

An investigation of instructor opinions on the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language: The case of Suruç Temporary Refuge Center[#]

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to acquire data through instructor opinions on the benefits of using literary texts for teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In this respect, a semi-structured interview form was prepared and applied to 50 Turkish instructors working at the Suruç Temporary Refuge Center in Şanlıurfa, Turkey, within the scope of the project "Supporting the Integration of Children to Turkish Education System (PICTES)". The opinions of 50 instructors were examined and it was determined that using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language contributed to teaching Turkish, improved language skills and provided cultural transfer. The present paper provided several suggestions based on these findings.

Keywords: Teaching Turkish as a foreign language, literary texts, instructor opinions.

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies, focusing on how education systems should be shaped and how education could provide productive outcomes, are being conducted in the world. Undoubtedly, the aim of such studies is to provide a high-quality education and to receive feedback from the students through observing or evaluating the outcomes of education. Currently, there exists a rapid change and transformation process in education, similar to all research domains. As a natural consequence, individuals find themselves in a global communication cycle, which creates the necessity to learn a foreign language (Göçer and Moğul, 2011). Consequently, teaching a foreign language constitutes the basis of current educational activities. Several studies were conducted on how to teach a foreign language, how that language should be used, and which approaches increase the permanency of that language, in other words, these studies focused on the most ideal approaches in teaching a foreign language (Demircan, 2013; Doyumğaç and Tezcan, 2018; Göçer, 2013; Kınay, 2016; Memiş and Erdem, 2013; Tarcan,

2014; Yılmaz, et al., 2018).

The question of why the individuals of the current era need to learn a foreign language besides their native language is a question that can be answered by anyone. Given the globalized world, numerous individuals seek the means to learn a new language based on different reasons (Güzel and Barın, 2016). Due to the developing technology and communication tools, world became a place without borders. Currently, individuals need to learn other languages more than ever, since there exists a constant and increased communication among these individuals. Therefore, teaching and training of a foreign language became a highly significant need, which led to the requirement of teaching a foreign language to individuals.

Given the significant geographical role of Turkey in recent years and the increasing trend that Turkish is accepted as a prevailing language in the world, there exists an increased interest in learning Turkish, both domestic and abroad. Thus, teaching Turkish to foreigner

individuals became a highly significant issue. Furthermore, Syrian citizens, who natively speak Arabic and seek asylum in Turkey due to the Syrian civil war that started in 2011, encountered Turkish language in Turkey and started to learn the language through the different institutions that teach Turkish as a foreign language in this area (Akkaya, 2013; Kıymaz and Doyumğaç, 2019). Above-mentioned reasons led to several questions focusing on the means to teach Turkish, methods and techniques to be used while teaching Turkish, permanency of Turkish and the means to use Turkish more actively as a foreign language. Providing answers to these questions and eliminating related problems depend on eligible studies conducted in this research domain (Güzel, 2003; Kınay, 2016; Memiş and Erdem, 2013; Yılmaz, et. al., 2018).

One of the most important problems encountered while teaching Turkish to foreigners is that the provided education is insufficient and is not at the desired level. Studies conducted on the subject are limited and the related academic studies are quite new. While there exist 24 departments for teaching German in Turkey, contrastingly, the significance of teaching Turkish in Turkey is a highly new consideration (Hengirmen, 1994). Furthermore, other problems include the fact that there is a different set of rules in Turkish grammar that is new to foreign individuals, the process of teaching is perceived as dull and difficult by the learners, and there exists a requirement to ensure that the learnt language would be permanent and not be forgotten. Besides these problems, teaching Turkish as a foreign language is a relatively new research domain and one of the important insufficiencies in the domain is due to the lack of literary texts that could be used in teaching Turkish language to foreigners. The effects of literary texts on the development of mental and linguistic skills, value teaching, ensuring motivation, development of imagination, creativity and socialization of individuals were reported to be highly substantial (Ayhan and Arslan, 2014). Researchers highly stressed considering context in educational research and provided trainings or services for more effective cognitive, social, educational, mental outcomes (Doyumğaç et al., 2020; Tanhan, 2019, 2020). From such a contextual perspective, language, linguistic, discourse, literary texts and other used materials play an important role (Börekçi, 2009). All these findings enable an interdisciplinary perspective to literacy texts (Lampi et al., 2019). All these render the language teaching process enjoyable and increase the drive to learn that language. Literary texts also facilitate teaching a foreign language since it provides concrete examples regarding the rules of that language. They make language learning permanent and support its use further in daily life. Although literary texts attain such level of significance, they are not sufficiently used in teaching Turkish to foreigners (Akkaya and Doyumğaç, 2019; Kınay, 2016; Uluçay and Doyumğaç, 2019; Ünal, 2005).

