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Ayhan DİRİL

Gaziosmanpaşa Üniversitesi, İngilizce, ayhandiril@yahoo.com

TEACHING TURKISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TO FOREIGNERS THROUGH A TURKISH FILM

Abstract

The aim of this study is to present some language supporting samples through a Turkish film called 'Mucize' to foreign students who study Turkish as a foreign language. In the article, examples are presented to show the characteristics and knowledge of Turkish culture supported with the use of Turkish language and cultural sayings. Activities are presented in three categories as pre-viewing, while viewing and post-viewing. There will be dialogues to develop their speaking abilities and enrich their vocabulary with the authentic language. A bridge will be formed between the different cultures with the presented samples in Turkish language.

Keywords: Turkish culture, Films,

TÜRK DİLİ VE KÜLTÜRÜNÜN YABANCILARA BİR FİLM VASITASIYLA ÖĞRETİMİ

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkçeyi yabancı dil olarak çalışan yabancı uyruklu öğrencilere ,Mucize adlı filmde dili destekleyici örnekler sunmaktır. Türk dili ve kültürel deyimleri kullanımı ile birlikte Türk kültürüne dair bazı özellik ve bilgi veren örnekler sunulacaktır. Aktiviteler; film öncesi, film süresinde ve sonrasında olmak üzere üç grupta sunulacaktır. Konuşma beceri ve kelimelerini geliştirmek için gerçek dil ortamından konuşmalar sunulacaktır. Sunulan örneklerle farklı kültürler arasında bir köprü kurulacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı, aktivite, film

Introduction

The use of Turkish films in teaching Turkish to foreigners can be effective. A Turkish film will be a great support to foreign students with some good planned activities. The learners will be using not only their eyes but also their ears which are basic in learning a language. With a good selection of a film the motivation will increase and the learning stage will be more effective by the movement of the students. The foreign learners will probably have very limited vocabulary and conversational skills. But the films with their extensive use of Turkish in real life will increase the performance of cultural work too. It will attract learners and entertain them with its interesting story. It will draw them into the world presented in the film. The more they are interested in the plot the more they will be eager to talk about it. Learners will be familiar with Turkish language and culture and prepare to change their behaviors in a positive way in language learning. It is one of the necessities of teaching cultural conditions to use the films. Because in textbooks Turkish learners cannot view the life in Turkey from a broad window. So this Turkish film will play an important role to present the learners a broad way of our culture and it will be a springboard to form discussion groups which will be an opening to a new culture and provide visual and auditory incentive. The cultural background of Turkish will be understood better. To be aware of the culture in films holds great importance in language learning. It aims that the learner will have some idea on socio-cultural and life in Turkey through the films which reflect the culture. This awareness will activate to find the differences of their past knowledge and the new cultural information they get from this film. With the communicative involvement of the learners the learning process will be more effective.

Previewing activities

The purpose of these activities is to increase the motivation and interest of the learners about the film. As a starter the learners are asked to discuss the meaning of 'Mucize'(the miracle).Then extra questions can be asked as guidance namely 'Have you ever lived and had an experience like a miracle? Why do you think it was called Miracle?' etc.

The advertising poster is shown to the students and asked what the story can be about. Some photos of the characters are shown and asked to guess about their personalities.

The students may present their guesses about the story of the film and relationship between the characters. They are guided by the teacher to guess the title and the poster of the film. By doing this the learners will enlarge their vocabulary, share ideas and form their creativity.

While-viewing activities

The purpose of these activities is to experience Turkish culture in an authentic way through the film and develop their listening skills. Also it is aimed to broaden their imagination and give an idea about the language used, its richness in use, and make some critics. During these activities the learners will be able to learn some body language and gestures which are just specific to our culture, life in a local area and also education problems in that area too.

