



## **Journal of Educational Studies and Multidisciplinary Approaches (JESMA)**

**www.jesma.net**

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#### **To cite this article:**

Ermağan, E. (2025). Put the title of the paper here. *Journal of Educational Studies and Multidisciplinary Approaches (JESMA)*, 5 (1), 84- 104. <https://doi.org/10.51383/jesma.2025.121>

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**Cross-Cultural Common Elements in Foreign Language Teaching: Turkish Teaching Activities of Yunus Emre Institute in South Korea**

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Original Research

DOI: 10.51383/jesma.2025.121

Received 16 February 2025

Revision 28 March 2025

Accepted 31 March 2025

**ABSTRACT**

Success in language teaching depends on the coordinated realization of various elements. The grammatical and pronunciation structures of the language, the educational level, goal, and motivation of the language learner, the methods and places where the language is learned, the institutions that provide language learning, teachers, curricula, experts who prepare language teaching books, and cultural stakeholders of the language are among the noteworthy stakeholders of the process. Foreign language teachers increasingly point to the importance of culturolinguistic studies. In this article, South Korea is chosen as a case study of the teaching of Turkish, a language that has been increasingly learned in distant geographies in recent years. The research design focuses on determining common cultural elements in Turkish and Korean languages concerning the language-culture relationship and the extent to which this culturolinguistic method is reflected in the activities of Yunus Emre Institute, the "official language teaching institution" of Türkiye, in Seoul. The main problem is to what extent is source-target culture transfer provided in language teaching activities, and to what extent are shared cultural elements included in the process? Using the method of document analysis, the article argues that both target culture transfer and activities involving shared cultural elements will create new opportunities in language teaching for foreigners and offer various suggestions in this context.

**Keywords:** Foreign Language Education, culturolinguistics, Turkish, South Korea, Yunus Emre Institute.



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**Introduction**

Foreign language education in the world takes place through various methods such as self-learning techniques, digital environments with artificial intelligence, and physical and remote

activities of private and public institutions (Piniel, 2024; Albert, 2022; Akbarov, 2015). For example, the United Kingdom, France, or Russia offers the opportunity to learn their own languages around the world through language institutions. In recent years, states have been making strategic investments in language teaching processes as a part of cultural diplomacy (Abbas, Gao, & Ismail, 2023; Bound et al., 2007).

How do these official state institutions teach their languages in a foreign country? To rephrase the question, to what extent is the target culture present in language learning? To what extent are elements common to both cultures included in the curriculum, or are they alternatively excluded? It should be emphasized that the transfer of the target culture and the preparation of cultural content in language teaching activities are critical issues, and the necessary intercultural research on this subject has been increasing in the relevant literature around the world (American & Tajabadi, 2020, pp. 623-644; Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Cortazzi & Jin, 1999, pp. 196-219; Soetaert & Van Kranenburg, 1998, pp. 23-36; Habermas, 1981).

In 2021, it was reported that Turkish ranked fifth among the languages learned as a foreign language in the world (Gürer, 2022; Jeon, 2017). What might be the implications of the experience of teaching Turkish as a foreign language in South Korea for foreign language education literature globally? There are various historical and cultural ties and some common traditions, customs, and beliefs between the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Türkiye (Choi, 2014). The possibility that Turkish and Korean are related through the Ural-Altaic language family coincides with some cultural similarities between these countries (Lee, 2021, pp. 183-198). Official relations began in 1949 when Türkiye recognized South Korea as an independent state. Since Türkiye participated in South Korea's war of independence between 1950 and 1953 and 462 of its soldiers were martyred, the South Korean people refer to the Turkish people as "blood brothers" (Lippe, 2000, pp. 92-102; SukBong, 2007).

