

## Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives

Cemaliye Onderol<sup>a</sup>, Ministry of Education and Culture, Lefkosa, North Cyprus, Turkey

Zehra Ozcinar Uzunboylu<sup>b1</sup>, Ataturk Teacher Training Academy, Department of Teacher Education, Lefkosa, North Cyprus, Turkey [zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr](mailto:zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr)

### Suggested Citation:

Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>

Received from September 10, 2024; revised from November 11, 2024; accepted from January 31, 2025.

Selection and peer review under the responsibility of Prof. Dr. Jesus Garcia Laborda, Alcala University, Spain.

©2025 by the authors. Licensee United World Innovation Research and Publishing Center, North Nicosia, Cyprus. This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

©iThenticate Similarity Rate: 11%

---

### Abstract

This study explores Algeria's teaching policy concerning foreign languages, particularly French and English, within its educational system. Recognizing the critical role of languages in national development, Algeria has positioned French as the first foreign language to facilitate communication with the West and access technological advancements, while English serves as a second foreign language, mainly for business and professional communication through English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Despite these efforts, challenges persist in English language instruction, particularly in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary acquisition, as well as in the distinction between spoken and written English. Employing a descriptive research methodology, this study examines the historical trajectory of foreign language education in Algeria post-independence, with a focus on the current state of English language teaching. A case study was conducted on ESP learners at the University of Mascara to assess instructional effectiveness. Findings indicate that ESP instructors often lack specialization in the field, and learners' specific needs are largely overlooked. Consequently, this research highlights the necessity of targeted pedagogical strategies and specialized training for ESP instructors to enhance learning outcomes. The study concludes with recommendations to improve English language teaching at the university level, emphasizing the need for an informed, needs-based approach to ESP instruction in Algeria.

**Keywords:** General English; languages; specific English; teaching policy

---

\* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Zehra Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Ataturk Teacher Training Academy, Department of Teacher Education, Lefkosa, North Cyprus, Turkey [zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr](mailto:zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the native language of the North Cyprus is Turkish, the courses given in state schools are also taught in Turkish. While many courses are given in schools that are formal education institutions, the Turkish course is included in the curriculum as a basic course because the native language in the North Cyprus, as in Turkey, is Turkish. For this reason, as in all levels of education in the country, Turkish education is provided to foreign students in primary schools, and some problems are encountered in the education and training process (Albayrak & Erciyas, 2019).

Learning a language other than one's mother tongue has become one of the requirements of our age. To get to know different cultures, fully understand their mindset and values, and see the world from different perspectives, it is necessary to learn and teach the languages of different societies. Apart from these reasons, foreign language teaching has become increasingly widespread for many different reasons such as for those working in commercial professions, those migrating from one place to another, and those engaged in tourism (Kanpol & McLaren, 1995).

Today, with the increase in migration in the world, foreign students who migrate to the North Cyprus receive education here, so it can be said that it is of great importance for immigrant students to acquire the Turkish language in terms of their success in their lessons (Albayrak & Erciyas, 2019). Foreign students can enroll in schools in the North Cyprus at the beginning or in the middle of the semester. Turkish is considered a foreign language for students whose native language is not Turkish. Compared to immigrants from Turkey, language teaching to foreigners migrating from third countries is more different and complex due to the differences in their native language and culture (Miçooğulları, 2020).

The emphasis on teaching Turkish to foreigners and the importance of the issue being emphasized and brought to the agenda has a short history of twenty years. The main purpose of teaching a foreign language to an individual is to enable the individual to communicate (Charoento, 2016; Salama et al., 2022; Almohtadi et al., 2023).

To communicate, the individual must have developed basic language skills in the target language and must learn its culture. In order for the individual to achieve these gains, a valid reason must be found for the question "Why am I learning this language?", and the individual must be made to feel that he/she needs this language and that it will provide positive gains (Şahin & İşcan, 2014).

Güntaş et al. (2021) evaluated teaching Turkish as a foreign language in Cyprus through the eyes of Turkish teacher candidates. As a result of the interviews conducted with the teacher candidates, students' anxiety is the main problem. Egeli and Barut's (2020) opinions of teachers in a primary school in TRNC in 2019-2020 In the study aimed at determining the problems and solutions of foreign students, it was shown that the students' failure to succeed in their classes, because of their mother tongue was not Turkish, was among the difficulties they experienced.

In their study, Takır and Özerem (2020) revealed that the problems encountered by foreign students in a school environment where different cultures are present cause language and cultural differences in the context of multiculturalism. İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017) evaluated the opinions of teachers about the primary school education of foreign students in public schools as an example of Sinop province. During the study, it was determined that the majority of the students were Syrian students, but in an environment where Afghan, Iranian, and Iraqi students were also included, teachers had difficulties in educating these students, and their expectations regarding the formation of urgent solution methods were determined.

Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboyu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>

Moralı (2018) stated that the main problem encountered in teaching Turkish as a foreign language to Syrian refugee children is the emotional state of the children. Korkmaz (2018) discussed some problems and solutions experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners. In the research; after reviewing the language structure and alphabet of the target audience, it was suggested to determine the differences with Turkish and to study the points that need to be emphasized.

Sariahmetoğlu and Kamer (2021) evaluated the education and adaptation process of foreign students. As a result of the research; the most important problem faced by teachers and administrators was that foreign students do not know Turkish. As a result of the data obtained, Güngör and Şenel (2018) determined the sub-themes of "Language and culture differences", "Basic language skills", "Understanding", "Expressing and commenting", "Falling behind the program" and "Academic failure" in the main theme of the problems experienced by foreign students in their education.

Çelik and Kodan (2020) revealed that university students' expectations from lecturers who teach in their native language and a different language are in the field of language use and teaching methods. Çelik and Kodan (2020) recorded the suggestions of 36 primary school teachers who had Syrian and Afghan foreign students in their classes regarding Arabs, students, and parents taking Turkish language courses teaching Turkish.

### 1.1. Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to reveal the problems experienced by primary school teachers working in the North Cyprus in teaching Turkish to foreign students, their solutions to these problems, and their opinions on solution suggestions. In line with this purpose, the following research questions were sought.

1. What are the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students?
2. What are the solutions to the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students?
3. What are the solutions to the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students?

## 2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

This section includes information about the research method, study group, development of the data collection tool, collection and evaluation of data, and the ethical process of the research.

### 2.1. Research Method

In this study, phenomenology and document analysis, which are qualitative research methods, were used. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that allows people to express their understanding, feelings, perspectives, and perceptions about a particular phenomenon or concept and is used to describe how they experience this phenomenon (Tekindal and Uğuz Arsu, 2020).

Document analysis, which also includes a literature review on the subject under investigation, enables the researcher to systematize observations interview records, and other documents. This analysis method saves time and other resources for the researcher, while also facilitating the establishment of the order of importance of the phenomena and events examined, the classification of data sources, and the creation of new data sets (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>

Detailed scanning of written documents containing information related to the facts or events examined in the research and creating new integrity from this information is called document/text analysis (Malterud, 2001). In this study, where the basic problems in teaching Turkish to foreigners are examined within the framework of literature studies, document review, which is a qualitative research method in which the available written documents are examined in detail, was used.

## 2.2. Participants

In this study, 12 classroom teachers working in two different primary schools in the Kyrenia and Nicosia districts of the North Cyprus in 2022-2023 were included. The demographic distribution of the teachers participating in the research is given in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

Demographic Distributions of Classroom Teachers

Teacher Characteristics	Primary School Name	Number of People
Primary school where he worked	Çağlayan Primary School	8
	Karaoglanoglu Primary School	4
Gender	Woman	12
	Male	0
Age	25-35 Years Old	4
	36-45 Years Old	5
	46-55 Years Old	3
Educational Status	License	7
	Degree	5
Duty	Class Teacher	12
Seniority	1-5 Years	3
	6-10 Years	0
	11-15 Years	2
	16 Years and Above	7
Experience of Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students	There is	8
	None	4
Foreign Student in Class	There is	10
	None	2
Total		12

As seen in Table 2, 8 teachers from Çağlayan Primary School and 4 teachers from Karaoğlu Primary School participated in the research. All teachers in the study group were women. Four teachers between the ages of 25-35, five between the ages of 36-45, and three between the ages of 46-55 participated in the study. Five of the classroom teachers had a master's degree and the other seven had a bachelor's degree. All teachers participating in the study are classroom teachers and graduated from Atatürk Teachers Academy. According to their seniority, 3 teachers have worked for 1-5 years, 2 teachers for 11-15 years, and 7 teachers for 16 years and above. When the experience of classroom teachers with foreign students is examined, it is seen that 8 people have this experience while 4 people do not have any experience. Most of the teachers who participated in the study in the 2022-2023 academic year have foreign students in their classes.

## 2.3. Data collection tools

The research data were collected using interview questions developed by the researchers. The opinions of two field experts were used in the preparation of the interview questions. After the necessary arrangements were made, the language validity was tested by asking questions to two classroom teachers who were excluded from the study group. The questions were found clear and understandable by the teachers. The interview questions are given together with the data indicating each question in the findings and discussion section.

## 2.4. Compliance with ethics

During the data collection phase of the study, research participation consent forms were obtained from the teachers who participated in the study. The consent form includes the purpose of the study, ethical principles, information on data confidentiality, and research phases. In this context, research data were collected entirely voluntarily. In addition, the necessary permissions were obtained to carry out the data collection process in the schools where the study was conducted. Publication ethics were followed during the writing phase of the study.

## 2.5. Data collection analysis

In the evaluation of the data obtained from the literature studies used in the research, content analysis, one of the qualitative analysis techniques, was used. As a result of the review, frequently expressed problems were expressed under headings. The coding and categorization process was followed in the content analysis. Coding is the process of creating short meaningful codes by changing the opinions or sentences of the participants. Categorization is the collection of data in the form of codes consisting of common opinions under a broad theme (Baltacı, 2017). In the data analysis process, the participants were coded as a result of gender and random order. For example, the coding was made as K1 for the female participant number 1, and K5 for the female participant number 5.

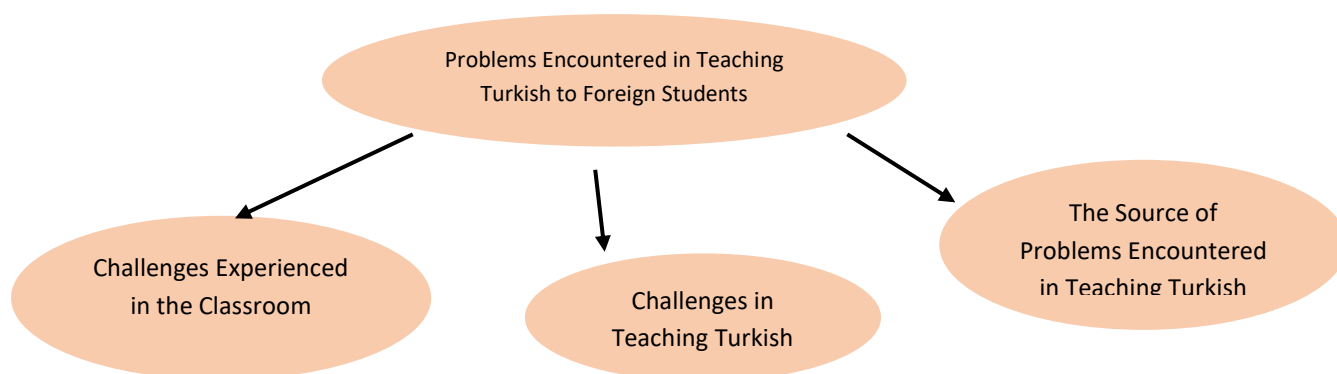
## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Problems in teaching Turkish to foreign students

In Figure 1, the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students are divided into categories and evaluated.