Teaching cultural sayings and phrases

Idioms, as much as proverbs, include traces of a nation's culture. They are like a nation's fingerprints. The importance of teaching proverbs and idioms stems from this very deep meaning

that they have. "Proverbs and idioms contain a nation's culture, thoughts, life experiences, traditions, morals and world perspective. (Atagul, 2016:373)

While a Turkish learner is watching a film for the first time he may face some cultural sayings or phrases which are confusing and specific to Turkish culture so they may have difficulty to grasp the meaning by word by word translation. With the help of the film these sayings can be best observed and learned. Before viewing the film, the teacher may provide some introduction to the scene where the film was made.

Here are some pattern sentences from the film called 'Mucize'.

Sample saying 1: In the second minute (2:58th) of the film this sentence is used; 'Aklını peynir ekmekle mi yedin?' It has a close meaning to "did you lose your mind? Or Are you crazy?" in English.

When it is heard for first time by a Turkish learner it may sound meaningless to him. Translating the saying word by word would say "Have you eaten your mind with cheese and bread? 'which would totally seem confusing to the learner. When considering the events taking place in this scene it will be easy to understand that the actress is strongly objecting to the teacher so she must be criticizing him harshly by also using mimicry and hand movements.

Sample saying 2: Another saying (Kulağını iyi aç.)(34.52 min): When it is translated word by word it will be 'Open your ears wide'. In this scene the following words support the previous sentence by saying 'Listen to me carefully'. So it will add an extra focus on the meaning when teaching the usage to foreigners who are learning Turkish as a second language.

Sample saying 3: (42:45) 'Allah size zeval vermesin.' (Let Allah give you no downfall). This saying would have such a meaning in the second language as 'farewell, stay safe'. Considering the events in this part it will be clearly understood that it is used to wish the others safe travel as the villagers wave hands to the horsemen.

Sample saying 4 :(01:00)'Helal olsun!' (Let it be halal!) Used for 'Congratulations!'

Sample saying 5: 01:09) 'Hayrola?' (Let it be well)Used for asking "what is the news?"

Sample saying 6: (01:12) 'Gözün aydın!' Congratulations!

Sample saying 7 :(01:53)'Kurban olurum' (Let me be your sacrifice)It means: Please. In this scene the teacher is persuading the other character from committing suicide by also holding his arm he prevents him from jumping.

The teacher can make a sample dialogue in which these sentences are used and ask students to perform it in front of the class.

Sample dialogue:

Ahmet: Hayrola, Mahmut neden tedirgin görünüyorsun?(What's the news? Why do you look worried?)

Mahmut: Sınav soruları çok zordu.Notum düşük olduğu için okulu bırakmayı düşünüyorum.
(The test was difficult. As I got low grade I consider leaving the school.)

Ahmet: Aklını peynir ekmekle mi yedin? Kurban olurum, okulu bırakma sakın. Bak bu sene son sınıfın. (Are you crazy? Please, do not leave the school. This is your last class.)

Mahmut: Yok kesin kararlıyım. (I will certainly leave it.)

Ahmet: Kulağın iyi aç, Beni dinle.Bu senin son şansın okulu bırakırsan ailen ne kadar üzülür.
(Listen to me carefully! This is your last chance. If you leave it your family will be disappointed.)

Mahmut: Doğru söylüyorsun bunu düşünmemiştim.(This is true. I had not considered it.)

Teaching by mimics and body language

Mimic is the imitation of copy of actions, speech, etc. To copy or imitate a person closely, especially in speech, expression, and gesture. Body language is communication without words.

As the film is being watched the learners will realize some sayings or daily talks expressed by mimics they never met before. So using a film like that will give the learners opportunity to grasp the right use of them. The scenes in this film will provide them good examples to give a light. Here are some moments for learners to see how things are expressed and supported by mimics or gestures. . As all the students are expected to mimic the dialogues it will create a warm atmosphere in class too.

How to practice these samples:

The learners watch these scenes as many times as they wish and try to imitate the actions as shown in the film.

Sample sentences where mimics are used:

Sample 1. (Minute: 00:08) (Sen Kimsin?)(Who are you?)This is said in an angry way by shaking the face right and left fast.

Practice: The students practice saying these sentences to each other by using gestures. This will give them opportunity to learn the pattern by heart.