The present study, therefore, examined instructor opinions on the benefits of using literary texts for teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Instructors were interviewed for the benefits of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Therefore, the present study aimed to reveal the importance of literary texts used in teaching Turkish as a foreign language through instructor opinions. Accordingly, the present study is expected to contribute to eliminate the insufficiencies in the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language

The Turkish nation ruled different geographies in the world since its emergence in the stage of history and had contact with various other nations. Turkish nation was the protagonist of many historical events and played an active role in the history. Such historical background made Turkish one of the most widely used languages in the world, it attracted the interest of the societies, which had centuries-long relations with Turkish nation and individuals in these endeavored to learn Turkish. Such factors caused Turkish to be one of the frequently spoken languages in the world throughout the history. Currently, the desire and demand for learning Turkish considerably increased due to economic, social, political and geopolitical reasons.

Turkish language is taught in secondary schools in 87 countries, in private courses in 46 countries and in university in 9 countries, based on the demands in these countries. There are 28 countries that has a Turcology departments, where research is carried out on Turkish Language and Literature. Currently, Turkish language is a world language spoken by 220 million people in an area of 12 million square kilometers and has more than 600 thousand words (Akalin, 2009). Furthermore, the interest in learning Turkish increased due to the presence of Syrian refugees in Turkey who fled the civil war over the years, the active state of Turkey in its geographical and international location, the increase of foreigner students in recent years and the interest of foreign businesspeople in recent years (Akkaya, 2013; Dursun and Akkaya, 2017; Kıymaz and Doyumğaç, 2019).

Turkey's growing international power in recent years and its geopolitical significance caused an increase in the number of people who demand to learn about Turkey, accordingly the Turkish language and culture. In order to meet these demands and to introduce Turkey further in the international arena, teaching Turkish as a foreign language becomes a highly significant issue (Doyumğaç, 2017; İşcan, 2011). The high popularity of Turkish reveals the importance of teaching Turkish to foreigner individuals and the amount of efforts that should be made in the field. In recent years, studies in the field gradually increased and domestic and abroad activities in teaching

Turkish as a foreign language were initiated. Academic studies are expected to contribute the development in teaching Turkish as a second or foreign language to foreigners, hence, a priority must be assigned to the research domain by academic institutions and scientists in Turkey (Durmuş, 2013).

Currently, teaching Turkish as a foreign language is carried out by the Yunus Emre Institute, several higher education institutions, Maarif Foundation, Turcology departments and various cultural institutions in various parts of the world. In Turkey, Turkish education as a foreign language is provided to students who come from different countries, refugees in Turkey and individuals who desire to learn Turkish due to different reasons (Yıldırım and Tüfekçioğlu, 2016).

Literary texts

Turkish language education, both as the native and as a foreign language, is generally carried out through literary and instructive texts. Since the richness, fluency and sophistication of Turkish language emerge through idioms, proverbs and stereotyped expressions in the literary texts, it is possible to state that literary texts become the main tools of language teaching (Karakuş, 2012). Literary texts enable the individuals to become aware of the possibilities and enjoyment of the language that they are learning and use the language they learnt. Furthermore, literary texts are important materials that enable the learner to see the structural rules and semantic features of a language in a more substantial way. It would be highly useful to provide answers to the question “what are literary texts?” in order to reveal their significance (Dolaşık, 2018; Akkaya and Doyumğaç, 2019; Khan and Alasmari, 2018; Uluçay and Doyumğaç, 2019; Serin and Turan, 2015).