What is the place of cultural interaction and language studies in bilateral relations? Korean culture, music, and TV series have created one of the fastest-growing influences worldwide (Hong, 2014); and Türkiye has been one of the countries that have experienced this influence closely. In this context, there has been increase in the number of South Korean tourists coming to Türkiye due to the revitalized relations, and in 2023, out of a total of 50 million tourists coming to Türkiye, 160,000 came from South Korea, marking a 60 percent increase. As a result, the education of Koreans in Turkish culture has emerged as an area of cultural interaction (Pakt Agency, 2022). Yunus Emre Institute (YEE), the "official language teaching" institution

of Türkiye, which started its operations in Seoul in early 2019, organizes both online and face-to-face training to teach Turkish culture or Turkish in this country. Established in 2009, YEE today has more than 80 branches around the world. The initiative aims to support Turkology departments and Turkish language education, in addition to Turkish language teaching through collaborations with educational institutions in different countries. The Korean Cultural Center in Ankara operates in the same way as the YEE, providing Korean language instruction and workshops on Korean culture for Turkish citizens, as well as scholarships for Korean and Turkish students to pursue university, master's, and doctoral studies. However, Korean Studies in Türkiye and Turkish Studies in Korea have not yet reached the desired level. The Asian Studies MA programs, available at METU, Boğaziçi University, and Ankara Social Sciences University, as well as the Interdisciplinary Asian Studies PhD Program at Erciyes University, provide graduate education opportunities for students interested in Korea. In Korea, three universities—Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies, and Seoul National University—have Turkology departments (Çelik & Yücel, 2023, p. 167; Li, 2015, pp. 167-171).

In this article, the method of the study will first be described, followed by an explanation of the theoretical framework. In this regard, language-culture relationships in foreign language teaching, transfer of target culture, and integration of common cultural elements into language teaching processes are considered foundational. In order to test the theoretical assumptions, the first step is to attempt to identify the common cultural elements between Turkish and Korean cultures in the field. This study investigates to what extent these common cultural elements are reflected in the language and cultural activities of Yunus Emre Institute in Seoul (abbreviated as "YEE-S"). This analysis is concluded with findings, discussion, and recommendations.

### Research Method

The main research method in this study is document analysis. In studies conducted with document analysis, primarily, resource scanning and collection of appropriate sources are of great importance (Mogalakwe, 2006; McCulloch, 2004). In this scientific process, the researcher needs to reach reliable, sufficient and accurate sources. This research, which will be conducted both theoretically and as a field study, will utilize sources obtained in the final analysis to advance the study. The researcher collects various documents as part of the primary research data source for the main problem of the study and examines them in depth. Then, the necessary documents are categorized, and the main structure of the study is created. This

method is generally accepted as a complement to other research methods in the literature (Merriam, 2009). On the other hand, an increase in the application of this method has been observed in social sciences in recent years.

Within the framework of this research, it should be stated that "in order to ensure validity and reliability in the document analysis method, instead of only examining the documents, it is necessary to try to interpret them together with their source and the way they were formed, to verify the results obtained from the documents from different sources and, when necessary, to use methods other than document analysis, and as in all research methods, to strictly adhere to research standards and ethics in document analysis" (Sak et al., 2021, p. 228). Accordingly, not only Turkish sources but also Korean sources were examined. Common elements in Turkish and Korean cultures were investigated, and attempts were made to identify them. After identifying common elements, the focus was on whether these were used in language learning. The theoretical framework was investigated in detail and found to be up-to-date based on current world literature. Within the scope of the field study, both written and web resources of Seoul Yunus Emre Institute were examined. The press releases of this institution's authorities were read. People actively used the internet and watched YouTube content. For example, the video published by Afyon University (2023) provides original information. Cultural and political documentaries and films about the relationship between South Korea and Türkiye were watched. Relevant studies of Koreans were also obtained. The accuracy and ethics of all sources were checked. In controversial issues, possibilities were emphasized rather than certainties. In total, resources related to English, German, and Turkish were used. The study was created based on these data.

The relationship between common cultural elements and language learning is a widely studied topic in the relevant literature, with a considerable number of resources available. However, there is not yet enough research from different countries and languages. This study exemplifies this deficiency. In clear terms, one of the institutions that plays the most active role in teaching Turkish in Korea is the Seoul Yunus Emre Institute. This study examines this institution for the first time in the literature.

