

# A Critical Look at the Phenomenon of 'A Mixed-Up Use of Turkish and English' in English-Medium Instruction Universities in Turkey

## Türkiye'de İngilizce ile Eğitim Veren Üniversitelerdeki 'Türkçe ve İngilizcenin Karma Kullanımı' Olgusuna Eleştirel Bir Bakış

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### ABSTRACT

In recent years, many Turkish universities, particularly the foundation universities in the private sector, have adopted English either in part or in full, as the language of instruction. In practice, this has meant that English should be the only working language of instruction in all academic activities, ranging from lectures, seminars, presentations to thesis defenses. However, little attention has been paid to the fact that the ideals of policymakers are not always in tune with the actuals of the policy implementers (Jenkins, 2014; Karakaş, 2016a). In the Turkish higher education, there is evidence that lecturers and students often breach the English-only policy by using a mixed-version of Turkish and English, which is widely known as Tarzanca (Tarzanish in English) in Turkey (Collins, 2010; Karakaş, 2016b). This critical review seeks to explore the phenomenon of Tarzanish in general and its use in English-medium instruction (EMI) universities in particular. While doing so, it is also aimed to find answers to the following questions: (1) How is Tarzanish conceptualized and described in the dictionaries, literature, online sources (e. g. blogs, discussion forums, etc.) and by scholars? (2) What are its descriptive characteristics in terms of morphology, syntax, and lexis? (3) Why do EMI people (lecturers and students) resort to it? Moreover, (4) what can be done to resolve the issue of Tarzanish in EMI universities? Drawing on the answers to these questions, the paper suggests that the notion of Tarzanish means different things to different people, lay people and EMI people resort to it for different purposes, and its use by lay people and EMI people show divergences due to some variables such as the level of language proficiency and the domains of language use (e.g., tourism, business, and higher education). Finally, some suggestions have been offered for the solution of the issue of Tarzanish in EMI universities.

**Keywords:** Higher education, English-medium instruction, Language policy and practice, A mixed-up language use, Tarzanish.

### ÖZ

Son yıllarda, özellikle de özel sektördeki vakıf üniversiteleri olmak üzere pek çok Türk üniversitesi, kısmen ya da tam olarak İngilizce'yi eğitim dili olarak benimsemişlerdir. Uygulamada bu, İngilizce'nin dersler, seminerler, sunumlar ve tez savunmaları olmak üzere tüm akademik etkinliklerde tek eğitim dili olması gerektiği anlamına gelmektedir. Bununla birlikte, politika belirleyicilerinin ideallerinin her zaman politika uygulayıcılarının gerçekleriyle uyumlu olmadığı gerçeğine çok az dikkat edilmiştir (Jenkins, 2014; Karakaş, 2016a). Türk yükseköğretiminde, öğretim elemanlarının ve öğrencilerin yaygın olarak Tarzanca (İngilizcesi Tarzanish) olarak bilinen Türkçe ve İngilizce karışımı bir dil kullanarak sadece İngilizce kullanımı politikasını sıklıkla ihlal ettiklerine dair kanıtlar bulunmaktadır (Collins, 2010; Karakaş,

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2016b). Bu eleştirel inceleme, genel olarak Tarzan-İngilizcesi olgusunu ve özellikle İngilizce ile eğitim veren üniversitelerdeki kullanımını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bunu yaparken de, şu sorulara cevap bulunması amaçlanmaktadır: (1) Tarzan-İngilizcesi sözlüklerde, literatürde, çevrimiçi kaynaklarda (blog, tartışma forumları vb.) ve araştırmacılar tarafından nasıl kavramsallaştırılır ve betimlenir? (2) Morfolojik, sözdizim, ve sözcük yapısı açılarından tanımlayıcı özellikleri nelerdir? (3) İngilizce ile eğitimin paydaşları (öğretim üyeleri ve öğrenciler) niçin buna başvurur? (4) İngilizce ile eğitim veren üniversitelerde Tarzanca sorununu çözmek için neler yapılabilir? Bu makale, bu sorulara verilen cevaplardan yola çıkarak Tarzanca kavramının farklı insanlar için farklı şeyler anlamına geldiğini, sıradan insanların ve İngilizce ile eğitimin paydaşlarının ona farklı amaçlar için başvurduklarını, sıradan insanların ve İngilizce ile eğitimin paydaşlarının Tarzanca kullanımının dil yeterliliği düzeyi ve dil kullanım alanı (örneğin turizm, işletme ve yükseköğrenim) gibi bazı değişkenlerden dolayı farklılık gösterdiğini belirtmektedir. Son olarak, Tarzanca sorununun İngilizce ile eğitim veren üniversitelerde çözümüne yönelik öneriler getirilmiştir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Yükseköğretim, Eğitim dili olarak İngilizce, Dil politikası ve uygulamaları, Karma dil kullanımı, Tarzanca