Prior to defining what a literary text is, it is essential to understand the meaning attributed to the word, text. Current Turkish Language Society (TLS) dictionary defines text as “entire words that make up a writing through form, expression and punctuation features, manuscript” (TLS, 2019). The textual value of a writing depends on the fact that it contains a message, rather than the number of pages or sentences. That is, a single word and sentence with a message can also be perceived as a text. A literary text is a whole with aesthetic features composed by various elements (Atalay, 2014). In literary texts, emotions, thoughts and dreams are expressed in an aesthetical way that stimulates excitement and admiration (Güneş, 2013). Text is a narration and consensus medium that is formed to communicate through various channels. A literary text, on the other hand, has an artistic value that incites aesthetic pleasure. Literary texts are created to evoke a conception and artistic pleasure in the reader (Aktaş, 2009).

Above-mentioned definitions emphasized that literary texts initiate an aesthetic and artistic pleasure on human beings, contribute to the development of language through revealing the artistic aspects of a language and simultaneously support the development of the reader and the audience in the linguistic, artistic and intellectual domains.

Aim of the study

Although the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language has an important place both in the teaching process and after learning the language, it was observed that the number of studies focusing on this particular subject is quite limited. There exists no specific study that focuses on instructor opinions on the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to determine opinions of the instructors, who teach Turkish to foreigners, on the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The study, therefore, puts an effort to determine the benefits of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language based on instructor opinions.

METHODOLOGY

Research model

The present study employs descriptive analysis as a qualitative research design. Descriptive analysis presents findings in a summarized and interpreted form (Şahin, 2017; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Descriptive analysis was used in the present study to provide data through instructor opinions.

The present research employed a semi-structured interview form, a data collection technique through verbal communication. Interview is a process through which the interviewer establishes commonly a face-to-face dialogue with the subjects with the aim to receive several verbal responses on a particular subject (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Interview technique focuses on the means to reveal the thoughts, experiences and reasoning of individuals on a subject, rather than testing a hypothesis. Semi-structured interview technique, on the other hand, includes a preparation and planning conducted by the researcher, focusing on which questions should be asked. Furthermore, the researcher could ask sub-questions based on the flow of the semi-structured interview and obtain more clear and detailed responses (Güler et al., 2015; Turan, 2015).

Given that the present study focuses on the instructor opinions on the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish to foreigners, the semi-structured interview form was

applied face-to-face to Turkish instructors to provide data for the study.

Study group

The study group of the present research consists of 50

instructors, who teach Turkish at Suruç Temporary Refuge Center in Şanlıurfa, Turkey, within the scope of the project "Supporting the Integration of Children to Turkish Education System (PICTES)". The data set of the present study is obtained from the responses to the semi-structured interview form, of these 50 instructors who teach Turkish as a foreign language (Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of research participants.

Specifications		f
Gender	Male	27
	Female	23
Age	20-25	7
	25-30	39
	30 and above	4
Experience	1-3	1
	3-6	49
Graduation	Turkish teacher	6
	Turkish Language and Literature Teacher	8
	Primary School Teacher	36

Data collection techniques and data analysis

The present research employed interview technique as a tool of descriptive analysis, a qualitative research design. In this respect, 50 teachers who taught Turkish to foreigners were interviewed. First, a PhD graduate research assistant was consulted to receive expert opinion on the validity of the interview form and revisions were made based on the obtained feedback and an associate professor and a PhD graduate research assistant was consulted for further expert opinion. The semi-structured interview form was finalized due to all received feedbacks from the experts and employed to 50 instructors, who teach Turkish at Suruç Temporary Refuge Center in Şanlıurfa, Turkey. Subsequent to receiving all instructor opinions, the responses were analyzed. The obtained data was classified based on the problem statement and purpose of the research. The instructors were also asked an open-ended question, "What are the benefits of using literary text in teaching Turkish as a foreign language?", within the scope of the semi-structured interview form, which was prepared based on the problem statement and purpose of the research.