The research question in this study is as follows: How can Turkish institutions establish a cultural interaction with Koreans in teaching Turkish as a foreign language? Within the framework of this question, four main research models stand out in comparative cultural linguistics studies:

1. The Communicative Situations Description Model: Focuses on ritualized communicative situations in different structured languages (e.g., ceremonies, deaths, births).
  2. The CV Identification Model: Aims to identify eigen words in different structured languages.
  3. The Model of Description in the Context of Social and Psychological Processes: Explores the use of taboos in different languages.
  4. Model for Understanding Modes of Address: Vocatives and address expressions used by people from languages with different structures are analyzed (Alimjanova, 2016, p. 117).
- Taking the above models into account, we attempt to identify the common elements in Turkish and Korean cultures to be used in Turkish language education.
- Research on Koreans' Turkish experience in the context of foreign language education is still superficial.

### **Theoretical Framework: The Place of Culture in Language Teaching and the Role of Cross-Cultural Commonalities**

After 2000, culturolinguistics emerged as the intersection of linguistics and culturology. Culturology examines the relationship and interaction between language and culture by considering linguistic and extra-linguistic units as a whole. Comparative culturolinguistics analyzes the relationship and interaction between language and culture across two or more languages using an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates scripts and methods (Alimjanova, 2016, p. 2). The related literature mostly focuses on topics such as the basic concepts, methods, theories, models, and connotations of culturolinguistics. Some scholars, such as Humboldt, Grimm, Potebnya, Kashgarli Mahmud, Bally, and Arginbayev, pioneered the development of culturolinguistics as a unique discipline. Tolstoy, Yu. Stepanov, Teliya, Shmelev, and Apresyan, who analyzed cultural reflections within the linguistic field, advanced these studies. There is no clear consensus among researchers on the concepts of culturolinguistics. Nevertheless, the number and importance of culturolinguistic studies that help intercultural communication are increasing worldwide (Sharifian, 2015; Everett, 2012).

Language and culture are two interconnected concepts. When cultural elements are not taught sufficiently, the learner's speaking a foreign language can be nothing more than expressing the concepts they see from their own cultural framework with different symbols. Culture is the ways of behaving, living, and speaking that an individual acquires, consciously or unconsciously, in the society from which he or she belongs from birth. Language, on the other

hand, is one of the most important means by which culture expresses itself and enables the transfer of culture to future generations (Öztürk, 2023, pp. 17-19).

There are two main factors related to culture in language learning. The first is the individual's own culture, called the source culture, in which they were born and raised. Second, it is the target culture with which he/she interacts in the learning/teaching process. Another important point is the international sphere, which lies outside the intersection and combination of the source and target cultures. In foreign language teaching, culture is generally formed on the basis of source, target, and international cultures (Iriskulova, 2012).

Since the cultures in which people grow up are different, understanding each other's cultures will facilitate communication and prevent possible misunderstandings and problems that may arise. For this reason, one of the topics to be discussed is how cultural interaction takes place when learning a foreign language. During this information transfer, it should be emphasized to the students that no culture should be perceived as superior or inferior to another, and that any differences may also be the case in the target language. When the language and the culture to which the language belongs are taught together, students gain knowledge about ways of life, understand how variables such as gender, social class, and social position are reflected in people's speech and behavior, and develop the ability to compare how to react in similar situations in the target culture and in their own culture (Rehman & Umar, 2019). Ignoring the native culture of the student in language teaching can lead to negative consequences when the student finds himself in a completely unfamiliar environment. In addition, the presence of the local culture appears to involve students in comparing the source and target cultures and making cognitive inferences, such as finding similarities and differences between these cultures (Iriskulova, 2012, p. 3).

There are three views in the literature on how cultural content in foreign language teaching materials can ensure language learning success: "The first view is that teaching the culture of the target language along with the language will lead to language learning success, increased comprehension of the target language, and proficiency in the target language" (Nault, 2006, p. 316; Tseng, 2002, p. 13). The second view is that it is right for language learners' own local culture to predominate over that of the target language, especially when the content is written by local authors. Proponents of the second view, argue that it is necessary to reflect more on the source cultural content in language teaching (Kramsch, 1993, p. 205). The third view is that "cultural elements from all countries where the target language is spoken should be incorporated into language teaching in order to develop an intercultural perspective" (Dong,



2005, p. 56; cited in Açık, 2020, p. 92). In any case, the transfer of the target culture - be it through specificities or commonalities - is important.