Sample 2. (Minunte: 00:18)(Maşallah) (May Allah preserve from the evil. It also means “wonderful”). By lowering the head down the meaning of this word is strengthened.

Sample 3. (Minute: 00:34)(Kabul ettik gitti!)(We agreed!) By moving the hand down with a smiling face to show happiness of the decision.

Sample 4. (Minute: 43:00) (Hoşgeldiniz!) (Welcome!) Said by lowering the head and body forward to show respect.

Sample 5. (Minute: 53.00) (Hadi gel içeri.) Come inside. In the film this is expressed by moving the head left side.

Sample 6. (Minute: 57:00)(Çıkın bakayım) (Go outside.)Moving the hands towards the door to mean “you go out”.



Teaching culture by scenes from the film

Exploration of the culture and society of a linguistic community has always been an implicit part of language teaching, and film offers an abundance of interesting perspectives on people, periods and places. Furthermore, film dialogue is unlike most of the somewhat idealized discourse provided in course books, in that it tends to reflect the whole gamut of social and regional variation in the language. (Bottomley and Haill, 2016:1)

Teaching a language means also teaching a culture through pictures and actions in the books or films which mean language and culture are related to each other sharply. That's why foreign language instructors prefer using native films in FL classes as a handy device. Through the films the learners can also have some information about the foreign culture, their customs and traditions which play a role of interaction between different groups. While viewing the film called 'Mucize' the learners will observe the visible cultural details such as body language, mimics and actions.

Here are some samples chosen from this film to teach some cultural values.

How to practice these samples:

The samples given below may be discussed in groups. The learners can discuss where they are practiced, how they are accepted in their community, if they are right or wrong etc.

Sample 1: Action is cutting a ribbon. In the 45th minute the teacher is cutting the ribbon to open the school building. This action may not be understood by foreigners. Using this film will teach them to show that Turkish people cut ribbons to make an opening of some new buildings.

Sample 2: Action is breaking a pitcher: In the 80th minute the groom is taking the bride to his home on the wedding day. The bride is breaking the pitcher at the door which is a tradition that other cultures don't have. In our culture it is believed that it brings good luck to their marriage.

Sample 3: Action is beheading the bird: In the 81st minute the groom is beheading the bird on the first night of the wedding. It is a way of taking the control and have authority. It also means the bride must be obedient to the groom.

Sample 4: Action is kissing a person on the cheeks: In the 34th minute the villager is kissing the male teacher on his cheeks. Normally if a man kisses another man it would not be tolerated by in another culture but in our culture it has totally have to do with love and respect.

Sample 5: Action is throwing sweet on the head of the bride on the wedding day: In the 79th minute the groom is throwing candies to the bride's head. It means the marriage should bring happiness to them; it should be as sweet as the candies.

Sample 6: Action is talking close to the visitor's mouth: In the 18th minute the bride to be is talking to the woman who has come to visit her to choose for her son. In the culture of this local area it gives a chance to check the listener if the speaker's breathe smells or not. If it smells it will be a disadvantage for her.

Sample 7: Action is the bride to be is walking along the line of a rope. In the 19th minute the girl is walking on the rope and other women are watching her walk to check if she has any problem with her legs or walking.

Sample 8: Action is asking the bride to be the number of suras in the holly book in 78th minute. In some parts of Turkey especially in Anatolian regions religious brides or bride grooms are

preferable .Here in the film the woman is testing knowledge of religion of the bride to be by asking the number of suras in Koran.

Sample 9: Action is drinking coffee all together at home of bride to be. When the bride groom's family visits the home of bride to be they drink coffee which is special to our culture. Here in 79th minute of the film the women are drinking coffee all together.

Post viewing activities

The purpose of these activities is to create discussions among the learners, express their personal views about the film and make critics, make summary depending on the level of the learners, practice and develop their speaking abilities, and discover what different aspects are stressed by forming discussion groups which will provide learners opportunities to practice, and learn how to use the Turkish language.