Figure 1.

Problems in Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students



Problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students are grouped under three headings: difficulties encountered in the classroom, difficulties encountered in teaching Turkish, and the source of problems encountered in teaching Turkish.

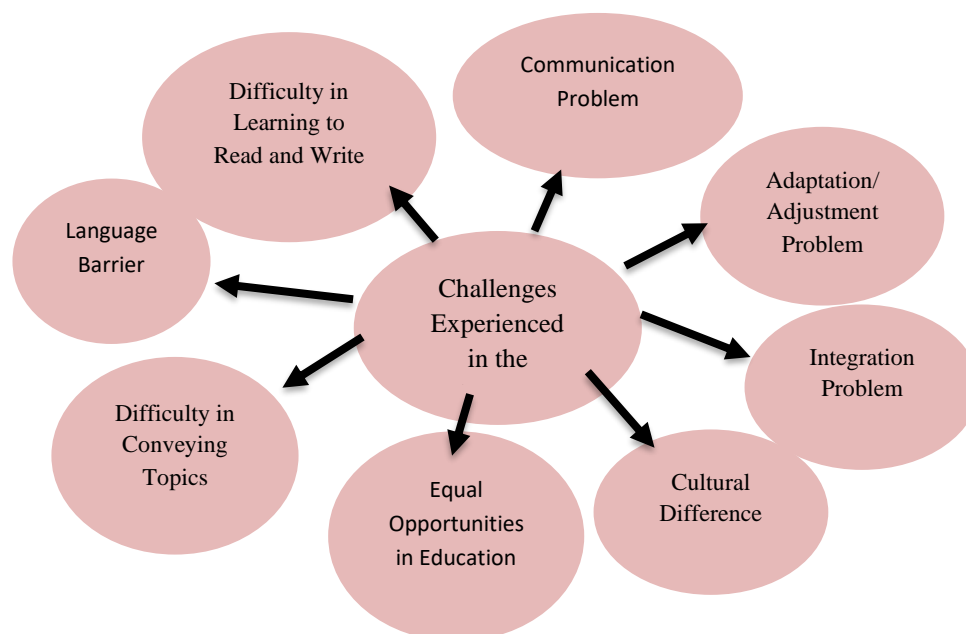
Difficulties in the classroom:

To determine teachers' opinions on the first sub-theme of the research, Difficulties Experienced in the Classroom, two questions were asked to classroom teachers: "Is it difficult to have foreign student/students in your class?" and "What are the difficulties of having foreign students in your class?"

Nine of the classroom teachers who participated in the research answered the question, “Is it a challenge to have foreign students in your class?” with “Yes,” while two responded with “Sometimes,” and one responded with “No.”

**Figure 2.**

Difficulties experienced in the classroom



The first sub-theme, which includes the difficulties experienced by the teacher in the classroom and the difficulties experienced by foreign students, is grouped under 8 categories: “Language Problem”, “Difficulty in Learning to Read and Write”, “Communication Problem”, “Adaptation/Compliance Problem”, “Integration Problem”, “Cultural Difference”, “Equal Opportunity in Education” and “Difficulty in Transferring Subjects”.

**Language problem:** The first findings in the responses of all teachers participating in the study are related to the language problem. These findings show that the language problem is the most obvious difficulty experienced by all classroom teachers. For example, K1 stated this problem as “They do not understand what is said and explained in Turkish”, while K6 and K11 stated, “The biggest/important problem is that students do not know Turkish.”

**Difficulty in learning to read and write:** According to the findings obtained in the study, students have difficulty in learning to read and write. Regarding this finding, K3 stated the following: “Since their mother tongue is different and they did not grow up in a Turkish-speaking environment, they are very unfamiliar with Turkish. The difficulty in understanding what is said causes great difficulties in vocalization and spelling studies. They have difficulty in vocalizing the letters during reading studies and in understanding that the letters are written as they are read.”

**Communication problem:** From the answers given, it was seen that classroom teachers classified communication as verbal communication and written communication. For example, K9 stated the following about verbal communication: “Students cannot express themselves, they cannot explain. They have difficulty in conveying their feelings and thoughts, which they cannot say with their language. They hold themselves back from speaking.”

In addition, K10 expressed that the communication problem is not only with students but also with families by saying, "We cannot communicate properly because families do not know Turkish. We cannot share the problems we have with students with them. This also causes communication problems." K4 expressed the problems experienced with written communication, "Students fall behind in education because they cannot read and write Turkish and do not understand what is being said. They cannot have the knowledge required for their age." K11 expressed the problems in both verbal and written communication, "Since foreign students do not know our language, they have difficulty participating in written and oral classroom activities. Not participating in activities distracts the student from the lesson."

**Adaptation/adaptation problem:** It was observed that class teachers based this finding on migration and the reason was diversified as those who came to our country temporarily and permanently. K5 commented about students who came temporarily: "In addition to education, children of families who were forced to migrate to our country due to their parents' jobs or temporary migration also come. These children know that they came to our country for a short time and they behave differently in our schools thinking that they will escape anyway." K10 made the following statement about students who came permanently: "Children of families who settled in the TRNC permanently experience adaptation problems for 5-6 months at most, and then they can adapt to the country, school, and classes." As an additional example of the adaptation problem related to migration, K12 said: "Foreign students often have problems adapting to their classroom environment and friends."

Students migrate to our country from different countries, cultures, and societies for different reasons. It is very important to know the reason why students migrate. Based on this reason, the main reason for the problems in the student's adaptation behavior can be found." This problem affects the classroom order of foreign students who have adaptation problems. It has been seen as a serious problem that disrupts the classroom. As an example of this situation, K6, one of his students who has difficulty adapting to school and class, said, "This year, my foreign student who came to my class does not know any Turkish because he is older. His English is not very good either. In this situation, he hardly understands the verbal lessons and gets bored. Because he gets bored, he makes noises and acts that disrupt the classroom order."

**The problem of Integration:** One of the difficulties experienced by teachers is that students cannot communicate with either the teacher or the students, so they only communicate with their friends in the school/class who speak their language. For example; K1 said, "Foreign students do not integrate well with Turkish children." This finding coincides with this, while K2 said, "Having a different language limits their socialization and friendships. Some of the students are also exposed to racism. For this reason, they socialize with students who speak their language, and they are excluded." and expressed the problem of integration.

**Cultural differences:** According to the findings of the research, having students from different cultures in the classroom creates difficulty. For example, K1 stated that cultural differences create difficulties by saying, "After teaching Turkish with foreign students, we still have difficulties in Life Sciences and Social Sciences classes because they do not have any experience in covering topics that make up our culture, such as our food, dances, etc."

**Equality of opportunity in education:** According to the findings, the lack of equality of opportunity in education has also taken its place among the problems. K5: "Students cannot learn because they do not understand. Being subjected to education without learning the language creates inequality of opportunity in education. Students do not receive education with equal opportunities. Foreign students are oppressed due to the differences brought by their mother tongue and culture." made a statement supporting the problem.

**Difficulty in teaching subjects:** Class teachers stated that they also had difficulty in teaching subjects as a problem they experienced. For example, K7, one of the participant teachers, explained this problem as follows:



"We have difficulty in teaching subjects because foreign students do not understand Turkish. Since the existing books are all for Turkish students, we have difficulty in finding a source on how to teach subjects." It was determined that the basic problem experienced by the students, the Turkish problem, caused problems in reading and writing activities in the classroom, in students' verbal and written communication with each other and their teachers, in their social adaptation skills, and in their friendships. In addition to these problems, it was stated that since foreign students started their education without being exposed to Turkish in their daily lives, many of their rights in education were taken away from them, they were not considered equal to their friends and they had difficulty in lessons related to our country's culture due to cultural differences.

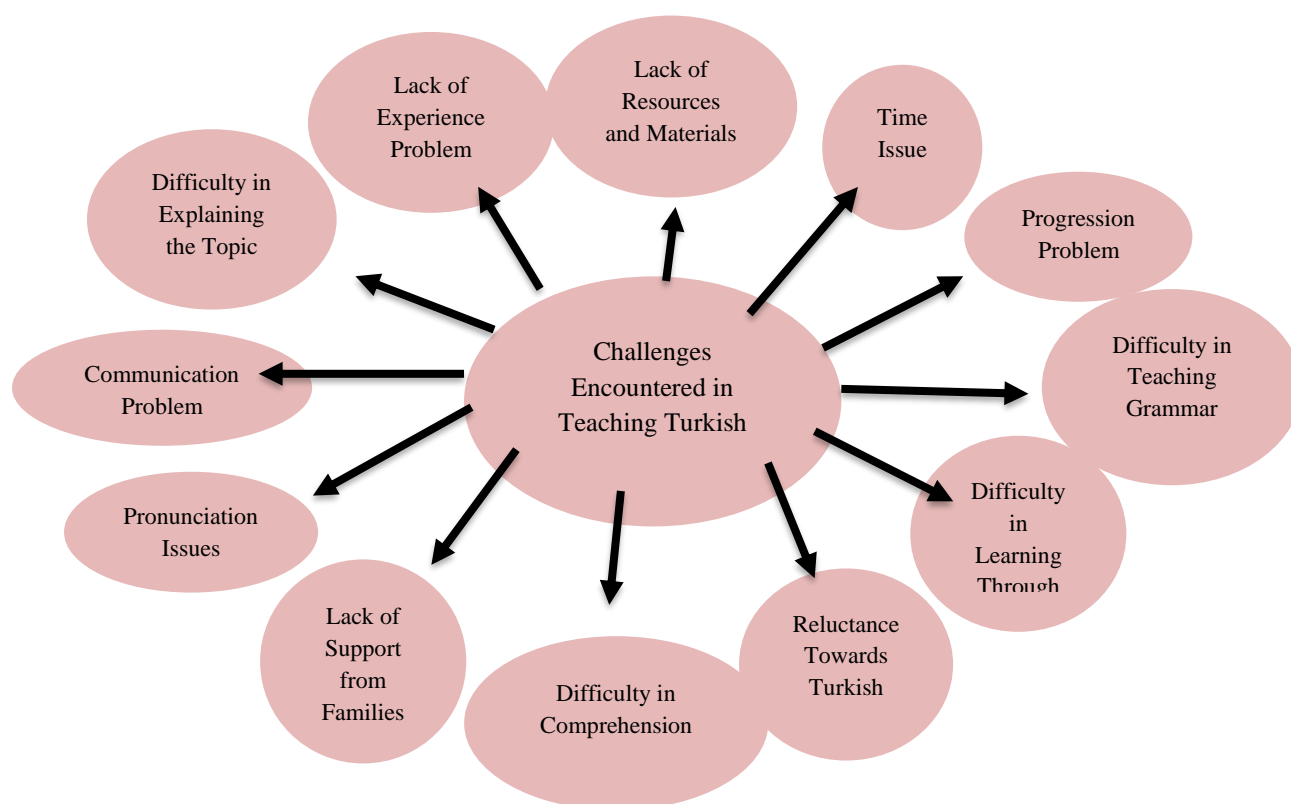
The biggest challenge teachers face with students who do not speak Turkish is that they have difficulty explaining the topics in class. While the results of the study are similar to the results of the study conducted by Egeli and Barut (2020) in a primary school in the TRNC in 2019-2020, the problems in reading and writing, difficulty in understanding and difficulty in advancing to the other party listed in the results, the additional problems listed in the study shed light on the field.