How should the target culture be transmitted? From the very first day, teachers introduce posters, maps, pictures, paintings, charts, real objects, CDs, and other audio-visual materials of the target culture into the classroom and try to create a mental image of the target language and culture. Thus, they involve students in the learning process. The activities used in language teaching can vary depending on the age and level of the learner. For example, national sports, religious or national holidays, and songs can be used for children and intermediate level learners. In all cases, however, the foreign language classroom should become a cultural island (Shirvan & Taherian, 2015). In this way, the learner will be able to understand the purpose of the expressions in both the first language and the foreign language. In addition, the internet and television can be used to support students in learning the target culture. Comparative research on the two cultures is also important.

It is necessary to be careful about the use of differentiated and common cultural elements in foreign language education. For example, in Spanish culture, a bull may be seen as strong but not smart or skillful, so the concepts of "savagery" or "brutality" may be interpreted differently by other nations in the world; consequently, "bloody" bullfights can be observed in this country (Lado, 1986). On the other hand, in Indian culture, the cow is a highly respected creature for its contribution to human life and cannot be mocked. It is also true that there are similarities between languages. For example, in Russian, the expression "When the crab whistles on the mountain ("Kogda rak na svistnet")" means something that will never happen, i.e., never. In English, this idiom takes the form of "When the pigs fly"; in Turkish, "When the fish come out of the sea"; or in Kyrgyz, "When the donkey's tail touches the ground" (Küçükler, 2012).

The initial anxiety level of individuals learning a foreign language is highest. As individuals get acquainted with the culture whose language they are learning and discover common cultural values, this level of anxiety decreases. A common culture is formed by recognizing, synthesizing, and making sense of the same things from both cultures. In other words, "common culture" emerges over time as a result of the encounter between the source culture and the target culture (Ajideh & Panahi, 2016).

However, when the literature on global foreign language education is examined, the general observation is that the language learner's own cultures of origin or international cultures are rarely used in textbook materials (Alonso, 2017; Liu & Laohawiriyanon, 2013; Wu, 2010; Akkoyunlu, 2019). Therefore, instead of an approach in which only the target culture or the



source culture is predominant, it is beneficial to balance the two cultures and international cultures by adding common cultural elements to language teaching processes.

### **Material and Findings: Turkish Teaching as a Foreign Language in South Korea, Shared Cultural Elements and Yunus Emre Institute**

If South Koreans see common elements between their own culture and Turkish culture in their language learning process, their motivation to learn Turkish will increase. For this reason, the similarities between the two cultures will first be highlighted by "selecting them for illustration." Then, the extent to which these elements are used in teaching Turkish will be analyzed at the Yunus Emre Institute in Seoul.

#### ***Common Features of Turkish and Korean Cultures***

In a literature review of this topic, which requires a deep and lengthy background study, the following seven areas of similarity between the two cultures can be highlighted (De Mente, 2012; Hoare, 2012; Brenner & Stocke, 2012; Sohn, 2005; Park, 2000).

#### ***Family Life***

In both societies, family is valued; members live together as a large family. In both societies, "respect" for parents and taking care of them is common, even if they live separately from their parents (Türközü, 2012). Again, it is seen that there are many kinship addresses in both countries: "In Korean, unlike in Turkish, 'sister' and 'brother' addresses change according to gender. While girls address their older sisters as 'onni' and boys address their older sisters as 'nuna,' girls address their older brothers as 'oppa' and boys address their older brothers as 'hyung' (Karacan, 2021, p. 201).

#### ***Food Culture***

Despite the differences that exist, the following similar dishes can be selected (Korea.net, 2023):

Gimchi: A traditional Korean pickle. There are many varieties. The type called Beçu, made from 'cabbage', is similar to sauerkraut in Türkiye.

Gocuçang: It is used to color and flavor dishes. Similar to pepper paste in Türkiye.

Hobagcon: A combination of zucchini and various vegetables, this dish is similar to Turkish hash browns.