Practicing the conversation

In developing language skills, students inevitably develop skills which can be applied in order areas of learning. Imitation and dramatization are found to be a good way which offers advanced learners opportunities to present themselves in role-play. (Wang, 2009:182)

There is a proverb that says: I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. This is also so true to teach Turkish. The dialogues in the movie will create a realistic setting and represent everyday speech. After watching the film the selected part will add authenticity produced by native Turkish speakers to learning with proper guidance of the teacher. This will make students get maximum benefit from the dialogues. From this point of view this film will serve as the ground for oral presentations and provide perfect encouragement for oral practice and strengthen their capacities to communicate in Turkish.

How to practice this activity:

Any selected part of the film as shown below is practiced in pairs. The emphasis is put on the way it is said and the mimics and gestures. They imitate the characters in pairs. As the dialogues are performed in the class the students are also asked to make some substitution drills. The students try to make up more questions similar to the same structure. The activity will move the students to be productive.

(18:00)(Hoş geldiniz. Nasılsınız) (Welcome! How are you?)

(18:10)(İyiyiz, kızım) (We are fine, my daughter.)

(18:19)(Geç otur hele.)(Go and take a seat there.)

(19:00)(Kuru fasulye nasıl pişirilir?)(How can you cook dry beans? Tell us.)

(19:12)(Fasulyeler akşamdan suya konur.)(Dry beans are put into the dish in the evening.)

(19:31)(Şimdi kalk yürü!)(Now you get up and walk.)

(20:00)(Aç ağzını!)(Now, open your mouth!)

Discussing in groups

While viewing the film the teacher stops the scene he chooses and asks the learners to make guesses about the rest of the film which will give an opportunity to produce more sentences.

The sample activity 1:

In the 110th minute of the film the scene is paused. Then these sample questions can be produced for discussion.

Question 1: (Biraz sonra ne olacak?) What is going to happen next?

Question 2: (Adam nasıl hissediyor?) How does the man feel at that moment?

Question 3: (Sizce neden uçak uçuruyor?) Why do you think he is flying his paper plane?

Question 4: (Bu uçak sizce neyi simgeliyor?) What do you think this plane symbolize?

The sample activity 2:

In the 112nd minute the scene is paused and these sample questions can be asked.

Question 1: (Öğretmen, onu intihardan nasıl vazgeçirecek?)

How is the teacher going to persuade him from committing suicide?

Question 2: (Eğer onun yerinde olsaydınız nasıl intihardan vazgeçirirdiniz?)

If you were in his shoes what reasons would you find to stop him from suicide?

This kind of activity lets the learners make up as many sentences as they wish. Then they can compare their guesses or discuss the replies with each other to form a discussion environment which is necessary to develop their Turkish.

Watch the video and circle the correct answers

To perform this activity, the teacher prepares multiple optional questions about any scene he wishes. The activity should be done after the film has been watched. It will give them an opportunity to revise the plot of the film. For example the scene has been chosen between the minutes from 01:52 to 01:55. The questions can be reflected on the board and the learners try to reply them. Here are three sample questions translated into English.

The man went to hillside

a) on foot b) by car c) by horse d) by jogging

The teacher asked Aziz to express his problems by.....

a) writing a letter b) sending a telegram c) speaking d) whispering

Aziz opened the door of his parents and looked at them in tears because he wanted.....

a) to check if they were sleeping b) to see them for the last time c) to feel better d) to kiss them

Watch the film and complete the sentences

The teacher picks up some sentences to practice from the film. He distributes the sentence sheets with the missing words to the learners and asks them to fill in the blanks while watching the film. Sample sentences:

(Time: 14:35) Aranızda en.....(büyük) kim?

(Who is theone among you?) Answer is 'eldest'

(Time: 21:08) Acaba..... nasıl biridir? (damat)

(I wonder howis like?) (the groom)

(02:07) Sen.....oldun? (ameliyat mı?)

(Have you had an.....? (operation)

After checking the answers the learners are asked to repeat the whole sentence with the right pronunciation. This will be helpful for speaking activity.

Forming the plot of the film (As a pre and post watching activity.)