Difficulties experienced while teaching Turkish:

To determine the second sub-theme of the first theme of the research, "Difficulties Experienced While Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students?", the following question was asked to the classroom teachers: "What kind of difficulties did you experience while teaching Turkish to foreign students?"

**Figure 3.**

Problems Encountered During Turkish Language Teaching



The findings regarding the second sub-theme of the research are gathered under 12 categories: "Communication Problem", "Difficulty in Explaining the Subject", "Lack of Experience Problem", "Lack of



Resources and Tools-Equipment", "Time Problem", "Progress Problem", "Difficulty in Teaching Grammar", "Difficulty in Learning by Listening", "Reluctance towards Turkish", "Difficulty in Understanding", "Pronunciation Problems" and "Lack of Support from Families". In light of the research findings, the main difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish are the communication problem, as well as the teachers' lack of experience, difficulty in explaining the subject, and the problems they experience with resources.

**Communication problem:** Teachers who participated in the study stated that communication problems have an important place in teaching Turkish. For example, K4 expressed the problem he experienced by saying, "Since we do not know our languages, I have to find a mediator and ask for help."

**Difficulty in explaining the subject:** As a result of the findings obtained from the research, classroom teachers also experience difficulties while explaining a subject in teaching Turkish. For example, K8 stated that he had difficulty in explaining with the sentences: "I have difficulty in explaining and expressing any subject. A different teaching style is required. I try to try and apply different methods, but it takes time to figure out the student's understanding strategy."

**Lack of experience problem:** Another problem experienced in teaching Turkish is that teachers do not have experience in teaching Turkish to foreign students. K11 clearly expressed this difficulty by saying, "Since I do not have enough experience in teaching Turkish to foreign students, I had difficulty determining how much time I should focus on which topic."

**Lack of resources and tools:** According to the findings of the research, there is a shortage of resources and tools in teaching Turkish to foreigners, according to the opinions of classroom teachers. K2 expressed his opinion on this problem by saying: "I had trouble due to lack of materials. I tried to benefit from English books. I had difficulty in finding resources that deal with teaching Turkish as a foreign language in explaining the subjects."

**Time problem and inability to pay attention one-on-one:** The difficulty that classroom teachers experience in teaching Turkish to foreigners is time constraints. K8 expressed the time constraint he experienced as follows: "We spend most of our time explaining to students in the class collectively. There is not enough time to pay attention to students one-on-one in the class and give feedback to those they do not understand. Separate time should be allocated."

**Progress problem:** In light of the findings, it was seen as a difficulty that classroom teachers could not make progress with foreigners during the teaching of Turkish. As an example of this view, K10 said: "Foreign students do not repeat at home what is done in the classroom. Since there is no repetition, what is learned is not learned completely and is confusing. This creates confusion between subjects and difficulty in progressing in the subjects."

**Difficulty in teaching grammar:** Another difficulty experienced in teaching Turkish was teaching grammar. For example, K2 stated the difficulty he experienced by saying, "Generally, foreign students have difficulty in grammar subjects. Since the students' native languages are different, the grammar rules seem very foreign to them. In some cases, I have to research the students' languages and make comparisons. This situation is quite challenging for me."

**Difficulty in learning by listening:** One of the problems listed in the difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish in the research is that students have difficulty learning by listening. Regarding this problem, K5 said: "Turkish cannot be taught specifically to foreigners in the classroom. Because this is a separate field. Therefore, these students try to learn only by listening. Since it is not possible to acquire the four basic skills of the language by only listening, problems are also experienced in grammar in addition to these skills."

**Reluctance to learn Turkish:** In the research findings, reluctance to learn Turkish was also included among the difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish. Teacher K7, who stated the finding, underlined this difficulty by saying: “Foreign students speak their native language with their friends who speak the same language. Especially students who come from England and whose native language is English have a harder time learning Turkish because their friends also know English. They do not feel a need to learn Turkish and they have no enthusiasm for the language.”

**Difficulty in comprehension:** Difficulty in comprehension experienced during teaching Turkish lessons is also among the findings. K9 mentioned this difficulty as follows: “After teaching reading, he had a hard time because he could not understand what he read. He could not do the activities, especially the study activities after the reading passages. I think the problem in comprehension stems from his inability to make connections with real life and his native language.”

**Pronunciation problems:** It is stated in the findings that foreign students experience pronunciation problems while using their speaking skills in teaching Turkish. For example, K10 said: “Foreign students experience pronunciation problems because they are unfamiliar with the language. The sounds that exist in their native language and the same sounds that exist in Turkish cause confusion and problems may occur in pronunciation. It is necessary to focus especially on similar sounds.”

**Lack of support from families:** One of the problems that classroom teachers experience in teaching Turkish is that families do not take this situation seriously. K2: “In recent years, with the increase in the number of foreign students, especially Russian children, we introduced Turkish lessons in the afternoons. However, families did not send their children to the courses,” he said, indicating that families were indifferent to the efforts of teachers and school administration.

In light of the findings obtained in the research, the communication problem was also emphasized as a common problem for students and teachers in teaching Turkish. It was revealed that the communication problem damages both student-teacher, student-student, and teacher-family relationships. Similar results were also found in a study conducted by İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017) in Sinop. İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017) drew attention to the language problem the most in their research and concluded that there were gaps in the communication between teachers and students.

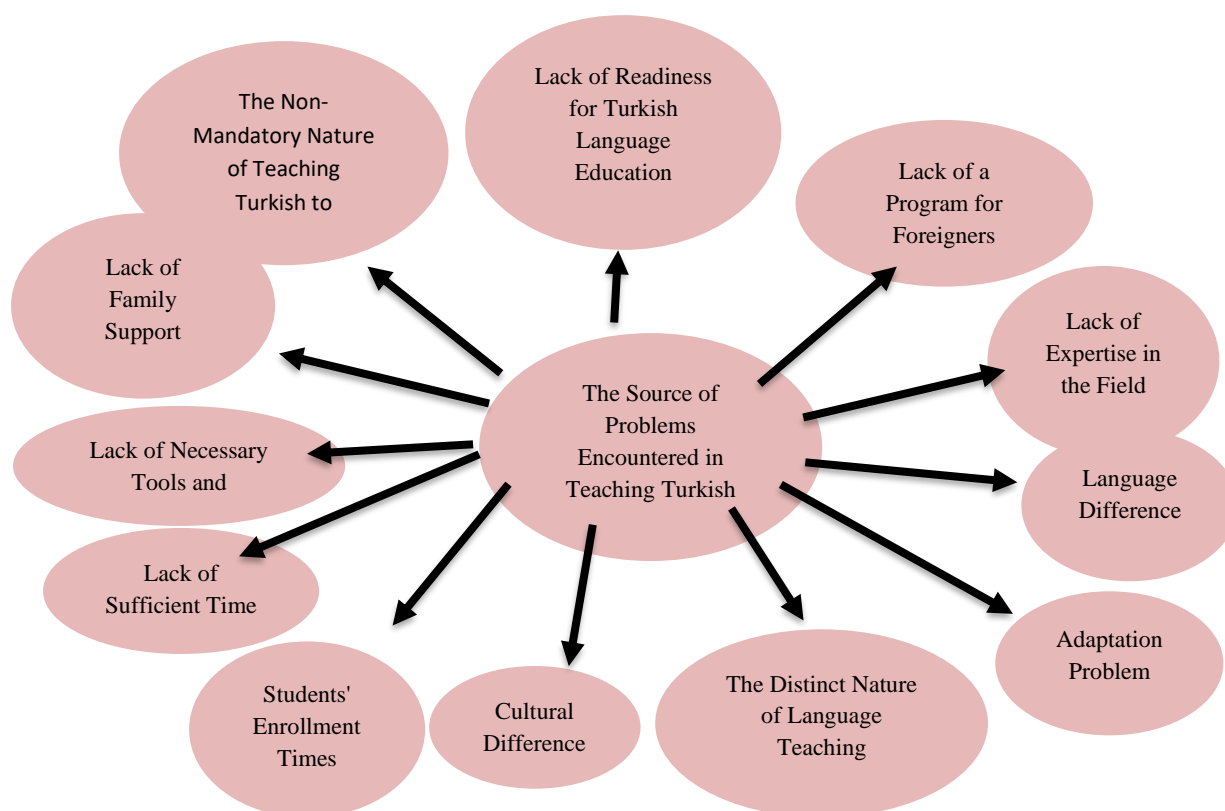
The difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish are teachers on one side and students on the other. While teachers experience problems such as lack of resources, inexperience, inability to communicate with family, and lack of support in teaching, it has been concluded that students learn the language inadequately only from what they hear from their environment in Turkish lessons, are uninterested and unenthusiastic about Turkish, have difficulty in understanding what they read and have difficulty in pronouncing words because their mother tongue is different. The results of the research are the same as the problems in teaching Turkish listed by Bay and Öztürkmen (2022) in their research conducted in Turkey for the same purpose.

### **3.2. The source of problems in teaching Turkish**

To determine the main reason for the third sub-problem of the first theme of the research, “Problems Experienced in Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students”, the question “What is the reason/source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students?” was asked to the classroom teachers.

**Figure 4.**

Source of Problems in Teaching Turkish



The findings obtained from the classroom teachers who participated in the research were collected in 12 categories. These are; “Language Difference”, “Cultural Difference”, “Lack of Readiness for a Turkish Education”, “Teaching Turkish to Foreigners is Not Mandatory”, “No Program for Foreigners”, “Lack of Experts in the Field”, “Lack of Family Support”, “Language Teaching is a Different Field”, “Lack of Necessary Tools and Equipment”, “Students’ Enrollment Times to School”, “Lack of Sufficient Time”, “Adaptation Problem”. While 6 of the classroom teachers in the research stated that one of the sources of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners was the language problem, 4 of them claimed that cultural differences were also a reason. Again, the lack of family support, which is a frequently mentioned problem, was mentioned by 3 teachers.

**Language difference / not knowing Turkish:** According to the findings obtained in the research, classroom teachers see language differences as the source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish. For example; K10 included the following sentence in his explanation: “The main problem is that they do not know the language...” Again, another teacher K7 referred to the language problem by saying: “The fact that students do not know Turkish and have never been exposed to this language before constitutes the basis of all problems.”

**Cultural differences:** In light of the findings, one of the reasons for the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners is seen as cultural differences. K7, one of the participating teachers in the research, stated the cultural differences as follows: “Every society has different cultural values that distinguish it from each other. The difference between the traditions, customs, traditions, customs, and behaviors of foreign students in their society and the values of our society creates a behavioral gap between foreign students and Turkish

students and creates a wall between students for integration, communication, and learning through cooperation.”