RESULTS

The instructors who participated the study presented the following opinions on the contribution of using literary

texts on teaching Turkish as a foreign language: developing basic language skills, developing reading habits, improving the reading skills of the student and increasing the speed of reading, improving the student's vocabulary, providing fluency in reading, ensuring culture transfer, ensuring correct pronunciation, students ability to extrapolate meaning, being instructive, facilitating the learning of new vocabulary, stimulating interest and curiosity throughout the process of language teaching, providing practicality in language teaching, enabling the students in expressing themselves, contributing to writing skills, contributing to the development of the mind, providing an artistic viewpoint, ensuring the permanence in learning grammatical rules, providing a critical viewpoint, ensuring that the student masters Turkish language, ensuring the transfer of learned vocabulary to the real life situations, developing the imaginary realm of the students, revealing the richness of the Turkish language, ensuring that the student uses Turkish language efficiently, saving time, providing a sense of harmony to the student, contributing the gains connected to the language, improving the rhetoric of the student, developing the depiction ability of the student, providing accent and intonation skills, strengthening the literary background of the student, improving the abstract thinking skills of the student, developing the empathy skills of the student, helping students to connect the sentences.

Instructor opinions that were listed above were

classified under six main headings. Examples to instructor opinions were provided in order to reveal the viewpoint of the instructors who teach Turkish to Syrian citizens.

Findings based on improving basic language skills through the use of literary texts

Instructors that participated in the research initially indicated that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language developed basic language skills. In the present research, the instructors expressed their opinions that the development of basic language skills was a benefit obtained through the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. "...literary texts are beneficial for the development of language, mind and vocabulary." (P6). "It is essential to use literary texts in acquiring and developing language skills such as speaking, reading, writing and listening" (P14). "Commonly, the use of literary texts improves speaking, writing, listening and reading skills" (P17). "I resort to literary texts since they develop speaking, writing, listening skills of the students" (P38).

It is possible to observe that P6, P14, P17 and P38 delivered similar opinions on the reasons and benefits of using literary text in teaching a foreign language. The high number of instructors who delivered similar opinions supported the reason and benefit that literary texts developed basic language skills.

Findings based on providing culture transfer through the use of literary texts

Another opinion, expressed by the instructors participated to the present study, on the needs and benefits of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, was culture transfer. Several opinions were as follows: "Text facilitates a culture transfer" (P40) "We use literary texts since they ensure appropriate culture transfer" (P45) "Literary texts include the folkloric, cultural and national aspects of a language. Using these literary texts also help transfer these aspects." (P44) "We use literary texts to transfer our culture to future generations" (K36). It was possible to observe that the participants P36, P40, P44 and P45 expressed similar opinions. The high number of instructors who delivered similar opinions supported the idea that literary texts facilitated and had a significant role in culture transfer.

Findings based on developing reading habits through the use of literary texts

Instructors who participated in the study also expressed that literary texts helped to develop reading habits, to

develop reading skills, to increase the speed of reading and to provide fluency in reading. Instructors express several opinions as follows: "Literary texts increase the reading habits of students. Students' reading speed also increases with rhymes" (P3); "First of all, I use literary texts because they provide a habit of reading and writing for the students" (P29) "Helps to increase and develop the children's reading levels." (P13) "Literary texts provide the habit of fluent reading in Turkish teaching" (P21); "Literary texts increase the speed of reading in children" (P38). It was possible to observe that the participants P3, P13, P21, P29, and P38 expressed similar opinions. The higher number of similar instructor opinions supported the opinion that the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language helped students in developing reading habits, improving reading skills, increasing the speed of reading and providing fluency in reading.

Findings based on improving vocabulary through the use of literary texts

Another opinion on the needs and benefits of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language was **improvement in vocabulary** and facilitating the learning of new vocabulary. Instructors indicated that, "I use literary text to help the students to use more vocabulary, whether in everyday life, at school or in the neighborhood" (P7) "Since literary texts has a rich Turkish vocabulary, I use more literary texts in teaching" (P24) "Literary texts help students to guess the meaning of unknown vocabulary, thus learning of new vocabulary" (K50). It was noticed that the instructor opinions, P7, P24 and P50 were similar. In this respect, the high number of instructors who expressed similar opinions supported the idea that literary texts improved vocabulary and facilitated the learning of new vocabulary.