## INTRODUCTION

The teaching of academic subjects through the medium of English is a new and growing phenomenon in many countries of the expanding circle, particularly those of Europe (Dearden, 2014, 2015; Wächter & Maiworm, 2008, 2014). Nonetheless, Turkey enjoys a long history of introducing English-medium instruction (EMI) courses and programs at different levels of its education, but mostly at the tertiary level (Karakaş & Bayyurt, 2019). In Turkish higher education, EMI has been implemented in two ways so far. The first way of implementing EMI rests on “[t]he use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English” (Dearden, 2015, p. 2). That is, English is embraced in full across the disciplines as the sole medium of instruction. Turkey’s first EMI university in this sense is Middle East Technical University (METU) which was established in 1956 in Ankara. The second way of implementing EMI programs in Turkey is the use of English as the partial medium of instruction in certain disciplines, such as international relations, and electrical and electronics engineering (Başibek et al., 2014). Of these partial EMI universities in Turkey, Çukurova University is a representative example (e.g. Küçük, 2018).

As regards the sociolinguistic status of English, Turkey stands in Kachru’s (1985) expanding circle where English is widely studied as a compulsory school subject and has no colonial past under an Anglophone rule. Therefore, English in Turkey is not considered a relic of British or American colonization (Bear, 1985). However, some practices such as transition to English in education and establishing intensive preparatory English programs (PEP) for low proficiency students at EMI universities, have given rise to discussions that, in terms of language choice for instruction and language teaching policies and practices, Turkey seems to hold “a colonial mentality” (Boss, 1999, para. 15). Thus, it is considered to act like a country colonized by an English-speaking nation (Sinanoğlu, 1998, 2006).

What lies beneath such discussions is primarily the mismatch between policy decisions and ground realities. There is plentiful evidence that lecturers and students do not always use English in EMI classes, but instead frequently switch to Turkish, although these practices technically violate

institutions’ English only policies (Karakaş, 2016a, 2017). There is also evidence that lecturers and students frequently use “a mixed-up version of both languages that allows expression in neither”, more commonly known within Turkey as ‘Tarzanca’, or Tarzanish (Boss, 1999, para. 14). Given that such discussions and observations on the use of EMI in Turkey have been proceeding since almost the advent of EMI in Turkish education, few attempts have been made to address the key issues around the medium of instruction debate (e.g. Selvi, 2004). The current paper thus sets out to examine the mismatch between avowed EMI policy principles and actual practices (i.e. the use of Tarzanish), and address the concerns raised by the relevant parties by drawing on best practices to propose solutions to the mismatch between policy and practice in the Turkish context.

### English and English-Medium Instruction in Turkish Universities

In the domain of education, Western languages, such as French and German, have started to play a focal role in Turkey following the establishment of the new Turkish state in 1923 by replacing Arabic and Persian, as the new state emerged as a western-oriented country (Bear, 1985). English began to supplant German and French when Turkey established a regional alliance with the US towards the end of the 1950s after the end of World War II. Since Turkey’s alliance with the US in the region, English has widely spread across the country with a welcoming attitude, and become the most studied compulsory foreign language in the Turkish education system (Büyükkantarcıoğlu, 2004). Moreover, it has become “the most popular medium of education after Turkish” (Doğançay-Aktuna, 1998, p. 37) at different levels of education, now ranging from kindergartens, primary schools, high schools to higher education institutions, but mostly spearheaded by the private sector (Coleman, 2006; Dearden, 2014).

As this paper examines English and EMI at Turkey’s tertiary level education, I first provide an overview of the historical development of EMI at Turkish universities. As mentioned earlier, EMI is not a new vogue in Turkey because Turkish schools, especially those run by missionaries, have offered education in English for a long time, though mostly for the children of the minority groups and the elite Turkish families.