Lack of readiness for a Turkish education: Another source problem that is obtained from classroom teachers and that makes teaching Turkish difficult is that students are accepted to classes without any prior preparation. K1 expressed this source problem as follows: “The problems do not only manifest themselves in the Turkish language teaching of these students, since Turkish forms the basis of other courses, it also causes problems in them. Accepting students to classes without being included/subject to any preparation in all aspects (culture, socialization, introduction to the country, etc.) constitutes the root of all the problems experienced.”

Teaching Turkish to foreigners is not mandatory: Two of the classroom teachers attributed the problems experienced by foreign students in teaching Turkish to the fact that learning Turkish is not mandatory. Teacher K2: The fact that teaching Turkish is not mandatory for foreigners causes students to learn Turkish later or not to learn some things at all. Students did not come to the additional courses that were opened. Necessary arrangements should be made to teach Turkish to students.”

Lack of an education program for teaching Turkish to foreigners: As a result of the findings obtained in the research, another source of the problems in teaching Turkish is the lack of education policies developed for foreigners. For example, K5, one of the participating classroom teachers, stated the source problem with the following sentences: “There are no sanctions for teaching Turkish to foreigners. The biggest help would be for the Ministry to first provide the opportunity to teach these students the language and then send them to schools. The path to be followed by the students can be kept under control by creating education programs and following these programs. The lack of education programs and following Turkish books in the curriculum of the Turkish education program that are not suitable for the level of the students are the sources of the problems.”

Lack of experts in the field: The source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students was the lack of expert teachers assigned to teach the language to foreign students. Participant K11 commented on this problem as follows: “The lack of expert teachers in the field forces classroom teachers who do not know how to teach Turkish to foreigners and who do not have the field to teach Turkish.”

Lack of family support: Another finding obtained from the opinions of the classroom teachers participating in the research is that the difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners stem from the lack of family support. K4 responded to this problem by saying, “Since children do not have a Turkish-speaking environment at home, they cannot develop their Turkish. Since families do not know the language and are not aware of it, they do not encourage their children to learn Turkish.”

Language teaching is a different field: Another finding in the research is that teaching a language to foreigners is different from teaching Turkish and that there may be a resource problem if the same teaching is done. K5 expressed this problem by saying, “The duty of class teachers is not to teach Turkish to foreigners but to implement the curriculum in Turkish. Language teaching is a separate field of expertise.”

Lack of necessary tools and equipment: It has been observed that the problems experienced while teaching Turkish to foreign students are also caused by a lack of resources. For example, K6 stated the situation by saying: “It is the lack of sufficient equipment. There are no resource books with explanations and exercises for foreign students or if there are, they are not provided to schools. These students have always existed and will continue to exist. There is a need for resources that can facilitate the teaching of Turkish by classroom teachers.”

**Adaptation problem:** In the problems experienced in teaching Turkish, the fact that students cannot adapt to the school/class and lessons has been seen as a strong factor. K8 stated this factor as follows: "Students feel much more foreign than they are during language teaching. This situation distances students who cannot adapt to the school or classroom environment from Turkish teaching together with the foreignness they feel during language teaching. In one sense, foreignness in the language is an indication that they cannot adapt to the class and students develop a negative attitude towards the language."

**Lack of time:** One of the findings obtained in the study is that there is no separate time to teach Turkish to foreign students. According to the findings obtained from the classroom teachers, teachers try to teach Turkish to foreign students while they are teaching the students in the classroom. For example, K11: "We have a very limited period in the classroom for teaching Turkish to foreign students. We can easily deal with these students while they have other students solve transcripts, quizzes, etc. This corresponds to a maximum of one lesson hour in a daily program. Some teachers try to deal with them during breaks. However, since I think that the only time a foreign student will socialize with their friends will be during breaks, I try to allocate time in the classroom. I want them to do work that will keep them busy. While doing different things with other students in the classroom, I teach them reading and writing, and in mathematics, I teach them the multiplication table. If we had time, I could teach them more, but spending two or three hours instead of one hour every day means that it will take two or three times as much as it could. Especially in teaching Turkish, reading and writing exercises, dividing into syllables, and creating and meaning words are not studies that can be completed in one-hour lessons per day." He stated that the source of the problems in language teaching is the lack of time allocated to teaching Turkish.

**Student registration times:** When the findings of the source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students are examined, the time of students' registration to school is also seen as a factor. Participant teacher K10: The time of our foreign students' registration to school is also a factor in their inability to follow the class. Especially foreign students who will start the 1st grade lose 70% of their reading and writing period when they come to school in the middle of the term. Enrolling in the middle of the year creates great disadvantages for them. The problem of progress in teaching Turkish also arises from here."

In the study, it was determined by the classroom teachers that the fact that foreign students do not know Turkish causes many problems that meet on a common ground both in the classroom environment and in teaching Turkish. The fact that students do not know Turkish was at the top of the problems and was seen as the source of many other problems. The classroom teachers in the study mentioned many different problems and their sources that arise while teaching Turkish. The source of these problems experienced in teaching Turkish is based on many factors, especially the students not knowing Turkish, belonging to a different culture, and the lack of support from their families. The lack of necessary equipment in schools has forced classroom teachers to cope with insufficient resources in teaching Turkish. The most emphasized problem in teaching Turkish as a foreign language is the lack of useful materials, especially books.

Another source of the problem is that families do not tend to teach Turkish to their children, do not show dedication, and do not repeat what is taught at home. This situation has led to the student not developing in Turkish teaching and the classroom teacher being in the same place in teaching. The teacher's attempt to deal with foreign students alone to progress has also created the need to create extra time. Teachers have also attributed the sources of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to the lack of preliminary preparation for a Turkish education to be offered to foreign students. In this context, the study conducted is consistent with the results of the research conducted by İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017). İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017) also identified the fact that students start school without knowing Turkish as a problem. In the study, the fact that there is no sanction on behalf of foreigners regarding teaching Turkish as soon as they arrive in the country, the fact that there is no educational program for teaching Turkish to foreigners other than the Turkish education program, and the fact that language teaching is a very different field but experts in this field do not

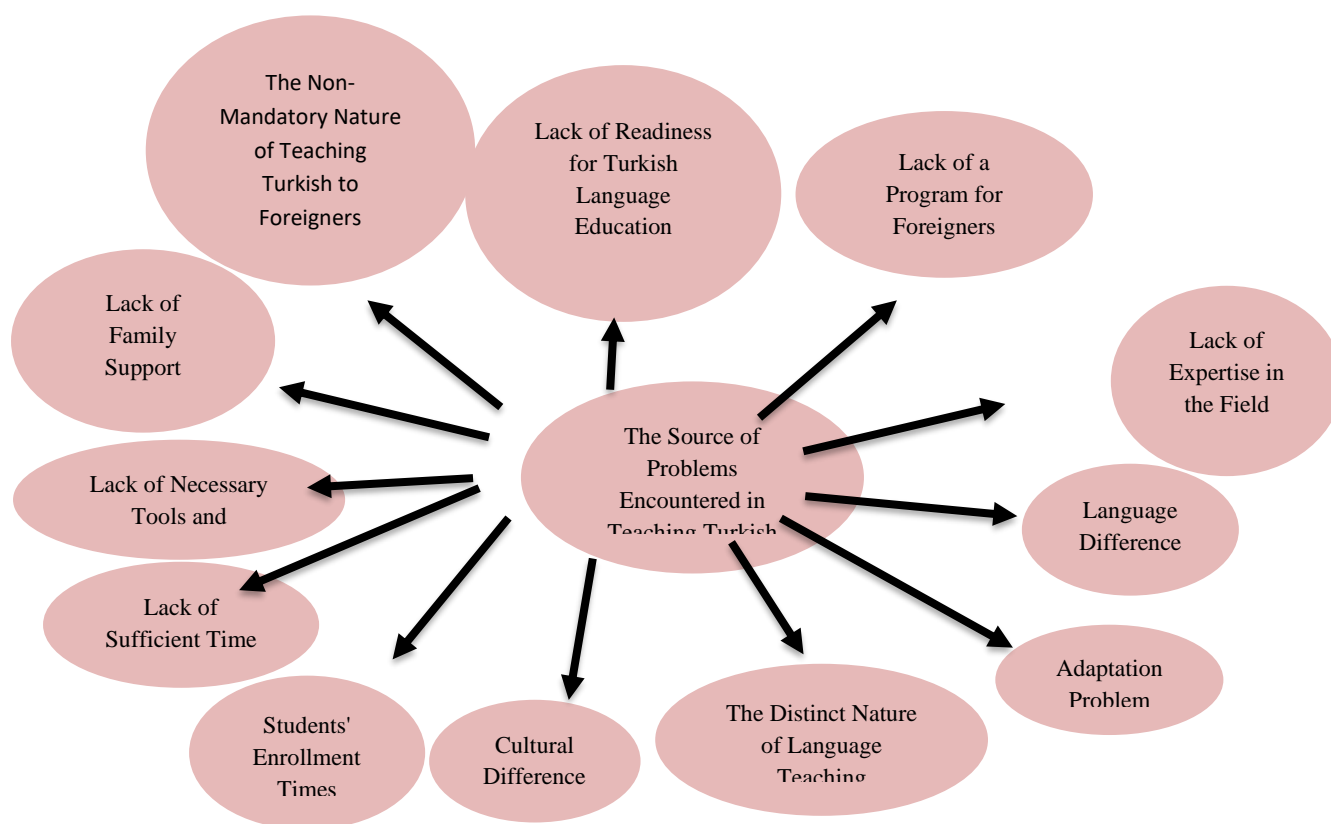
teach, are also listed as the sources of the problems. When the literature is examined, the problems in the research conducted by Bay and Öztürkmen (2022) are the same.

### 3.2. The source of problems in teaching Turkish

To determine the main reason for the third sub-problem of the first theme of the research, “Problems Experienced in Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students”, the question “What is the reason/source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students?” was asked to the classroom teachers.

Figure 4.

Source of Problems in Teaching Turkish



The findings obtained from the classroom teachers who participated in the research were collected in 12 categories. These are; “Language Difference”, “Cultural Difference”, “Lack of Readiness for a Turkish Education”, “Teaching Turkish to Foreigners is Not Mandatory”, “No Program for Foreigners”, “Lack of Experts in the Field”, “Lack of Family Support”, “Language Teaching is a Different Field”, “Lack of Necessary Tools and Equipment”, “Students’ Enrollment Times to School”, “Lack of Sufficient Time”, “Adaptation Problem”. While 6 of the classroom teachers in the research stated that one of the sources of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners was the language problem, 4 of them claimed that cultural differences were also a reason. Again, the lack of family support, which is a frequently mentioned problem, was mentioned by 3 teachers.

*Language difference / not knowing Turkish:* According to the findings obtained in the research, classroom teachers see language differences as the source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish. For example; K10 included the following sentence in his explanation: “The main problem is that they do not know the



language...” Again, another teacher K7 referred to the language problem by saying: “The fact that students do not know Turkish and have never been exposed to this language before constitutes the basis of all problems.”

*Cultural differences:* In light of the findings, one of the reasons for the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners is seen as cultural differences. K7, one of the participating teachers in the research, stated the cultural differences as follows: “Every society has different cultural values that distinguish it from each other. The difference between the traditions, customs, traditions, customs, and behaviors of foreign students in their society and the values of our society creates a behavioral gap between foreign students and Turkish students and creates a wall between students for integration, communication, and learning through cooperation.”