Findings based on stimulating interest, curiosity and enjoyment during the language teaching process through the use of literary texts

Another instructor opinion, which was expressed as the need and benefit of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, was that literary texts stimulated interest, curiosity and enjoyment throughout the language teaching process. "Literary texts used in teaching Turkish are interesting, students pay attention to these texts." (P11) "...in other words, vocabulary in literary texts attract the attention of students and they start to use these vocabulary in daily life involuntarily." (P35) "Literary texts facilitate a more enjoyable learning. Rhymes, riddles, anecdotes also facilitate enjoyment and mental development simultaneously." (P2) "Increase the interest in education." (P45). It was determined that the

instructors P2, P11, P35 and P45 delivered similar opinions which supported each other. The number of instructors who expressed similar opinions proved that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language increased interest and curiosity and reinforced the idea that language teaching became more enjoyable due to using these texts.

Findings based on mental and linguistic development through the use of literary texts

Instructors also expressed the common opinion that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language contributed to the mental and linguistic development. *"Literary texts contribute to the linguistic and cognitive development of children."* (P47) *"Mental skills are improved."* (P33) *"...it is useful both for mind, language and vocabulary development."* (P6). Instructors P6, P33 and P47 expressed similar opinions, stating that literary texts were necessary and beneficial since they contributed to the mental and linguistic development of students.

The other common view of the instructors was that the literary texts revealed the richness of the Turkish language, ensured that Turkish was used effectively by students and students sensed the opportunities of the Turkish language. *"Recognizing the richness of the language"* (P5) *"...literary texts reveal the richness, associations and images of the language"* (P16) *"My aim in using literary text in teaching Turkish to foreigners is to use genres that are important in a language and useful in getting used to that language, such as rhymes, poems, stories etc. The aim is to teach both Turkish and to reveal the richness of Turkish language while teaching"* (P8) *"...the aim is that they use Turkish more efficiently"* (P12). It was noticed that the instructors P8, P12 and P16 stated that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language revealed the richness of Turkish language, popularized language opportunities and enabled the effective use of Turkish language.

DISCUSSION

Literary texts include the use of the rules and vocabulary of a language. A student who attempts to learn a foreign language could perceive the different use of language and vocabulary in literary texts written in that particular language and such experience could contribute to the use of that language in different areas. Literary texts are structures that exhibit the diverse uses of the syntax within the language for students who learn a foreign language. Coming across with these diverse structures could enable the student to produce their own concepts about that language. Furthermore, literary texts have an important place in ensuring individual participation in the

language learning process (İsaoğlu, 2018: 42). Once the literary texts are utilized as materials that enable students to learn the grammar and rules of a language, language teaching mainly focuses on these texts (Serin and Turan, 2015). For example; I use literary text to help the students to use more vocabulary, whether in everyday life, at school or in the neighborhood" (P7) "Since literary texts has a rich Turkish vocabulary, I use more literary texts in teaching" (P24) "Literary texts help students to guess the meaning of unknown vocabulary, thus learning of new vocabulary" (P50) Participants with the code gave their opinions in a way that confirms the studies.

Language teaching is based on the development of basic language skills. The basic criterion in a successful language teaching is the proficient use of basic language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The main purpose of language teaching is that the learner understands what he/she reads or writes and expresses him/herself through written or oral form (Öztürk and Dağıstanoğlu, 2018). Therefore, language instructors disseminated the use of literary texts in language teaching in order to develop the basic language skills, increase the level of using basic language skills and to increase a more natural use of that language (Ünal, 2005). These explanations are also supported by the opinions of the participants coded; "it is essential to use literary texts in acquiring and developing language skills such as speaking, reading, writing and listening" (P14); "Commonly, the use of literary texts improves speaking, writing, listening and reading skills" (P17). Hence, the significance of using literary texts in language teaching was emphasized by the European common language framework program, since they were beneficial not only for reading skills, but also writing and speaking skills (Serin & Turan, 2015). Furthermore, the use of literary texts in foreign language teaching improves the language levels of students. Reading comprehension, speaking and written expression skills of students are not neglected once literary texts are used in teaching (Çakır, 1990).

