Turkey that teach Turkish as a foreign language (such as the Ministry of National Education, Türkiye Maarif Foundation, Yunus Emre Institute, Directorate General of Overseas Turks and Relatives, Turkish Diyanet Foundation, Turkish language teaching centers within universities, etc.), there is no collaboration on this matter. Each institution has developed its own Turkish language teaching program as a second language (Melanlıoğlu and Balcı, 2020).

In creating materials for teaching Turkish as a foreign language, many factors such as the native language structure of the target audience, their age, the cultural environment in which they were raised, etc., should be taken into consideration; however, these are often overlooked. The prepared lesson materials are being made through trial and error, often devoid of a scientific approach.

"In the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, grammar topics need to be classified, delimited, and structured in a way that supports specific skills" (Karatay and Kaya, 2019, p.3). In teaching Turkish as a second language, the relationship and connections between grammar and content sequencing must be taken into account when arranging them. For example, the teaching of the -cI derivation suffix can be associated with the teaching of occupational nouns. The important thing to note here is that while grammar topics are subtly introduced, greater emphasis should be placed on teaching occupational nouns.

Method

The Model of the Research

In the study, a case study model was used within the context of qualitative research. In case studies, an event or several events are examined in depth. "Case study is a methodological approach involving the in-depth examination of a limited system through the use of multiple data collection methods to systematically gather information about how that system operates and functions" (Chmiliar, 2010; cited in Subaşı and Okumuş, 2017, p.420).

Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of theses, books, conference proceedings, articles, reports written on teaching Turkish as a foreign language and foreign students who have learned Turkish as a foreign language at all levels. The sample consists of all studies conducted on grammar and subject content according to language levels in Turkish teaching as a second language, as well as students and learners learning Turkish in Turkology departments within private and state institutions in Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia.

Data Collection Tools and Analysis

Data were obtained through document analysis and observation, which are qualitative research data collection methods.

Document analysis is a systematic method used to examine and evaluate all documents, including printed and electronic materials. Like other methods used in qualitative research, document analysis also requires examining and interpreting data to derive meaning, develop an understanding of the relevant topic, and generate empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; cited in Kırıl, 2020, p.173).

The studies and resources (books, articles, theses, conference papers, etc.) related to the subject were scanned and indexed under relevant headings. Researchers have long taught abroad at all levels of teaching Turkish as a foreign language (YDTÖ). The YDTÖ courses have been provided to students and participants of the respective nationalities in Turkish language and literature departments or courses at certain private and state institutions in Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia. In this context, researchers have observed the stages of teaching grammar and topics in Turkish Language Teaching as a Foreign Language (YDTÖ) courses, and the parallel teaching of which grammar with which topic has been repeatedly applied and tested in YDTÖ.

At times, it has been observed that the grammar in textbooks prepared for YDTÖ is not compatible with the content of the subjects. Researchers have noted these situations and attempted to accurately match grammar and subject content to the appropriate level. Document review and observation-based data have been transferred to tables according to language levels. In the tables, contents are shown as GR (grammar content) and SC (subject content).

Findings and Comments

The teaching of Turkish as a native language and the language grammar and subject content in the YDTÖ are not the same. The four basic skills of the language, listening-comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, develop in different ways in the mother tongue and in the In YDTÖ, for example, priority is given to the development of speaking skills while more emphasis is placed on reading and writing in Turkish language instruction. Therefore, grammar and subject content do not parallel in one's native language and in YDTÖ, and grammar and subject contents do not progress parallelly. According to the obtained data, grammar and subject contents to be taught according to levels in YDTÖ are shown in the tables below.