Mandu: It is similar to manti in Turkish food culture.

when we look at the Korean dining table, it is reminiscent of the table setting in Turkish culture (Korea Herald, 2016).

### *Birth Tradition*

It is observed that some beliefs about the period of pregnancy are the same: if a woman's belly is pointed, she will give birth to a boy; if it is flat, she will give birth to a girl; you cannot go to a funeral home during pregnancy; if you criticize someone during pregnancy, the baby will look like that person; if chicken meat is eaten, the baby's skin will be rough like chicken skin; a pregnant woman who wants to eat sour foods will have a daughter. The naming of the baby, after the grandfather, is similar in both countries. It is observed that the baby is swaddled in both countries. In Turkish traditions, a practice called tooth bulgur or tooth wheat is performed when the baby's first tooth appears. This tradition is quite similar to the "dolcançi" ceremony that used to be organized in Korea to celebrate the first year of the baby's birth (Giray, 2012, pp. 197-198).

### *Wedding Tradition*

Although the wedding traditions of both countries are very different, some aspects are similar, such as the tradition of dowry, and bundles. Dowry refers to the money or goods that the bride brings with her when she gets married. In Korea, the idea that the boy takes the house and the girl brings the dowry has recently become dominant; this approach can also be observed in Türkiye. When the wedding date is set, gifts are sent from the groom's house to the bride's house in Korean, and Turkish culture. In Korea, the gifts are called "ham," and the people who take the gifts to the girl's house are called "hamcigi" or "hamcinabi." Just like in Türkiye, those who take the gifts are given tips from the girl's house. The gifts are then taken out and shown to the guests (Kim, 2024; Kendall, 1996).

### *Traditional Holiday Tradition*

One of the most important holidays in Korea is "Sollal," the celebration of the New Year. Koreans, just like Turks, celebrate this day with their families. Sollal dishes are prepared, and after the meal, the younger ones bow to their elders and greet them, similar to the custom of kissing hands in Türkiye. This greeting is called "sebet don". Here, as in Türkiye, the elders give pocket money to the little ones. In Korea, as in Turkish culture, Koreans visit the graveyards of their dead ancestors and clean the weeds on the graves during the "Chuseok" holiday (Seoul Metropolitan Government, n.d.; Harmancı, 2014).

### *Children Games*

Mal Tagi Nori: A game played by children divided into two groups. This game is the same as the "long donkey" game in Türkiye, but here, the word "horse" is used instead of "donkey."

Gonginori: A traditional game played with five pebbles the size of marbles. The Gonggi game is similar to the "five stone" game in Turkish culture.

Pengi Chigi: It is a game played by Korean children that involves spinning their tops on ice and soil. With the help of a rope wrapped around the spinning top, it is thrown to the ground, and the person who spins it the longest wins the game. This is very similar to the Turkish "topaç game."

Gullongşö Gulligi - Circle Game: It is the same as the hoop game played by children in Türkiye in the old years (Karacan, 2021, pp. 210-213).

### *Superstitions*

The following are some examples of similar superstitions in both cultures:

- Among the Turks, there is a belief that when whistling at night, beings such as jinn and devils may come, and a bad event will occur. In Korea, whistling at night means that a snake will come and bring bad luck.
- In the culture of both countries, the idea that cutting one's fingernails at night will bring bad luck is dominant.
- According to the beliefs of both countries, one should not jump over a child lying on the ground (Karacan, 2021, pp. 210-214).

Overall, the shared cultural elements between Turkish and Korean cultures reflected (selectively) in this study can be utilized in Turkish language teaching activities for Koreans: In the context of family life, respect for parents and kinship addresses (e.g., 'onni,' 'nuna,' 'obba' or 'hyong') will be of interest to Korean citizens. Under the heading of food culture, gimchi, gocuçang, hobagcon, mandu dishes, and the figure of the floor table can be directly evaluated. As a birth tradition, common beliefs about the period of pregnancy or the "dolcanchi" ceremony can be highlighted. Within the scope of wedding traditions, dowry and bundle traditions can be conveyed through the terms "ham" and "hamcigi". Under the heading of holiday traditions, similar practices such as "Sollal," "sebet don," and "Chuseok" can be emphasized. As children's games, the four games described in the text will also arouse interest. The superstitious beliefs can be illustrated with various examples to draw attention to common cultural beliefs.