However, EMI in the early days of Turkey was mostly restricted to secondary level education. As for higher education, most resources refer to Bogazici University as the first EMI institution in Turkey as it was turned into a university from an American missionary school, Robert College, founded in 1863. However, since Robert College was handed down to the Turkish government in 1971 and renamed Bogazici University, some resources regard METU, established in 1956, as the first state-funded EMI institution of Turkey. With the initiative of the private sector that established Bilkent University in Ankara, the number of EMI universities reached three in 1984. These three universities offered EMI programs across their all disciplines in order to “enable students ... to access scientific and technological information published in English in their related disciplines” (Official Gazette, 1984, as quoted in Kırkgöz, 2005, p. 102). As can be understood, the transition to EMI in those universities at the time was an attempt to raise qualified human resources for the country in line with the country’s western-oriented policies.

A dramatic increase in the number of EMI programs occurred when the number of universities rose to 193 in 2014, now exceeding over 200 universities (Karakas, 2016a). It is because most newly established universities have turned to offer partial EMI courses and programs, and private institutions have largely adopted EMI-only policies in an effort to capitalize on English to vie for more fee-paying students. The exact number of EMI programs and courses are unknown, as universities keep changing the language of their programs from Turkish to English and at times, give up on English and switch back to Turkish. However, a recent study estimates that more than 20% of all undergraduate courses are delivered through different modes of EMI, mostly partially (Arik & Arik, 2014). This figure does not include EMI programs and courses at the post-graduate level, though, so the actual number of programs across all levels is probably much higher.

### Key Issues Around English-Medium Instruction

Unsurprisingly, debates and discussions about EMI have been never-ending in Turkey, often intense yet incredibly scientifically unsound. To borrow Selvi’s (2014, p. 7) words, the role of English as the language of instruction has “always been a matter of controversy in both academic and popular circles”. People of these circles generally fall into two groups: those who want EMI policies to continue at public and private institutions, and those who are against EMI and want Turkish to be the medium of instruction. The advocates of EMI policies, mostly scholars from the field of applied linguistics, emphasize the positive impacts of EMI on the development of students’ first language skills (Alptekin, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 2003; Kırkıcı, 2004) as well as intercultural competence and cognitive functioning, e.g. improvements in knowledge, intellectual strategies and practices (Soylu, 2003). Another supporting argument is that concentrated exposure to English in EMI classes can enable students to more effectively learn English compared to the more traditional way of teaching English at schools as a compulsory school subject (Sert, 2008; Zok, 2010). Empirical evidence to support this line of

argument is also available in the recent literature, showing students’ improvement in areas of vocabulary expansion (Lin & Morrison, 2010) and major language skills (Muda et al., 2012; Rogier, 2012).

The opponents of EMI policies come from different walks of life, including journalists, politicians, writers, lecturers, and students. Compared to the views voiced by the proponents, the opponents’ views on EMI are rather varied. Their views primarily revolve around four main concerns. The opponents are concerned about: (1) didactic and pedagogical issues, such as increased workload on lecturers (Arslantunalı, 1998; Dalkız, 2002; Köksal, 2002; Sert, 2008; Zok, 2010); (2) language and national loyalty issues, such as adverse effects of EMI policies on Turkish language, culture and identity (Boss, 1999; Duman, 1997; Sinanoğlu, 2000); (3) the issue of access to EMI institutions and the outcomes of access to such institutions for the public, which might give rise to the creation of a select class among the society that benefits from the knowledge of English as “cultural [and economic] capital par excellence and one of the most powerful forms of symbolic capital in the country” (Hu, 2009, p. 49); and (4) the planning and implementation dimensions of EMI.

The language policy and planning issue is the most pertinent one to the current research as the emergence of Tarzanish is a matter of mismatch between language policy and practice. Regardless of the mode of EMI courses/programs adopted, there is empirical evidence that most classes planned to be delivered in EMI turn out to be delivered in Turkish, or a hybrid form of Turkish and English, branded as Tarzanish (Collins, 2010; Karakas, 2016b). I turn now to consider this issue firstly from a general and descriptive perspective and then narrow it down to the institutions’ EMI-only policies in particular.