*Lack of readiness for a Turkish education:* Another source problem that is obtained from classroom teachers and that makes teaching Turkish difficult is that students are accepted to classes without any prior preparation. K1 expressed this source problem as follows: “The problems do not only manifest themselves in the Turkish language teaching of these students, since Turkish forms the basis of other courses, it also causes problems in them. Accepting students to classes without being included/subject to any preparation in all aspects (culture, socialization, introduction to the country, etc.) constitutes the root of all the problems experienced.”

*Teaching Turkish to foreigners is not mandatory:* Two of the classroom teachers attributed the problems experienced by foreign students in teaching Turkish to the fact that learning Turkish is not mandatory. Teacher K2: The fact that teaching Turkish is not mandatory for foreigners causes students to learn Turkish later or not to learn some things at all. Students did not come to the additional courses that were opened. Necessary arrangements should be made to teach Turkish to students.”

*Lack of an education program for teaching Turkish to foreigners:* As a result of the findings obtained in the research, another source of the problems in teaching Turkish is the lack of education policies developed for foreigners. For example, K5, one of the participating classroom teachers, stated the source problem with the following sentences: “There are no sanctions for teaching Turkish to foreigners. The biggest help would be for the Ministry to first provide the opportunity to teach these students the language and then send them to schools. The path to be followed by the students can be kept under control by creating education programs and following these programs. The lack of education programs and following Turkish books in the curriculum of the Turkish education program that are not suitable for the level of the students are the sources of the problems.”

*Lack of experts in the field:* The source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students was the lack of expert teachers assigned to teach the language to foreign students. Participant K11 commented on this problem as follows: “The lack of expert teachers in the field forces classroom teachers who do not know how to teach Turkish to foreigners and who do not have the field to teach Turkish.”

*Lack of family support:* Another finding obtained from the opinions of the classroom teachers participating in the research is that the difficulties experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners stem from the lack of family support. K4 responded to this problem by saying, “Since children do not have a Turkish-speaking environment at home, they cannot develop their Turkish. Since families do not know the language and are not aware of it, they do not encourage their children to learn Turkish.”

*Language teaching is a different field:* Another finding in the research is that teaching a language to foreigners is different from teaching Turkish and that there may be a resource problem if the same teaching is done. K5 expressed this problem by saying, “The duty of class teachers is not to teach Turkish to foreigners but to implement the curriculum in Turkish. Language teaching is a separate field of expertise.”

*Lack of necessary tools and equipment:* It has been observed that the problems experienced while teaching Turkish to foreign students are also caused by a lack of resources. For example, K6 stated the situation



by saying: "It is the lack of sufficient equipment. There are no resource books with explanations and exercises for foreign students or if there are, they are not provided to schools. These students have always existed and will continue to exist. There is a need for resources that can facilitate the teaching of Turkish by classroom teachers."

*Adaptation problem:* In the problems experienced in teaching Turkish, the fact that students cannot adapt to the school/class and lessons has been seen as a strong factor. K8 stated this factor as follows: "Students feel much more foreign than they are during language teaching. This situation distances students who cannot adapt to the school or classroom environment from Turkish teaching together with the foreignness they feel during language teaching. In one sense, foreignness in the language is an indication that they cannot adapt to the class and students develop a negative attitude towards the language."

*Lack of time:* One of the findings obtained in the study is that there is no separate time to teach Turkish to foreign students. According to the findings obtained from the classroom teachers, teachers try to teach Turkish to foreign students while they are teaching the students in the classroom. For example, K11: "We have a very limited period in the classroom for teaching Turkish to foreign students. We can easily deal with these students while they have other students solve transcripts, quizzes, etc. This corresponds to a maximum of one lesson hour in a daily program. Some teachers try to deal with them during breaks. However, since I think that the only time a foreign student will socialize with their friends will be during breaks, I try to allocate time in the classroom. I want them to do work that will keep them busy. While doing different things with other students in the classroom, I teach them reading and writing, and in mathematics, I teach them the multiplication table. If we had time, I could teach them more, but spending two or three hours instead of one hour every day means that it will take two or three times as much as it could. Especially in teaching Turkish, reading and writing exercises, dividing into syllables, and creating and meaning words are not studies that can be completed in one-hour lessons per day." He stated that the source of the problems in language teaching is the lack of time allocated to teaching Turkish.

*Student registration times:* When the findings of the source of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students are examined, the time of students' registration to school is also seen as a factor. Participant teacher K10: The time of our foreign students' registration to school is also a factor in their inability to follow the class. Especially foreign students who will start the 1st grade lose 70% of their reading and writing period when they come to school in the middle of the term. Enrolling in the middle of the year creates great disadvantages for them. The problem of progress in teaching Turkish also arises from here."

In the study, it was determined by the classroom teachers that the fact that foreign students do not know Turkish causes many problems that meet on a common ground both in the classroom environment and in teaching Turkish. The fact that students do not know Turkish was at the top of the problems and was seen as the source of many other problems. The classroom teachers in the study mentioned many different problems and their sources that arise while teaching Turkish. The source of these problems experienced in teaching Turkish is based on many factors, especially the students not knowing Turkish, belonging to a different culture, and the lack of support from their families. The lack of necessary equipment in schools has forced classroom teachers to cope with insufficient resources in teaching Turkish. The most emphasized problem in teaching Turkish as a foreign language is the lack of useful materials, especially books.

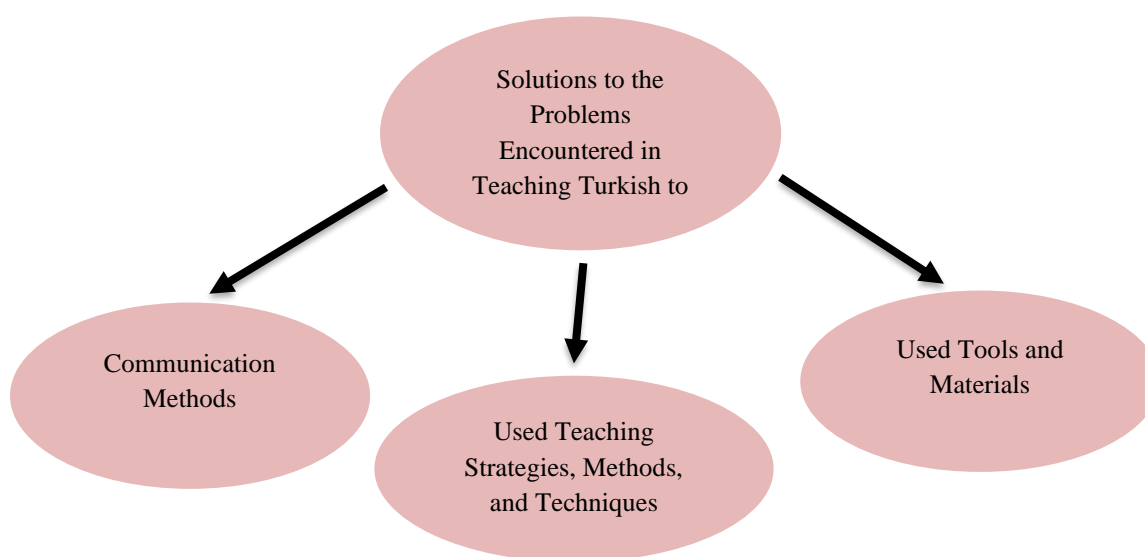
Another source of the problem is that families do not tend to teach Turkish to their children, do not show dedication, and do not repeat what is taught at home. This situation has led to the student not developing in Turkish teaching and the classroom teacher being in the same place in teaching. The teacher's attempt to deal with foreign students alone to progress has also created the need to create extra time. Teachers have also attributed the sources of the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to the lack of preliminary preparation for a Turkish education to be offered to foreign students. In this context, the study conducted is consistent with the results of the research conducted by İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017). İmamoğlu and Çalışkan (2017) also identified the fact that students start school without knowing Turkish as a problem. In the study, the fact

that there is no sanction on behalf of foreigners regarding teaching Turkish as soon as they arrive in the country, the fact that there is no educational program for teaching Turkish to foreigners other than the Turkish education program, and the fact that language teaching is a very different field but experts in this field do not teach, are also listed as the sources of the problems. When the literature is examined, the problems in the research conducted by Bay and Öztürkmen (2022) are the same.

### 3.3. Solutions to problems in teaching Turkish to foreign students

**Figure 5.**

Solutions to Problems in Teaching Turkish to Foreigners



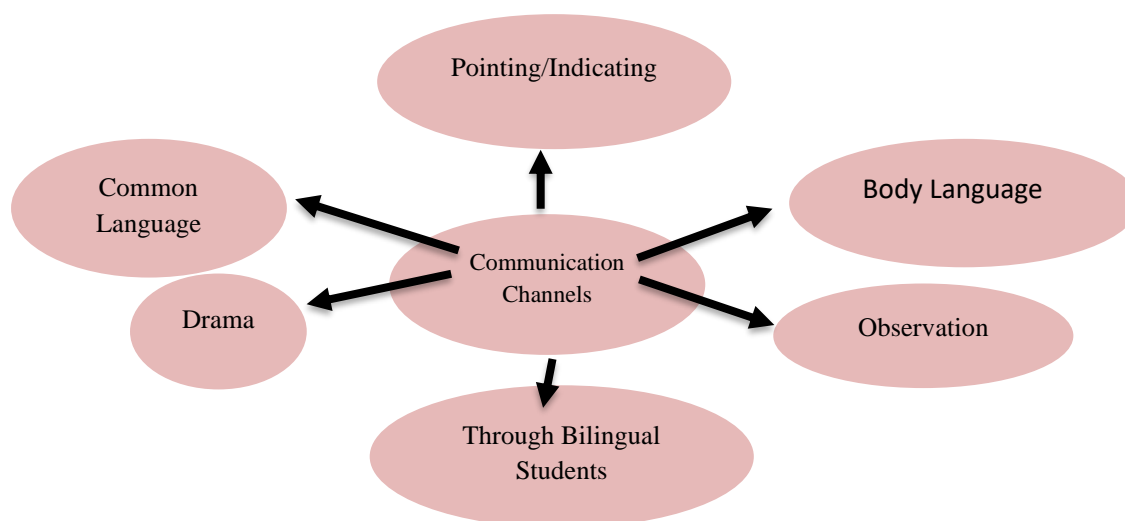
Solutions to the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreign students are grouped under three headings: “Ways of Communication”, “Teaching-Strategy, Methods, and Techniques Used” and “Tools-Equipment Used”.

Ways of communication:

To determine the findings regarding the first sub-theme of the second theme of the research, “Ways of Communication”, the following question was asked to the classroom teachers: “How did you communicate with foreign students on the first day they came to your class?”

**Figure 6.**

Communication Paths



The answers given by the classroom teachers to the question “How did you communicate with the foreign students on the first day?” were gathered in 6 different categories as “Common Language”, “Pointing/Showing”, “Body Language”, “Observation”, “Through Bilingual Students” and “Drama”.

*Common language:* The most common answer given by the teachers participating in the study regarding how they communicated with foreign students on the first day was that they communicated using a common language. K3: “I communicated by speaking English with students whose native language was English or who also knew English. I communicated as much as I could with students who did not know English using sign language.” He claimed that he benefited from a common language and used it as a means of communication.