### *Language and Culture Activities of Seoul Yunus Emre Institute*

With the establishment of the Yunus Emre Institute in Seoul (YEE-S), the most populous city in South Korea, many types of activities, such as Turkish education, certificate programs, scholarships, and summer schools for those who want to study in Türkiye have been initiated. In the following mainly the linguistic-cultural activities of YEE-S in Turkish language education and interaction with the target culture will be highlighted. The information under both sub-headings is compiled from over 50 activities of YEE-S, from its website (<https://seul.yee.org.tr/tr>).

### *Activities in the Context of Teaching Turkish*

For Koreans interested in learning Turkish, YEE-S began offering the first Turkish language courses in May 2019. Korean citizens of all ages interested in learning Turkish applied for these courses. In the first phase, beginner-level courses were offered. These courses were not restricted to Seoul. Online Turkish courses were offered to students in many cities in South Korea. Two students who completed these courses and passed the final exam were awarded round-trip tickets to Türkiye.

In November 2019, Yunus Emre Institute and Hankuk University of Foreign Studies jointly organized the "II International Turkish Speaking Competition." Many students from Busan University and Hankuk University participated in this competition.

To improve the Turkish education of Korean students, a "Turkish Speaking Club" was organized for two months in November and December 2019. The students' feedback was positive. Another version of the "Turkish Conversation Club" program brought together not only Korean students who were learning Turkish, but also students from other backgrounds. The event was attended by 40 students who discussed the topic "The place of technology in our lives today and in the future." Since the event was broadcast live on social media, hundreds of viewers had the opportunity to participate.

The "Asian Countries Turkish Speaking Club," organized in May 2020, brought together many Asian students.

In August-September 2020, YEE-S cooperated with the Special Foreign Languages Promotion Agency, which operates under Hankuk Foreign Studies University, to teach Turkish more effectively in South Korea. The program provided 70 trainees with free Turkish courses.

The online event organized as part of the "2021 Yunus Emre and Turkish Year" brought together many Turkish-speaking participants from different countries.

In December 2022, the fourth "Turkish Speaking Competition" was organized in cooperation with Yunus Emre Institute, and the Alumni Association of Hankuk Foreign Studies University.

### *Cultural Activities*

YEE-S works in many cultural fields, such as education, music, film, dance, writing, and painting.

Durmuş Ersin Erçin, then Ambassador of Türkiye to Seoul, In Chul Kim, Rector of Hankuk Foreign Studies University, and Vagif Jafarov, Deputy Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Seoul, along with many faculty members, attended the introductory YEE-S dinner for South Koreans. Here, South Korean students performed Harmandalı, one of the Turkish folk dances.

Again, on April 16, 2019, a "Traditional Turkish Handicrafts Workshop" was held in Seoul. Here, Korean citizens were taught the art of Ebru and Calligraphy. The works of Korean students and faculty members were exhibited at Düzce University, a state institution in Türkiye. To increase the interest of South Korean students, a Turkish Folk Dance workshop was opened on October 15, 2019. Korean students were trained in sword and shield; another folk dance. As a result of the training, Korean students had the opportunity to visit the historical city of Bursa in Türkiye, where they presented a joint dance performance with a Turkish group.

On May 21, 2019, YEE-S represented Türkiye at the 8th Global Harmony Festival, where it had the opportunity to introduce marbling art and Turkish coffee to Koreans.

On 20-21 June 2019, a "Children's Festival" was organized for Korean children at Doosan Elementary School in Seoul. Korean children experienced street games played by Turkish children, such as hopscotch and spin the top.

YEE-S, together with the Embassy of Türkiye in Seoul, participated in the "II Public Diplomacy" event organized by the Korea Foundation on 24-26 October 2019. Göbeklitepe: People and Life" photo exhibition was held, and Turkish delight and Turkish coffee, two of the traditional food and beverage delicacies, were served at the promotional stand.