Effective and accurate teaching of any foreign language is one of the main objectives of language teaching. Thus, it is important to develop basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Therefore, students need supplementary materials that stimulate interest and curiosity and literary texts are capable of meeting such needs (Ayhan and Arslan, 2014). Khan and Alasmari (2018) and Bobkina (2014) state that literary texts in foreign language teaching contribute significantly to the comprehension and expression skills of language learners. For example; *"...literary texts are beneficial for the development of language, mind and vocabulary"* (P6). *"It is essential to use literary texts in acquiring and developing language skills such as speaking, reading, writing and listening"* (P14). *"Commonly, the use of literary texts improves speaking, writing, listening and reading skills"* (P17). "I

resort to literary texts since they develop speaking, writing, listening skills of the students" (P38) the opinions of the participants support the research results. In addition, according to the research results of Akkaya and Doyumğaç (2019) and Uluçay and Doyumğaç (2019), they explained that literary texts are important in teaching Turkish as a foreign language and that these texts improve their language skills. Lukka (2017) states that the selection of visual literary texts also contributes to the conceptual and intercultural competence of foreign language students.

Based on the initial finding of the present study and previous studies, it was concluded that literary texts used in teaching Turkish as a foreign language developed and provided a more competent use of basic language skills, therefore, they should be used in teaching Turkish. The findings of the present study were similar to the findings of previous studies in revealing the significance that using literary text improved basic language skills. Language is an important element of culture. Literary texts, on the other hand, are significant due to the cultural features and elements of the language incorporated in them. The contribution of literary texts to all levels and skills in language teaching are widely acknowledged. Literary texts provide functionality in language-related skills along with other factors such as culture. Given that the literary texts contain common understanding, consciousness and culture of a society, using literary texts in teaching a foreign language increases student interest and facilitates the comprehension of the society in which the language is learned (Odacı, 2018).

Literary texts, in which the rules and use of a language emerge in the most preeminent and effective way, reflect culture, the common value of the society and contribute to individual development through addressing emotions (Demir and Açıık, 2011). Literary texts are the works that reflect culture, language, history, feelings and thoughts of a society (Uyanık and Uslu, 2013). In addition to this, literary texts contribute to the development of understanding, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis skills as well as the understanding skills of language students. According to Börekçi (2015), while learning both a mother tongue and a second language, it is necessary to first explore the nature of the language and perceive it as an object to be learned. In addition, according to Börekçi (2006), reading, understanding, interpreting, taking an impression (becoming conscious), and thinking are realized through language. The text type that shows the nature of language as a whole is literary texts. It is indispensable to use literary texts for the development of high-level language skills of foreign language learners. It is understood that research participants also stated that literary texts contribute to the development of mental skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language. For example; "Literary texts contribute to the linguistic and cognitive development of children" (P47); "Mental skills are improved" (P33); "...it is

useful both for mind, language and vocabulary development" (P6); Recognizing the richness of the language." (P5) "...literary texts reveal the richness, associations and images of the language" (P16); "My aim in using literary text in teaching Turkish to foreigners is to use genres that are important in a language and useful in getting used to that language, such as rhymes, poems, stories etc. The aim is to teach both Turkish and to reveal the richness of Turkish language while teaching" (P8); "...The aim is that they use Turkish more efficiently" (P12) When the opinions of the participants coded are examined, it is understood that the participants also expressed their opinions as in the direction of the research results. Literary texts also play an important role in understanding cognitive linguistics, the essence of pre-understanding, philosophical interpretation, the communicator's prior knowledge, the communicator's presuppositions (cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, text linguistics), a discourse of the text (discourse linguistics), the interaction conditions of communicators (social psychology). Sagun and De Vera, (2019), Cheung (2019), Atmaca and Günday (2016), Shukri and Mukundan (2015) made statements that literary texts are important in developing mental skills.

Based on the second finding of the present study and previous studies, one of the main objectives in teaching a foreign language is to provide the knowledge of cultural elements which constitute the common memory and heritage of a society. Literary texts used in foreign language teaching are important tools that contain the elements of cultural heritage of a society and the finding of the present study, which indicated that instructors preferred to use literary texts for culture transfer through the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, was a highly significant finding, and the idea that the use of literary texts was found effective in culture transfer. Basic language skills such as reading comprehension and interpretation constitute the basis of language teaching and are important criteria in the evaluation of learning a language. Literary texts are among the most important materials in terms of developing reading skills, developing reading skills and providing fluent reading. Furthermore, reading, reading and listening comprehension and self-expression are considered as the main objectives of foreign language teaching.