*Pointing/showing:* One of the common answers of the teachers participating in the study is that they communicate by showing what they want to tell their students with signs. For example, K1: “I showed the word/sentence I wanted to tell the students by pointing to objects or clues around them. I tried to communicate what I wanted to say by using visual clues and pointing with my hands.” In this statement, communication is achieved by signs.

*Body language:* Another way that teachers participating in the study used to communicate was body language. K7 stated that he used body language, saying, “When I realized that I could not express my thoughts and feelings through words, we hugged the student on the first day he came to the class so that he would feel like he belonged here, and we said that we were very happy. We also allowed him to show us his feelings. We tried to communicate through body language. The student’s academic success will be affected when he starts to feel like he belongs to the school in the first days, weeks, and months, and this will motivate his desire to learn.”

*Observation:* K4, one of the teachers who participated in the research, observed that the foreign student was actively interacting and communicating with other students, saying, “I introduced him to the whole class and told them to take him among them and play at every break. I observed the students at every break. The foreign student’s interaction with the language will be provided the most in this way, and his/her Turkish communication skills will increase.”

*Communication through bilingual students:* When the findings are examined, it is stated by the classroom teachers who participated in the research that communication with foreign students can be established through bilingual students. This finding is included in the following statement of K5: “I established communication with my foreign students on the first day they came to my class through their other friends who spoke the same language and also knew Turkish. I had the bilingual students translate for me for the foreign students and the foreign students translate for me.”

*Drama:* K11, who used drama techniques to communicate with foreign students on the first day, said: “At the beginning of the year, we play introduction games in class by forming a circle for the foreign students who participate. In these games, students get used to saying sentences like ‘My name is...’ that are repeated constantly and sentences that include name/age. Dramatization gives students the self-confidence to learn the language.”

While coping with communication problems, the classroom teachers who participated in the study used the common language of the students and themselves, pointing, body language, communication, and drama through bilingual students as communication methods. Çelik and Kodan (2020) concluded in their research that communication is established through bilingual students. They concluded that upper-class students act as translators in the problems experienced while teaching Turkish to Arabs, and the students' problems are conveyed in this way.

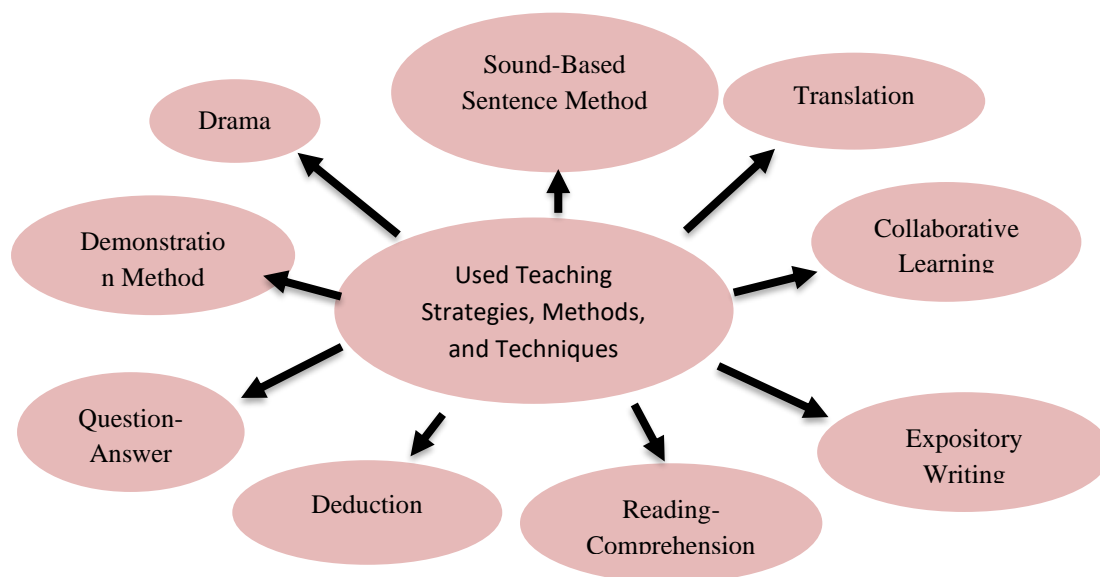
#### Teaching strategies, methods, and techniques used:

To determine the second sub-research of the second theme of the research, which is “Teaching Strategies, Methods, and Techniques Used”, three questions were asked to the classroom teachers as follows: “How did you cope with the problems you experienced? Did you get help?”, “Which methods-techniques did you use in teaching Turkish to foreigners?” and “What did you do when you first taught Turkish to foreign students? What are you doing now? Is there a difference in terms of teaching?” When the findings were examined, 6 of the teachers stated that they received help to cope with the problems they experienced while teaching Turkish, while 5 of them stated that they did not get help.

All of the classroom teachers claimed that there was no difference between the teaching they did to foreign students when they first met them and the teaching they did after they gained experience. Each teacher who participated in the study has been teaching for years in the way they determined for themselves. The methods used by the teachers are included in the findings in figure 7.

**Figure 7.**

Teaching-Strategy, Method, and Techniques Used



The findings collected from classroom teachers were grouped under 9 categories: “Showing and Doing”, “Question-Answer”, “Sound-Based Sentence Method”, “Translation”, “Deduction”, “Plain Expression”, “Cooperative Learning”, “Drama” and “Reading-Comprehension”. One of the teachers who participated in the research stated that he/she uses all the mentioned methods-techniques within the scope of his/her needs. (K9)

*Showing and doing:* Most of the teachers who participated in the study mentioned the showing and doing method. Teacher K4 stated that she used the showing and doing method as follows: “When writing sentences, I show the directions of the letters on the board with my finger, then I trace over them with a board marker. I want my students to do the same. Then I want him to write the same sentence from the beginning on the board underneath. We work on writing sentences, words, and letters with different materials so that the students can remember them. While working on all of them, I first show the directions of the letters, where they should be written in the line space, etc. and then I want my student to do it.”

*Question-Answer:* When the findings are examined, classroom teachers frequently use the question-answer method while teaching Turkish to foreign students. For example, K12: “I can say that the method I use the most with my foreign students is the question-answer method. I can say that this method is very beneficial for students. Especially in the beginning, in developing language skills, for example, I showed the pen and asked “What is this?” and waited for the student to answer. I motivated my students to speak with this method. As they progress, it is a helpful method in reading and comprehension studies, in forming sentences in activities, and explaining the subject by asking questions immediately after the grammar teaching. Because

the student directs his answers by using the words used in the question and in a way, he gets used to using the language by repeating what is said.”

*Sound-based sentence method:* It has been observed that there are teachers who also use the sound-based sentence method in teaching Turkish to foreigners. Three teachers who participated in the study expressed this method as follows: K5: “First I taught words, then I taught sentences.” K7: “I taught words that can be used in daily life such as color, number, day, month, name, surname, age, country, where he/she lives, and the name of his/her parents, and the letters that make up these words. Later, when communication began, I focused on the words that were not understood in the subject explanations. We moved from words to sentences.” K9: “We worked as if we were in a classroom (1st Grade) without taking into account the grade level that his/her age required. After teaching vowels, we taught words and sentences.”

*Translation method:* It is among the findings that classroom teachers use various translation methods when teaching Turkish to foreigners. K4, who used a bilingual student for translation: “I arranged for another student who spoke the same language and Turkish to be my desk mate. I asked for help from his bilingual friend. I helped my student gain reading, writing, and listening skills related to Turkish by teaching the Turkish equivalents of what he said with his friend.” While stating the method he used, K7, who used the phone, said: “By translating over the phone, I first taught them how to answer questions asked in daily life and what these questions meant. Before explaining the course topics, we introduced them to the language through translation.”

Participant K10, who resorted to a dictionary for translation in difficult situations, expressed this situation as follows: “When I could not explain what I wanted to say to a foreign student in class, that is, when I had a hard time, I used a dictionary.” K6, who was also in a difficult situation, said: “If I am experiencing a situation that I cannot handle and it disrupts the teaching of Turkish, I get help from our guidance teacher. Since he knows French, they solve the points that are not easily understood. I focus more on that subject.” He stated that he received help from a bilingual teacher and used translation in this way.

*Deduction:* Within the framework of the findings obtained in the research, it was found that one of the techniques used in teaching Turkish to foreigners was deduction. For example, K11 stated deduction with the following statement: “Starting from the immediate environment, we did activities of introducing oneself with sentences, introducing family and friends, classmates and school. We completed the teaching from the whole to the parts. First, starting with the teaching of the sentences heard around, then as the sentences were learned, the teaching continued towards words and from words to syllables.”

*Direct expression:* According to the views of the participating classroom teachers, direct expression is also among the methods used in teaching Turkish to foreigners. Teacher K7, who applied the direct expression method, stated this with the following sentences: “I started teaching Turkish by giving Turkish studies of words used in daily life. I explained what was what in short, clear, and explicit language by showing visuals and examples from the environment. For example, I said table by pointing to the table and asked them to say table.

I managed by making my foreign students work in Turkish extra and explaining the topics to them one-on-one.”

*Cooperative learning:* According to the answers given by the participants in the study, one of the strategies used while teaching Turkish to foreigners was determined as cooperative learning. K3, who participated in the study, said: “I provided opportunities for them to communicate with Turkish students in the class during the lesson and allowed them to learn by using the language. I increased the interaction in the class.” while referring to cooperative learning, K4 stated: “I made them sit with Turkish-speaking students and helped the foreign students. Turkish students helped. In this way, they learned as they communicated with their friends. I had them do some activities as a group. For example, Turkish reading passage questions. I applied to teach with interaction in the group with the help of their friends.”

*Drama:* The drama method has taken its place in the findings as a method used in teaching Turkish to foreigners. For example, K11 stated the drama method as follows: “I show cards with events to my foreign student in teaching Turkish. I interpret each card first. Then I want him to interpret the same cards and we act out the events together while interpreting. I develop his language and speaking skills by increasing his interaction with the language.”

*Reading-Comprehension:* It is seen in the research findings that reading-comprehension is also used during teaching Turkish to foreigners. For example, K10 expressed his teaching as follows: “We did reading-writing studies with short and simple passages. I supported Turkish teaching by reading books and watching TV series. I demonstrated with various examples and materials to make reading meaningful and to make the passage/book read come to life concretely.”

The teaching strategies, methods, and techniques used by classroom teachers as solutions are listed in the research findings. The strategies and techniques used by classroom teachers are demonstration, question-answer, sound-based sentence method, translation method, deduction, plain narration, cooperative learning, drama, and reading comprehension. As a result of the research, it was seen that teachers do not have much information about the strategies, and methods-techniques that should be used in teaching Turkish to foreigners. Most of the teachers use the teaching strategies and methods-techniques necessary for teaching Turkish. Arıcı (2010) discussed the strategies, methods, and techniques used in teaching Turkish in his study. Question-answer technique, induction and deduction, dramatization, and group work were shown as the techniques used in teaching Turkish in the research.