Table 1

Language Level A1

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Turkish Sounds and Shapes (Alphabet)	SC
2	Greeting and Introducing	SC
3	Demonstrative Pronouns (<i>This, that, those</i>)	GR
4	<i>Who? and What?</i> Questions	SC
5	<i>Yes, No Words and -mI</i> Question Suffix	SC / GR
6	Negation in “ <i>değil</i> ” Nouns	SC
7	First 100 Words to be Taught	SC
8	Major Vowel (Vocal) Harmony	GR
9	Plural Suffixes (<i>-ler, -lar</i>)	GR
10	Personal Pronouns (<i>I, you, he/she/it, we, you, they</i>)	SC
11	y Fusion Consonant	GR
12	Days of the Week	SC
13	Possessive Suffixes (Complement Form)	GR
14	Consonant Softening	GR
15	Numbers	SC
16	The words <i>var</i> and <i>yok</i>	SC
17	State of Presence (<i>-de, -da, -te, -ta</i>)	GR
18	Teaching Consonant Assimilation	GR
19	The usage of verb roots in imperative mood (come, go, do, read, etc.).	SC
20	The Infinitive Suffixes (<i>-mek, -mak</i>)	GR

21	Present Continuous Tense (-Iyor)	GR
22	The present tense negative form	GR
23	The present tense question form	GR
24	Association of House and Its Sections	SC

In foreign language teaching, the phonetic and morphological structures of languages are highlighted. In this context, grammar and subject contents also vary in languages with different origins and structures. Even the social structures and cultural elements of societies can influence this situation. As can be seen in Table 1, teaching tenses in YDTÖ starts with the present tense. Because a characteristic arising from social structure comes to the forefront. Turkish society lives in the present tense, and events are shaped according to the current time. The present tense has a characteristic that encompasses all tenses except the past tense. In the table below, this situation is exemplified very concretely.

Table 2

The present tense appearance of other tenses

Tense	Example Sentence
Present Tense	We are going to Ankara.
Future Tense	<i>We are going to Ankara for the week.</i> (We will go to Ankara next week)
Present Tense	<i>We always go to Ankara.</i> (We always go to Ankara)

Therefore, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages does not provide grammar and subject content appropriate to levels in languages. Only the four basic language skills (along with some additional skills) show the targets that need to be achieved. Sometimes, when explaining language skills-related objectives, partial subject content is mentioned.

In experiments conducted with participants in research, it has been clearly determined that the sequence of teaching the positive form of tenses first, followed by the teaching of negative and question forms, is more appropriate in the teaching of tenses. The necessity of teaching topics such as vowel harmony, assimilation of 'y', consonant softening, and consonant assimilation in the teaching of positive, negative, and question forms of tenses has been determined in practical applications conducted with the participants in the research.

Especially at the A1 and A2 levels, grammar topics have been taught intuitively.

The teaching of grammar topics has been lost within the subject matter. The living aspects of language, such as listening-comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing, have been emphasized.

In applications conducted with students, it has been observed that the times are shaped in the form of present tense, past tense seen, future tense, simple present tense, and past tense heard in teaching order. It is observed that grammar and subject matter are effective in teaching the times in this sequence.

Table 3

Language Level A2

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Reading Practice	SC
2	<i>Which one?</i> Question	SC
3	<i>How much?</i> Question	SC
4	Dative Case	GR
5	Directions	SC
6	Teaching of the question <i>'Which?'</i>	SC
7	Seen Past Tense	GR
8	<i>How?</i> Question	SC
9	Accusative case	GR
10	Occupational Nouns with the Suffix '-CI'	GR / SC
11	Dictation Practice	SC
12	Teaching the Future Tense	GR
13	Country, Language, and Nationality Names	SC
14	Adjective Derivation Suffix <i>-li / -siz</i> Suffix	GR
15	<i>How's the weather?</i> Question	SC
16	Separation Case	GR
17	Teaching Colors	SC
18	Teaching the Past Tense	GR
19	<i>When?</i> Question	SC
20	Seasons and Months	SC
21	Instrumental case	GR
22	<i>What time is it?</i> Question	SC

Just as it is important to teach the suffixes of noun cases in parallel with the teaching sequence of tenses, it is also crucial to teach them appropriately according to their meanings.