Literary texts are one of the important tools used in language teaching. The activities carried out in language teaching are commonly based on reading, listening, comprehension and writing (Öztürk and Dağüstanoğlu, 2018). Furthermore, it is possible to state that reading skills in Turkish is the focus of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, since it constitutes the basis for the development of other basic skills. Teaching reading in a foreign language can be defined as the synthesis of the new and previously retained information by the student, the grammar rules of the taught language and knowledge

of his/her native language (Erdem et al., 2015). However, the first step of the reading comprehension is that the individual knows the characteristics of the type of literary text he/she reads and the way to read that type of literary text, where different types of texts might require specific types of readings (Özbay, 2009). Once the studies that support the finding of the third title, it was observed the instructor opinions on that using literary text in teaching Turkish as a foreign language was that literary texts had the potential to improve reading skills, as one of the basic language skills, increase the speed of reading and provide fluent reading. Such opinions and the obtained data were therefore significant findings that exhibited the importance of using literary text in foreign language teaching.

The richness of a language is measured by the associations between words. Consequently, once contemplating on the richness of a language it is necessary to evaluate the presence and quality of literary texts written in that language (Yıldız, 2017). Literary texts, rich in vocabulary, are beneficial for those who learn a foreign language since they lead to the development of new vocabulary; therefore, literary texts have an important place in teaching Turkish as a foreign language in terms of improving reading-comprehension skills, as well as improving vocabulary of students (Serin and Turan, 2015). There is certain lack in studies that focus on teaching the skill to acknowledge and differentiate words, thus, enriching the vocabulary of the students. Such insufficiency negatively affects reading and comprehension skills. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare texts based on word compilations that need to be provided to students. Vocabulary development is essential for the students to express themselves better and texts should be prepared with appropriate vocabulary (Melanlıoğlu and Özbay, 2008).

As literary texts are studied during the course as a course subject, group activities and positive interactions could help to increase vocabulary and expression skills of the students in both languages, native and foreign (Çakır, 1990). During such course conduct, the instructor should teach unknown vocabulary in Turkish to the students so that they learn the meaning of the vocabulary encountered during the course (Zorbaz and Köroğlu, 2016). Both the findings obtained in the fourth section and the results of previous studies suggest that vocabulary development, which is highly significant in foreign language teaching and vocabulary teaching can be achieved through the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Such outcome reveals the necessity of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language and making use of literary texts.

It is important for an instructor to make the learning environment attractive, thus the students enjoy learning the language and improve their language skills. Furthermore, the enthusiasm of the students to participate the course is another significant issue that needs to be addressed. One of the methods to create

diverse learning environments and an interesting and attractive learning process is to design a course conduct that attracts student attention through activities based on literary texts (Göçer, 2010). Literary texts are significant in teaching Turkish to foreign students in an enjoyable way (Ayhan and Arslan, 2014). Moreover, illustrated texts used in foreign language teaching enable the student to develop a positive attitude towards the course and contribute to the development of affective skills. These texts also facilitate student participation in the course (Ökten and Sauner, 2015). Instructor opinions on literary texts in the fifth section emphasized that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language stimulated interest and curiosity and provided an enjoyable teaching process. This finding was supported by several studies conducted by different researchers. Such finding indicated that the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language had an important role both for active student interest and an enjoyable teaching and learning process.

Literary texts have a great impact on the development of the mental and linguistic skills of students, therefore, it is essential to use literary texts as a tool for the development and reinforcement of linguistic and personal skills (Ayhan and Arslan, 2014). Similarly, Tanhan (2019) also stressed how language and mental health are inextricably related to one another in education and psychology disciplines. The author explained in detail how language plays a crucial role on peoples' functioning including their performance in education. Therefore, the author strongly recommended use of the language in education and mental health from a contextual perspective meaning constructing and using appropriate experiential activities. From this perspective, it is clear that paying attention to contextually sensitive language and activities is indeed needed. Furthermore, there are several activities that can be conducted for the mental development of children. Lullabies and singing, reading stories aloud and letting children repeat some words while singing stimulate certain parts in children's brain, which in turn accelerates children's mental and linguistic development. It was also established that infants were familiar with the texts that were read to them in early ages (Güneş, 2010). Furthermore, some other researchers in education highly underlined a contextually sensitive and well-grounded research and activities for more effective services in education (Doyumğaç et al., 2020; Tanhan, 2019, 2020; Tanhan and Strack, 2020). The researchers stressed one of the recent qualitative research methods called Online Photovoice (OPV) to get the experiences of people and especially students in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic through literary texts. These OPV texts include biological, psychological, social, spiritual, and economic aspects through shared visual and written documents from participants. Based on all these, literary texts construct one of the most effective and experiential avenue to provide contextually sensitive materials and activities that enable students to utilize