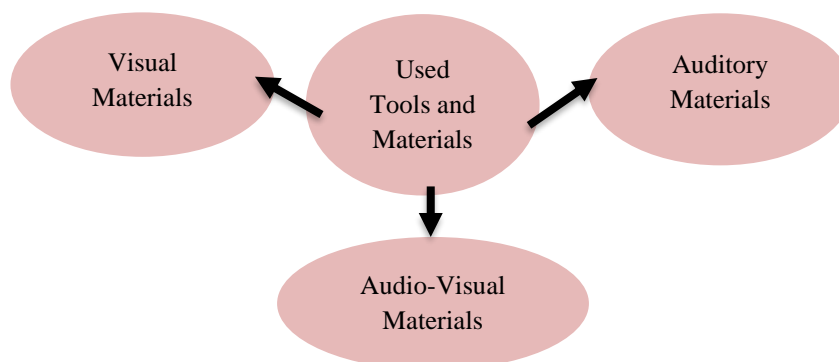
#### Tools and equipment used:

To determine the third sub-research of the second theme of the research, “Tools and Equipment Used in Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students”, the question “Which tools and equipment (books, films, among other things) did you use while teaching Turkish to foreign students?” was asked to the classroom teachers.



**Figure 8.**

#### Tools and Equipment Used



When the research findings are examined, the answers given by the classroom teachers are gathered in 3 categories. These categories are listed as "Visual Materials", "Auditory Materials" and "Audio-Visual Materials".

*Visual Materials:* All of the classroom teachers in the study used visual materials. While 10 of the teachers stated that they preferred visual materials when teaching Turkish to foreigners, 3 of these teachers limited their teaching to only visual materials. For example, K5 said, "I used Yunus Emre Institute's book 'Learning Turkish', projection and videos for the subject explanation." and expressed that he used audiovisual materials as well as visual materials, while K4 and K8 said, "I used the Turkish books and reading books of the Ministry of National Education." and stated that they used only visual materials.

*Audio Materials:* Some of the classroom teachers who participated in the study also used songs as additional materials. For example, K11 clearly stated that he used audio materials by saying, "I find it useful to make foreign students listen to songs about the sound I teach. I think it provides a permanent learning environment for students to use the sound correctly in reading and speaking."

*Audiovisual Materials:* The majority of classroom teachers used audiovisual materials. K6, who used these materials, stated the following: "I use videos, film clips, or cartoons that students like to explain the subject. The fact that the subject explanation is both visual and listenable provides a greater opportunity for the information to be remembered by the students."

The tools and materials used by classroom teachers in teaching Turkish are mostly both auditory and visual materials. This shows that classroom teachers try to teach by stimulating more than one sense organ and that students try to achieve permanent learning by being exposed to more than one stimulus. Soyuçok (2020) also revealed in his research that the understanding and practices in Turkish education have a structure that is student-centered, appeals to more than one sense, offers rich learning environments, and includes different measurement and evaluation practices.

### 3.3. Solution Suggestions for Problems in Teaching Turkish to Foreign Students

The third theme of the research was gathered under a single sub-theme called "Teaching Strategies, Methods, and Techniques".

Teaching strategies, methods, and techniques:

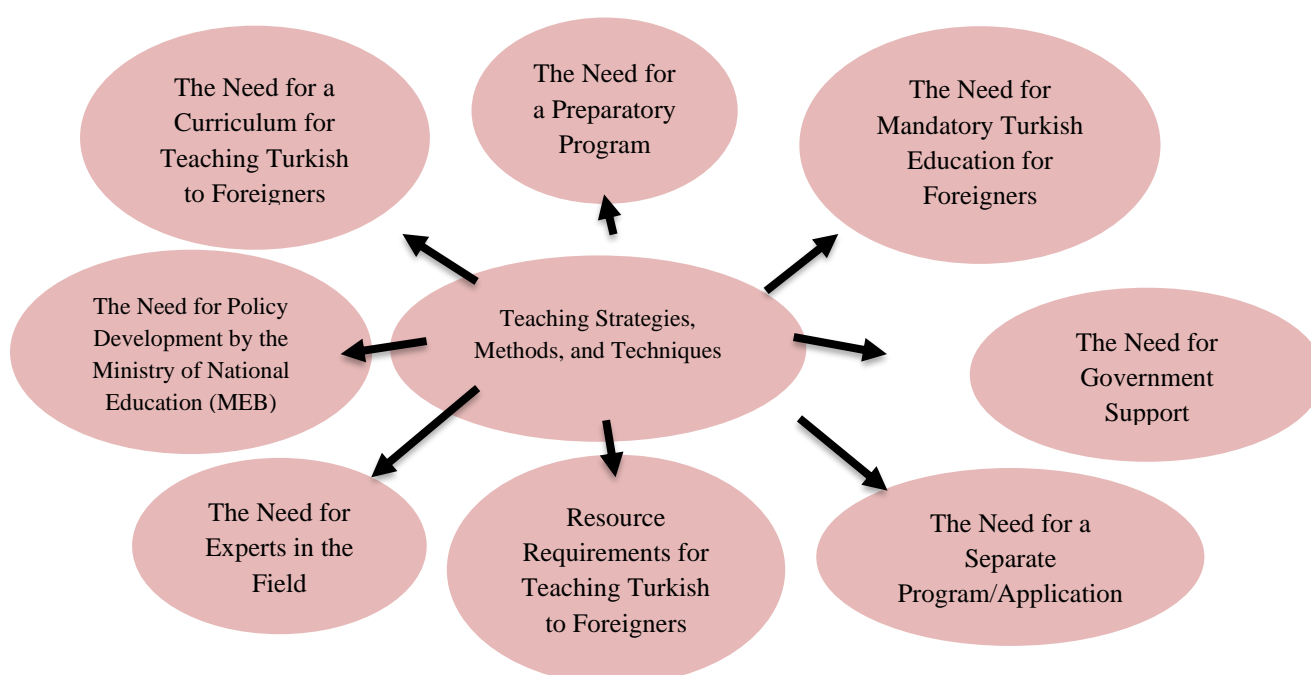
In order to reach the findings of the sub-theme of the third theme of the research, "Teaching Strategies, Methods and Techniques", the following questions were asked to the teachers: "Does your school have any practices for teaching Turkish to foreign students? What else can be done?", "Are the teachers in the North Cyprus sufficient in teaching Turkish to foreigners?", "Should any changes be made in the Turkish language teaching program? What kind of changes can be made?" and "What kind of steps do you recommend to be taken to eliminate the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreigners at the primary school level in the TRNC?"

All 12 classroom teachers who participated in the study from two different regions and schools shared the same view that their schools currently do not have any practices for teaching Turkish to foreign students. 8 teachers from Karaoğlu Primary School stated that there were Turkish language teaching courses in the afternoons last year, but the courses were terminated because families did not send their children.

Most of the teachers who participated in the study found the classroom teachers inadequate in teaching Turkish to foreigners. In addition, according to the findings of the study, it was deemed appropriate not to make any changes to the Turkish language teaching program.

**Figure 9.**

Teaching Strategies, Methods, and Techniques



The findings were divided into 8 categories as “Program Requirement for Teaching Turkish to Foreigners”, “Preparatory Program Requirement”, “Compulsory Turkish Education for Foreigners”, “State Support Requirement”, “Separate School/Class/Course Application Requirement”, “Expert Person Requirement in the Field”, “Resource Requirement for Teaching Turkish to Foreigners” and “MEB Policy Development Requirement”.

*Program requirement for teaching Turkish to foreigners:* It was observed that the teachers who participated in the research argued that a separate program should be developed for teaching Turkish to foreigners. K5 commented on this suggestion: “Language teaching and Turkish language teaching are different. These should be included in the curriculum as separate courses. If Turkish language teaching is carried out according to the Turkish language teaching program, Turkish language teaching to foreigners should also be carried out by creating and following a program for foreigners.”

*Preparatory program need:* The classroom teachers who participated in the research suggested that a language preparatory program be prepared for foreign students who do not speak Turkish. For example, K1 suggested: “For foreign students who do not speak Turkish, language teaching preparatory programs should be created for the Turkish education they will receive in schools when they come to the island. After each student acquires the language, they should continue their education in an educational institution appropriate to their level.”

*The need for compulsory Turkish education for foreigners:* In light of the research, classroom teachers suggested that teaching Turkish to foreign students should be made compulsory. K4 stated compulsory language education by saying: “For foreigners, language education should be provided as soon as they arrive in the country. Turkish education should be compulsory from the moment they arrive in the country.”

*Need for state support:* The classroom teachers who participated in the study stated that the state should lend a helping hand in teaching Turkish to foreign students. For example, K3: “Support should be provided to foreigners outside of school. The state should organize free private courses for these students outside of school hours and provide the necessary support.” He clearly stated that he expected help from the state.

*The need for a separate school/class application:* Another requirement in the recommendations section of the research findings is that a separate class or school should be opened for students who are foreign nationals and do not speak Turkish and that students should complete their first acquisitions of Turkish here and be distributed to classes and schools according to their levels after reaching a certain level. Class teachers expressed this need in different ways: K6: “A class should be created with foreigners who are academically suitable for their level and like them, and only Turkish should be taught until they acquire the language.” K7: “A Turkish class should be opened for these students. After taking Turkish here for the first three lessons, they should receive education in their classes for class integration.” K9: “An orientation year can be organized. A school can be opened for this year where foreigners will be taught Turkish. They can transfer to other schools

after they learn to speak, read, and write.” K11: “Accelerated and intensive Turkish should be taught in separate classes.”

*Need for experts in the field:* The classroom teachers who participated in the study do not find themselves competent in teaching Turkish to foreign students. In addition to this finding, they emphasize that Turkish teachers who are experts in their fields should be employed. K2, one of the participant teachers, emphasized that Turkish expert teachers should be assigned by saying, “It is inefficient for classroom teachers to teach Turkish to foreign students. Teachers who have received training in teaching Turkish should be invited to in-service training or experts who can provide training in this field should be employed.”

*Resource requirement for teaching Turkish to foreigners:* As a result of the research, it was seen that classroom teachers need guiding resources when teaching Turkish to foreigners. K7, who defended the need for resources, stated his opinion by saying: “Appropriate books should be prepared and printed for teaching Turkish to foreign students. In this way, classroom teachers will not have difficulty in explaining the subjects and students will follow the books more easily. Even Turkish children have difficulty understanding the existing books. The existing books should also be rearranged.”

*The need for MoNE policy development:* Among the solution suggestions produced by classroom teachers among the research findings, there is also the need for MoNE to develop a policy. Participant teacher K5 stated this view as follows: “MoNE should develop a separate policy. Students who cannot speak Turkish are placed in a lower class than their age by the ministry when they come to the island. What needs to be done is that these children should first receive Turkish language education for 1 year in centers determined by the ministry, regardless of their age, and then be placed in classes appropriate for their age.” K10 added: “A lesson on the subject can be included in the afternoon activities. More external help can be received regarding teaching Turkish. MoNE should take action on the issue. Necessary reinforcement and courses should be provided to students.” and provided a guiding idea for MoNE.

Teachers stated that they had difficulty teaching Turkish to foreigners because they were not competent in teaching Turkish and had no experience in this field. However, there is no evidence in the findings that teachers should be trained in this regard. Classroom teachers emphasized that only teachers who are specialized in teaching Turkish should be assigned. Sariahmetoğlu and Kamer (2021) concluded in their study at the secondary school level that teachers should also be trained.