Since June 30, 2020, the "Global Culture and Education Program" has been providing face-to-face education to Koreans, despite the pandemic,. The program was held at the Songdo Campus International Education Center in cooperation with YEE-S, Yeonsu Municipality, and Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. In these programs, Koreans received various seminars from experts from Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. The program also presents important works in Turkish. For example, Prof. Nan-ah Lee, who translated all of Orhan Pamuk's works into

Korean, also gave seminars in the program. The third edition of the program was held in April 2022.

In December 2020, the "World Mirror - Mirror Man Statue," titled by South Korean artist Young-ho Yoo, was erected in Bursa National Garden as a symbol of the brotherhood between the two countries. Bursa is the third city to host this statue.

On March 18, 2021, the Çanakkale martyrs of the Turks were commemorated at the Turkish Martyrdom at the UN Korea Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea.

### *Analysis of Activities-Findings*

Language activities in a nutshell;

- The target cultural groups and the international context were considered.
- Collaboration was established with South Korean institutions.
- Attempts were made to teach Turkish through regional Asian communities and online environments.
- Turkish-speaking groups were formed.
- Both global, (technology) and local (Yunus Emre) topics were selected to generate motivation.
- Physical experience of the source culture was provided by giving gifts.
- From a theoretical framework, the main issue that is missing is that the target culture institutions, actors, and speech topics are not used more frequently in these activities.

Cultural activities in a nutshell;

- Cultural activities have remained more oriented towards promoting Turkish culture, as these activities have been relatively recent, starting from 2019 onwards.
- The participation of other Turkish states in the activities gave South Koreans the opportunity to become better acquainted with different Turkish cultural approaches.
- Local Korean collaborations are vital and have already been implemented; however, these collaborations should be diversified in both subject and institutional contexts.
- The presentation of the work of Korean students and faculty members in Türkiye, and the conduction of a joint activity (dance), served as an appropriate source-target culture meeting.
- The use of 'coffee-lokum' in conveying the source culture is accurate; however, examples from the common food culture described above could have also been given. As a

whole, the common cultural elements identified above could have been covered under this heading.

- Common games - identified in this article - could have been included in the activities carried out with Korean children.
- Topics originating from the target culture should also be included among the main themes of the activities.
- It was appropriate to convey historical common values to the language learner.
- As a localization of the source culture, the promotion of Turkish works by Korean actors is positive for language teaching.
- The sculpture of a South Korean artist in Türkiye can be read as a localization of the target culture in the society of the language being taught on the one hand and expansion of the common interaction area on the other.

## Conclusion

The emergence of cultures and languages and their interaction with each other in the historical process is research areas of both culturology and linguistics. Today, the number of cultural-linguistic studies is increasing to reveal the specificities, transitions, or commonalities between different languages. These studies bring innovations and advancements to language teaching. In other words, teaching the target language along with the target culture, basing the language on socio-cultural contexts, helps teach meaningful language, but it is not enough on its own. The way to become competent in the target language is to include the source and target cultures in the second/foreign language pedagogy. It is noteworthy that the materials in which only the source culture or intercultural content is selected as a source of activity in language teaching are not functional, as indicated by conducted studies. Clearly, in all kinds of language teaching environments where cultural representations are exhibited (textbook, classroom, activity, out-of-class environments), the balanced distribution of source and target cultures is important. This study ultimately focuses on teaching Turkish to Koreans through the interaction of Turkish and Korean cultures. How does the Yunus Emre Institute Seoul in South Korea realize the transfer of the target culture in language teaching? Can the language learner see themselves in the cultural-academic activities carried out? At this point, it was found that in order to be more effective in teaching Turkish as a foreign language in South Korea, it is necessary to integrate more common elements from Turkish and Korean culture into the teaching activities and to include more of the learner's culture in the process. For this reason, the micro field of the study



emphasizes increasing similar regional-cultural theoretical and field studies in the more effective teaching of Turkish in the global arena. It suggests that relevant language teaching policies, institutions, and personnel should adapt to new methods. From this perspective, in the study's macro field, the theoretical and practical research methods and findings provide a sampling from the field of foreign language teaching studies among different cultures.