multiple cognitive and social skills. For example, the following quotes from the participants support the researchers. "Literary texts used in teaching Turkish are interesting, students pay attention to these texts" (P11); "...in other words, vocabulary in literary texts attract the attention of students and they start to use these vocabularies in daily life involuntarily" (P35) "Literary texts facilitate a more enjoyable learning. Rhymes, riddles, anecdotes also facilitate enjoyment and mental development simultaneously" (P2); "Increase the interest in education" (P45). Kıymaz and Doyumğaç (2020) explained how students should study texts in their contexts in order to enhance their verbal and written skills. This can happen when students spend time with more diverse literary texts from different disciplines. The findings of the last section and the studies supporting these findings maintained that literary texts contributed to the mental and linguistic development of children. Therefore, the use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language is expected to contribute to the mental and linguistic development of students.

Commonly, instructor opinions were parallel with the findings of other researches in literature. For instance, according to Karakuş (2012), Turkish teaching was usually conducted through literary texts because they were useful sources for teaching Turkish. The beauty, richness, fluency and simplicity of Turkish language emerged in idioms, proverbs and metaphorical and stereotypes in literary texts. The student should be aware of the richness of the language he/she is learning. Realizing such richness is only possible through literary texts. According to Kurt (2015), literary texts should be used in foreign language teaching and learning, since they reveal the subtleties, beauty and richness of a language. As the literary texts reveal the richness and subtleties of a language, they also allow the student to master the characteristics of the language he/she is learning and to express him/herself in the best way possible, either orally or in writing. Therefore, the use of literary texts that include the aesthetic and structural richness of Turkish is expected to enable the effective use of the language by the students and the students will be able to recognize the opportunities of the language. Such outcomes reveal the significance of using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Furthermore, there exist various studies that support the findings of the present study based on instructor opinions, particularly recognizing the opportunities of a language and effective use of that language.

The findings of the present study based on instructor opinions and the findings of previous studies indicated that use of literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language had the potential to improve basic language skills, provide cultural transference, demonstrate the richness of expression in Turkish, develop vocabulary, stimulate student interest and curiosity, thus enhance motivation, attract attention, make the learning process enjoyable, provide the student aesthetic, critical and

empathy perspectives and to enable social interaction of students through providing environments for communication. Millions of Syrian citizens took refuge in Turkey and these individuals need to learn Turkish through accurate and institutionalized approaches in order to attain an accelerated adaptation and to remove problems that could stem from miscommunication. Thus, using literary texts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language is an indispensable part of an effective teaching process and greatly contributes to the language learnt. Therefore, the present study established that literary texts should be used at every stage of teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

One of the prominent results of the study is that literary texts play an important role in the development of language skills. It is understood that literary texts in foreign language teaching (in second language or target language teaching) help students to improve their understanding and expression skills. Therefore, it has been determined that using literary texts at advanced level of foreign language teaching will bring perspective to language learners. Based on all these, the following suggestions can be made for teaching Turkish as a foreign language:

- It is necessary to benefit from certain literary genres in teaching Turkish to foreigners starting from the intermediate level.
- Even though the literary texts are adapted according to the levels, care should be taken not to break the context of the texts.
- While using literary texts, the meaning of the words should be tried to be taught in context, without interfering with the original structures of the sentences.
- It should make use of literary texts in teaching basic language skills and grammatical structures.
- Through literary texts, the psychology, sociology and history of the society to which the foreign language (target language, second language) belongs and cultural values should be understood
- By using literary texts in academic Turkish teaching, texts, types of words and general structures of Turkish can be approached linguistically.

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