Classroom teachers who have problems with resources for teaching Turkish to foreigners have suggested that this situation should be addressed urgently and that the needed teaching materials, especially books on teaching Turkish to foreigners, should be provided. Akyürek (2021) also mentioned the lack of resources among the problems encountered in teaching Turkish in his study and suggested that the tools and equipment that will meet the needs of the students should be provided.

No teacher suggested that families should be educated or made aware of the problem of families remaining spectators to Turkish language teaching and not providing support. Unlike the research conducted,

teachers who participated in Turan and Polat's (2017) research suggested family education and getting help from the family.

In the study, teachers did not offer any solutions to motivate students to learn Turkish or to eliminate pronunciation problems. On the other hand, Güntaş et al. (2021) encountered similar problems in their research and concluded that as a solution to these problems, it would be beneficial for students to learn the language using a lot of activities, to facilitate Turkish teaching, to alleviate students' motivation and concerns, and to use a dictionary. In our study, only one of the participating teachers stated that he used a dictionary when he was in a difficult situation.

It is a matter of debate that teachers who believe that students should be taught Turkish in separate schools/classes or courses with state support without being placed in classes to eliminate their lack of Turkish do not make any suggestions regarding cultural differences from other sources and the passivity of the family. In the research of Güngör and Şener (2018), introducing Turkish culture to families and providing Turkish courses to families were presented as suggestions for these problems. There is no such suggestion in the findings of this research, so it is seen that there is a deficiency in this respect.

He made suggestions by emphasizing the need to develop a Turkish language teaching program, make it compulsory for foreigners to learn the Turkish language, prepare a special preparatory program for these students, and employ expert teachers in the field. When the literature is examined, many studies have focused on the need for programs for foreigners, and the findings of our research overlap with other studies in this context. Korkmaz's (2018) study also focused on the need for experts in the field as a suggestion.

In the study, classroom teachers listed the problems they experienced, the solutions they applied to the problems, and the suggestions they made as stated in the findings. The common suggestion of the teachers for all the problems experienced in teaching Turkish was that the Ministry of National Education should develop a policy. Unlike most studies, classroom teachers in the study stated that the state and the Ministry of National Education should reconsider and organize the teaching of Turkish to foreign students in line with the needs. No study has been encountered with classroom teachers on the teaching of Turkish to foreign primary school students in Turkey, and studies conducted in a similar field, no suggestions were given regarding the basic reasons for the problems experienced by students in their education and no suggestions were made regarding the Ministry of National Education and the state.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

With the research conducted, the opinions of teachers regarding the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreigners in primary schools in Nicosia and Guinea region in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, the solutions applied to these problems, and the possible solution suggestions were analyzed and the following results were reached.

Regarding the problems experienced in teaching Turkish to foreign students, which is the first theme of the research, the following results were obtained: communication, adaptation, and integration problems arising from the students not knowing Turkish; disruptions in student motivation and progress due to lack of support

Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboyulu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>

from families; and difficulties experienced by teachers in explaining the subject due to the lack of programs and appropriate resource books for foreigners.

Regarding the second theme of the research, the classroom teachers did not place much emphasis on teaching Turkish as a foreign language, but they addressed the methods and techniques used in teaching Turkish. The participant teachers supported teaching Turkish with audiovisual materials, but they also complained about the lack of resource books for teaching Turkish to foreign students.

Regarding the third theme of the research, it was suggested that an educational program and resource books should be developed for foreign students, students should be included in a preliminary program to acquire the language, and the state or the ministry of education should take the issue seriously.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, suggestions based on the findings of the research are presented. In this context, suggestions for the Ministry of National Education, school administrators, teachers, and those who will research the subject in the future are presented below.

Preparations for the necessary education program and resource books for teaching Turkish as a foreign language should be initiated. Training should be provided on teaching Turkish to foreigners. Teachers should be provided with theoretical and practical information on teaching Turkish as a foreign language and they should be made competent in this regard. Families can also be advised to receive Turkish language education and use the language in order to facilitate teaching Turkish and to ensure that their children adapt to the language more easily. Turkish language education should be provided to foreign students compulsorily and free of charge before they start school. Conferences should be organized with teachers who have experience in teaching Turkish and are specialized in this field for foreign students and the resources they use should be utilized. School administrators should organize events that introduce the Turkish Cypriot community and culture to ensure the adaptation of foreign students, prevent them from feeling foreign, and encourage them to teach Turkish. Teachers should improve themselves by participating in programs organized by different universities or institutions and obtaining certificates. Ideas should be exchanged with people who are specialized in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language and the path to be followed should be supported by expert opinions. Researchers who will conduct research in this field can be advised to reach a larger number of teachers and work on different sample groups.

## REFERENCES

- Akyürek, HM (2021). A general evaluation of the problems encountered in teaching Turkish to foreigners. *Journal of International Social Research*, 14 (79). <https://web.s.ebscohost.com/abstract?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=13079581&AN=153113108&h>
- Albayrak, FATMA, & Erciyas, O. (2019). Teaching Turkish as a foreign language in the North Cyprus. *Rauf Denктаş and Fazıl Küçük: 1st International Symposium on Cyprus Studies*. Kyrenia. <https://avesis.medeniyet.edu.tr/yayin/5992c434-2d5e-4e45-9915-babe78433746/kuzey-kibris-turk-cumhuriyetinde-turkcenin-yabanci-dil-olarak-ogretimi>
- Almohtadi, R., Alghazo, K., Almazaydeh, L., Al Sou'b, M., & Ali Alelaimat (2023). Assessing electronic educational cards (EECs) as a method of foreign language learning: An experimental design approach using kindergarten students. *World Journal on Educational Technology: Current Issues*. 15 (1), 51-58. <https://doi.org/10.18844/wjet.v15i1.7630>
- Arıcı, AF (2010). Strategies-methods and techniques used in teaching Turkish. *Atatürk University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 7 (1), 299-307. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ataunisobil/issue/2817/37941>
- Baltacı, A. (2017). Miles-Huberman model in qualitative data analysis. *Ahi Evran University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 3 (1), 1-14. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/aeusbed/issue/30008/290583>



- Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative report*, 13 (4), 544-559. <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/baxter.pdf>
- Bay, Y., & Ozturkmen, E. (2022). Problems Encountered by Classroom Teachers in Teaching Turkish to Foreign National Primary School Students. *20th International Classroom Teacher Education Symposium (USOS 2022)*, 69-90. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Seval-Cigdemir/publication/367077476\\_Sinif\\_Ogretmenlerinin\\_Gozuyle\\_Yaratici\\_Yazma/links/63c06ee2ef57e61a61116527/Sinif-Ogretmenlerin-Goezueyle-Yaratici-Yazma.pdf#page=78](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Seval-Cigdemir/publication/367077476_Sinif_Ogretmenlerinin_Gozuyle_Yaratici_Yazma/links/63c06ee2ef57e61a61116527/Sinif-Ogretmenlerin-Goezueyle-Yaratici-Yazma.pdf#page=78)
- Çelik, Ö. Y., & Kodan, H. (2020). Experiences of Primary School Teachers Regarding to Teaching Turkish to Students who are not Native Turkish Speakers: A Phenomenology. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 16 (6), 215-230. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1279793>
- Charoento, M. (2016). Individual learner differences and language learning strategies. *Contemporary Educational Researches Journal*. 7 (2), 57-72. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cerj.v7i2.875>
- Egeli, S., & Barut, Y. (2020). The Problems of Foreign Students with Non-Native Turkish Language in School Environment. *Cyprus Turkish Journal of Psychiatry & Psychology (CTJPP)*, 2 (3). <https://web.s.ebscohost.com/abstract?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=13027840&AN=147541506&h>
- Güngör, F., & Şenel, EA (2018). Opinions of teachers and students on the problems experienced in the education-teaching of foreign primary school students. *Anadolu Journal of Educational Sciences International*, 8 (2), 124-173. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ajesi/issue/38903/454575>
- Güntaş, S., Güneşli, A., & Gökbulut, B. (2021). Teaching Turkish as a foreign language in Cyprus through the eyes of Turkish teacher candidates. *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, (10), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.1009032>
- İmamoğlu, HV, & Çalışkan, E. (2017). Teachers' views on primary school education of foreign students in public schools: The case of Sinop province. *Karabük University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 7 (2), 529-546. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/joiss/issue/32387/360214>
- Kanpol, B., & McLaren, P. (1995). *Critical multiculturalism: Uncommon voices in a common struggle*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA. [https://books.google.com.tr/books?hl=tr&lr=&id=2Fz8z6dDUD4C&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&ots=eoS4EQK9pT&sig=ESXi1aXmtxEbO1g4yCsjCyer2n8&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.tr/books?hl=tr&lr=&id=2Fz8z6dDUD4C&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&ots=eoS4EQK9pT&sig=ESXi1aXmtxEbO1g4yCsjCyer2n8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Korkmaz, E. (2018). Some problems and solutions in teaching Turkish to foreigners. *Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Journal of Social Sciences*, 15 (1), 89-104. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ksusbd/issue/37007/329420>
- Malterud, K. (2001). Qualitative research: standards, challenges, and guidelines. *The lancet*, 358 (9280), 483-488. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(01\)05627-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(01)05627-6)
- Miçooğulları, M. (2020). Comparative Evaluation of Turkish Support Education Programs for Foreigners: TRNC Example. *Synergy International Journal of Field Education Research*, 1 (2), 67-82. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/synergy/issue/58953/821450>
- Moralı, G. (2018). Problems encountered in teaching Turkish as a foreign language to Syrian refugee children. *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches*, 8 (15), 1426-1449. <https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.443945>
- Şahin, A., & İşcan, A. (2014). Teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Ankara: Pegem Academy Publications. <https://depo.pegem.net/9786053649199.pdf>
- Salama, R., Chiparausha, K. & Bsatar, F. (2022). E-learning system of teaching the English language. *Global Journal of Information Technology: Emerging Technologies*. 12 (1), 34-42. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjit.v12i1.7108>
- Sariahmetoğlu, H., & Kamer, ST (2021). Education and adaptation of foreign students: Problems and solution suggestions. *Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University Faculty of Education Journal*, 8 (2), 612-634. <https://doi.org/10.21666/muefd.852569>



- Onderol, C. & Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Turkish to foreign students in primary schools in North Cyprus: An evaluation of teachers' perspectives. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 15(1), 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjflt.v15i1.9695>
- Soyuçok, M. (2020). Changes in understanding and practice in Turkish education: two textbook examples. *Eurasian Journal of Language Education and Research*, 4 (2), 68-83. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/adea/issue/59084/796080>
- Takır, A., & Özerem, A. (2020). Examining the problems encountered by foreign students in a school environment with different cultures in the context of multiculturalism. *Kastamonu Education Journal*, 28 (1), 406-420. <https://doi.org/10.24106/kefdergi.3623>
- Tekindal, M. & Uğuz Arsu, Ş. (2020). A review of the scope and process of the phenomenological approach as a qualitative research method. *Beyond the Horizon Science Journal*, 20 (1), 153- 182. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/uobild/issue/58856/813813>
- Turan, M., & Polat, F. (2017). Problems encountered by foreign primary school students studying in Turkey and solution suggestions. *Qualitative Studies*, 12 (4), 31-60. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/nwsaqual/issue/31521/340805>