In this context, in the practices conducted with the students where the research is carried out, the teaching sequence of noun case suffixes begins with the locative case. Because it has been observed that after the teaching of personal pronouns, the possessive meaning is easily taught through the locative case. It has been determined that with the prior teaching of the question pronouns "who" and "what" and the nouns "existence" (*var*) and "absence" (*yok*), a wide

practice area is opened with students for the locative case. For example *I have a car, What's in the bag?, Who is in the class? etc.* It has been clearly determined in studies conducted with students that the teaching of locative cases, namely dative, accusative, ablative, instrumental, and locative cases, respectively, is followed. It is possible to say that the teaching sequence of tenses and the content of the subjects are effective in the ordering of noun case suffixes in this way.

Table 4

Language Level B1

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Heard Past Tense	GR
2	Sufficiency verb	GR
3	Vegetable and Fruit Names	SC
4	How do you feel today? Question	SC
5	The relative (equality) case	GR
6	Food (nutrition) and Beverage Names	SC
7	Necessity Mood	GR
8	Clothing names	SC
9	<i>Since/Until/For/Like</i> Prepositions	SC
10	Subjunctive-conditional mood	GR
11	Dictation Writing and Reading Practice	SC
12	imperative mood	GR
13	Family Relationship Names	SC
14	Pronoun and Adjective Derivation Suffix -ki	GR
15	Optative mood	GR
16	Reflexive pronoun	SC
17	Complementary verb	GR
18	Conjugation of Demonstrative Pronouns According to Noun Case Suffixes	GR

It is observed that the speaking skills of students who have completed levels A1 and A2 develop particularly well. From B1 onwards, the teaching focuses on listening comprehension, reading, and writing skills, with an emphasis on grammar topics. It has been observed that students who overcome speaking anxiety develop other language skills more easily.

In the grammar topic sequence, after the teaching of tense and noun case suffixes, the focus shifts to moods. It has been observed that students with a certain language foundation do not struggle when learning moods. The teaching sequence of moods is arranged as necessity, conditional, imperative, and optative mood.

In Turkish, adverbial participles and adjective participles occupy an important place. In the research, it has been observed that at the B2 level, predominantly focusing on a certain foundation, the teaching involves adverbial and adjectival participles for the target audience. In Table 5, the teaching sequence of adverbial participles is provided. The questions of *when*, *how*, and *why* to be used in the teaching of adverbial and adjectival participles have been taught in previous levels. As a result, it has been observed that the teaching of adverbial and adjectival participles becomes easier.

Table 5

Language Level B2

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Adverbs	SC
2	<i>-ken</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
3	<i>-IncA</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
4	<i>-DIkcA</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
5	<i>-DIğIndA</i> / <i>-DIği</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
6	<i>-DIktAn</i> sonra Time Adverbial Participle	GR
7	<i>-Eli</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
8	<i>-Ar...mAz</i> Time Adverbial Participle	GR
9	<i>-a</i> / <i>-e</i> State Adverbial Participle	GR
10	<i>-ErEk</i> State Adverbial Participle	GR
11	<i>-mAdAn</i> State Adverbial Participle	GR
12	<i>-Ip</i> Context Adverbial Participle	GR
13	<i>-DI ğI</i> Case Binding Adverb-verb	GR
14	<i>-DIğIndAn</i> Cause Adverbial Participle	GR
15	Teaching Words with Puzzles and Nursery Rhymes	SC
16	Teaching Words with Mnemonics and Similar Sounds	SC
17	Adjective-Verbs	SC
18	<i>-En</i> Adjective-verb	GR
19	<i>-ICI</i> Adjective-verb	GR
20	<i>-Ir/-Ar</i> Present Tense Adjective-verb	GR
21	<i>-AcAk</i> Present Tense Adjective-verb	GR
22	<i>-DIk</i> Past Tense Adjective-verb	GR
23	<i>-mIş</i> Past Tense Adjective-verb	GR
24	Reading adapted stories suitable for the level	SC

At level C1, the emphasis is primarily on the teaching of compound tenses, derivation, and inflectional suffixes.

Since Turkish is an agglutinative language, the teaching of derivation and inflectional suffixes holds an important place. Moreover, it is understood that the C1 level is shaped by the teaching of certain grammar topics related to adverbs, pronouns, and verbs.