The pictures from the film are reflected on the board randomly and learners are asked to number them from 1 to 16. This activity can be done before the film is watched without giving the correct order. Then as post watch activity it can be done by individually or in groups. This will be a good activity to summarize the whole plot of the film to develop their speaking abilities. It can also be used as a memory game in pairs or groups. For example each learner can ask his partner questions such as 'what is happening in the first picture, who is riding a horse'...etc. The method: On the board a big circle can be drawn and in it the name of the film is written. Then sub branches (spider activity) are drawn to form the story as a whole for revision. From this point of view the method can be called semantic mapping.

Semantic method is used to motivate and involve students in thinking, reading and writing. It enhances vocabulary development by helping students to link new information with previous experience. This is done by making an arrangement of words into a picture, which has a key concept at the center and related words and concepts linked with the key concept.

(Mukoroli, 2009)

Pause and repeat the sentences

For many language learners' repetition is highly valued. During repetition the focus will be on the way the word is said and how it is said compared to what you hear other learners say.

While watching the film the pattern sentences are repeated over and over again by using the movement keys on the keyboard. For example during watching the selected scenes by pressing the left movement key over and over again the learner can have the chance to repeat the sentences at the same time.

Here are some sample sentences to be repeated.

In 13th minute: Demek seni çok sevdiler. (So they like you a lot.)

In the 35th minute: Parayı hemen yolla kız.(Send the money as soon as possible.)

In the 01:57th minute: Benimle dalga geçtiler senelerce. (They made fun of me for years.)

By this method the learner will have the chance to pronounce the sentences in the natural way they are uttered. They may keep on repeating as many times as they wish since the control is at the top of their fingers on the keyboard.

Dubbing

Dubbing which is a process used in filmmaking can be a good incentive to teach the language. With the help of this study the learners will improve their speaking in a warm and friendly environment. It will allow communication between individuals and help them develop their vocabulary and writing skills.

What method is used: The Direct Method is used because the learner is not allowed to use his or her mother tongue. Grammar rules are avoided and there is emphasis on good pronunciation. In general, teaching focuses on the development of oral skills. This method is based on the assumption that the learner experiences the new language in the same way as he experienced his mother tongue. This method intends for students to learn how to communicate in the target language and aims to build a direct relation between experience and language, word and idea, thought and expression

How to implement this activity: Students will have the printed version of the dialogue in their hands beforehand on paper. After watching the selected part in film the volume is turned down. While re- watching the scene the learners do the dubbing and record that part as a clip. When the process is done it will give them great confidence.

For example in this part of the film the speech between these lines can be fun (from minute: 08:49 to 09:45)

Man: Ne işin var burda? (What are you doing here?)

Teacher: Muallimim. (I am a teacher.)

Man: Demek muallimsen he? (So you are a teacher?)

Man2: Sen kimim dedin? (Who did you say you are?)

Teacher: Muallimim dedim.(I said I was a teacher.)

Man2: Yanlış duymadım demi? (Am I wrong?)

Man 2: Muallim bey, hoşgeldin sefa getirdin? (Welcome, welcome!),

Teacher: Hoş bulduk.Afedersiniz, mektep nerde? (Thank you. Where is the school?)

Finding the main idea

The ability to find the central thought or main idea of the film is important for the understanding of the whole film. It can open a way to cooperative learning process too by forming discussions groups. This activity can also be used as a revision after the film view has been completed. The students make guesses about the main idea of the film and tell them to the rest of the class individually or in groups.

Some sample main ideas can be like these: Importance of being a teacher, Importance of love.

Conclusion

This article focused on the need of using Turkish films to teach the cultural richness with some activities urging the teachers to find more useful activities like the ones presented here.

Films include authentic materials which should be effectively used in classes where Turkish is taught as a foreign language. With the help of the presented activities the Turkish learners will develop their vocabulary and their speaking abilities realizing the body language and mimicry too through this authentic environment. During the activities there will be warm atmosphere which will make learning process easier. According to the level of the learners different activities should be created by the teacher. Teachers can teach Turkish to foreign students not only the language but also the culture of the area where the film is made.

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