Studies in the cultural field show that Korea and Türkiye have different and similar characteristics. Based on the theoretical framework (explained in this text), it has been found that there are similarities or beliefs between the two cultures regarding family life, food culture, birth traditions, traditional holidays, children's games, and superstitions. In the context of the place of culture in teaching Turkish to Koreans and in the target-source-international culture triangle, these similarities should be more thoroughly considered. The more the language learner increases their motivation and reduces their anxiety, the more successful they will be. Finally, Yunus Emre Institute has not only taught but also promoted Turkish culture. Although it has not yet reached the desired level, it has managed to attract the attention of Koreans with its various workshops. The most fundamental deficiency in all activities is that the target culture is not sufficiently covered in language studies. Therefore, studies of the target culture should be part of the diversified programs.

Besides, in foreign language learning processes, some important factors such as the difficulty of the language being learned, the cultural features of the language, and the desire of the language learner are prominent. The level of education, purpose, and motivation of the language learner are among the most critical parameters of successful language learning. Neither the shared cultural aspects regarding the culture of the language being learned nor characteristics of the person can be considered here. When these theoretical findings are adapted to the current field research, it is seen that although YEE-S takes the common elements of Turkish and Korean culture and the motivation of the language learner into consideration, its language learning activities are not sufficient and need to be developed.

Based on this study, similar studies can be further explored at two levels. First, it should be clarified whether the language teaching activities and model of the Yunus Emre Institute in Seoul are used in other language teaching institutions in Türkiye or in institutions abroad that teach Turkish. Secondly, it is important to investigate, whether language teaching institutions in the world carry out similar activities. For example, Germany tries to teach its own languages worldwide through the Goethe Institute, while China tries to teach its own languages through the Confucius Institute. There are some studies on the language teaching activities of these

institutions, which provide a comparative perspective in the context of this study. Such language teaching institutions around the world generally carry out similar practices and draw attention to the importance of target and source culture interaction in foreign language education. The findings in Seoul could be a model for other public and private Turkish activities. It can also be a source of inspiration for similar language teaching institutions around the world that do not implement these practices.

To sum up, in this study, which compares the source and target cultures based on their common elements, it is hypothesized that revealing the differences between the two cultures can provide a better understanding of the target culture. And in cases where what exists in the source culture does not have a counterpart in the target culture or vice versa, how to proceed is one of the issues that should be considered in the transfer of the target culture. One recommendation is that more cultural content from the source culture be added to the materials used to develop the intercultural communication competence of language learners.

In the end, the following suggestions can be made for language-culture interactive foreign language teaching studies in the literature:

- Language teaching is also a culture teaching. In foreign language teaching, culture should not be seen as a separate element from language.
- In language teaching, transferring the target culture and raising international awareness are one of the basic inputs of the process.
- Intercultural skills in language teaching include the ability to reconcile source and target cultures, to identify and use a variety of strategies that involve cultural sensitivity and interacting with individuals from other cultures, to fulfill the role of a cultural mediator, to overcome intercultural conflicts and misunderstandings, and to be successful in everyday relationships. Otherwise, not being competent in both the target culture and the native culture will lead to misunderstanding or pragmatic failure.
- In teaching culture, the goal is not cultural assimilation but cultural awareness. For this, the language teaching institution or the teachers should know the culture of both languages.
- A person who is only or mostly exposed to their own culture is unlikely to fully grasp a foreign language with a different cultural structure.
- As the elements of the target culture are recognized over time, potential anxieties about language learning decrease, and motivation increases. Therefore, language learning activities that are not infused with the target culture deprive the language learner of additional motivation.

- A successful method in foreign language teaching is to identify the common cultural characteristics and use them in language teaching materials. This requires a meticulous examination of both cultures and the identification of their similarities and differences.
- When teaching a foreign language, differentiated cultural elements such as food culture, marriage, death, and belief traditions should not be reflected in an exclusionary manner. On the contrary, the process can be made more relatable through shared elements.
- Localized materials should also be considered in foreign language teaching, and cultural activities should be developed in which learners can compare the phonological, morphological, semantic, and syntactic features of their source language and the target language.

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