Table 6*Language Level C1*

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Indefinite Pronouns	SC
2	Voice in Verbs	GR
3	Personification Adjectives	SC
4	Quickness Verb	GR
5	Auxiliary Verbs	GR
6	Vowel Reduction	GR
7	-Ce suffix	GR
8	-Cik/-cAğIz The Diminutive Suffix	GR
9	-Er augmentative suffix	GR
10	Noun Verbs	SC
11	<i>According to /About to /Against /Towards/Alone/ Despite</i> and other prepositions	SC
12	Conjunctions	GR
13	Compound Tense Verbs	GR
14	Story Compound Tense	GR
15	Narrative Compound Tense	GR
16	Conditional Compound Tense	GR
17	Derivational affix	SC
18	Verb to Noun Derivation Suffixes	GR
19	Verb to Verb Derivation Suffixes	GR
20	Noun to Noun Derivation Suffixes	GR
21	Noun to Verb Derivation Suffixes	GR
22	Reading instructional texts on grammar topics	SC

Researchers have determined that at the C2 level, more vocabulary, word groups, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation can be taught to students who have completed grammar and subject content. The teaching and reading of literary texts are an indication that the reading skills of the target audience at this level have reached the highest level. Watching printed and visual media is seen as the pinnacle point where listening comprehension and reading comprehension skills can reach. Being able to use idioms, proverbs, cultural motifs, abbreviations, and terms while speaking is the best goal that can be achieved for speaking proficiency. Being able to use spelling and punctuation

correctly is also at the highest level for writing proficiency. It has been observed that the target audience, who has mastered the topics at C2 level, begins to use the target language in a manner close to that of a native speaker.

Table 7

Language Level C2

Order	Grammar (GR) and Subject Contents (SC)	Content
1	Teaching Reduplications	SC
2	Teaching Idioms and Proverbs	SC
3	Teaching Terms	SC
4	Teaching Abbreviations	GR
5	Teaching Synonyms	SC
6	Teaching Sentence and its Elements	GR
7	Teaching Spelling and Punctuation	GR
8	Reading Literary Texts	SC
9	Reading Printed Publications	SC
10	Watching Visual and Audio Broadcasts	SC

Conclusion and Recommendations

Grammar and subject contents consist of a total of 120 topics, with 24 at level A1, 22 at level A2, 18 at level B1, 24 at level B2, 22 at level C1, and 10 at level C2. It is clearly seen that grammar and subject contents progress from simple to complex.

A method has been used in the teaching of grammar topics from known to unknown. It is understood from the findings that, particularly in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, grammar topics follow a specific sequence due to the structure of Turkish.

The teaching sequence of subject contents is completely shaped according to the priority in everyday speech (colloquial language). It is observed that factors such as meeting individual needs, relationship with society, social life, cultural elements, etc., are influential in the formation of this sequence. Since every society has different social life and cultural values, the importance level of subject contents may vary.

It is possible to say that the teaching sequence of grammar and subject contents is different in teaching Turkish as a foreign language compared to teaching Turkish as a native language. In teaching Turkish as a native language, emphasis is placed on teaching grammar, while in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the development of speaking skills is focused on at the initial levels, and it is observed that the four basic language skills are aimed to be developed

in parallel In this context, those who graduate from Turkish Language and Literature teaching departments are more suitable to teach Turkish as a second language only after attending a seminar and obtaining a certificate in Turkish language teaching as a foreign language.

Turkish, which has an agglutinative structure, possesses a mathematical-like structure. Suffixes are attached to root words, remaining constant, to create different grammar categories by affixing and removing them. A suffix attached to a fixed root in one example can later be taught by attaching it to thousands of other roots. For example, it is understood that thousands of nouns can easily form their plural by adding -ler, -lar suffixes by looking at the last vowel sound in the noun, and the target audience grasps this quickly. It is very important for Turkish teachers teaching Turkish as a foreign language to be knowledgeable in this field.

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