### Tarzanish Phenomenon in General

At its simplest, Tarzanish refers to “a way of communicating with a foreigner, involving the use of gestures and a few simple words (similar to that used by Tarzan and Jane)’ or ‘(speaking) using gestures and a few simple words, in the manner of Tarzan and Jane” (“Tarzan İngilizcesi Nedir”, 2018, p. para. 3). Obvious from this definition is that the naming of Tarzanish has been inspired by the manner of communication (‘Me, Tarzan – You, Jane’) between Tarzan, brought up by a gorilla in the African wilds, and Jane, an impeccably well-educated lady. Currently, the notion of Tarzanish (more commonly known as ‘Tarzanca’) does not have a comprehensive scope within the relevant literature, which has thus led to a scarcity of empirical research and theoretical discussion about it. Nonetheless, it is a very well-known linguistic phenomenon in the Turkish context often associated with the undesired outcomes of foreign language instruction in Turkish schools (Tüfekçioğlu, 1998; Vassaf, 2016). It has a wide coverage on the printed and online media, primarily the discussion boards, blogs, and opinion forums (see, for example Gezginsozluk, İngilizce Bankası Sözlük, Onedio, Sesli Sözlük). From the scarce academic literature and the discussions related to Tarzanca on blogs and discussion forums, it has become evident that

the term itself means different things to different people, and it has, thus, been approached from several perspectives depending on various factors (e.g. who uses it, what features it has, what functions it fulfils, why people resort to it).

### Is it a Pidgin or Not?

According to some scholars, Tarzanish should be regarded as a pidgin, i.e. “a language that emerges when groups of people are in close and repeated contact, and need to communicate with each other but have no language in common” (Velupillai, 2015, p. 15) as already defined in some online Turkish dictionaries, İngilizce Bankası Sözlük (“Tarzanca”, 2018b). As is clear from this description, Tarzanish is seen as a way of communication between Turkish people and foreigners. Such regular language contacts often occur in specific domains, such as tourism, aviation, and business. Perhaps, it is because of this reason that Velupillai (2015) goes as far to claim, despite not providing any concrete examples, that Tarzanish in Turkey is an example of tourist-pidgins as the Turkish people in the tourism sector and the tourists are in such a consistent interaction that a pidgin variety may emerge from this repeated interaction. To judge whether this claim actually applies to the case of Tarzanish, it is vital to see some examples of such form of language use and its features in certain work-sphere domains. For instance, in fixed locales like those of hotels, nightclubs, or restaurants, Turkish young people trying to approach foreign women have been reported to utter the following sentences in entries and

comments written in various discussion forums and blogs (e.g. Gezinsozluk):

Table 1 demonstrates that the language use draws primarily on non-grammatical English, with simple words and simple grammatical structures that obviously fail to convey the desired meaning to the interlocutors. It is also evident from the examples that users have a poor command of English, just exploiting their existing knowledge of English to pick up girls. Moreover, users of such form of language often garnish their language use with nonsensical facial and hand gestures along with some widely known simple words, such as ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘come’, ‘good’, ‘bad’, and ‘ok’ (“Tarzanca”, 2018a; “Tarzanca Konuştuğumuzun 11 Kanıtı”, 2018).

However, unlike the above examples, there are other instances in which people with high level of English proficiency prefer to speak and write, especially among themselves, by interspersing their Turkish with English words, mostly verbs and nouns. The conversation exchanges below are from a TV show (available at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhumx8li5qs>>) that attempts to raise concerns over such language use in a humorous manner. Company employees entered into these exchanges in a high-level meeting over the sale of fermented sausage produced by the company.

As can be seen from the given examples, the speakers are all Turkish primarily communicating through Turkish with one another, yet with the insertion of English words related to business terminology. From a descriptivist perspective, the above examples are relatively revealing about Tarzanish form of language use in a particular way. We can see that code-mixing, i.e. “the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from a co-operative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand” (Gumperz & Hernandez-Chavez, 1975, p. 155) is a key feature of such language use. It is because users of this form of language mostly show an inclination to intra-sentential alternation (at clause/word boundaries) in interactional exchanges despite

**Table 1:** Examples of a Mixed-up Turkish-English (Tarzanish) Use in the Tourism Sector

Tarzanish	Intended meaning
Speaker: “Are you kola?”	Would you like to have/drink coke?
Speaker: “Let’s cola.”	Let’s drink coke.
Speaker: “Are you disco?”	Would you like to go to the disco?
Speaker: “Are you dance?”	Would you like to dance?
Speaker: “What are you?”	What do you want?

**Table 2:** Examples of a Mixed-up Turkish and English (Tarzanish) Use on Visual Media

Tarzanish (Tarzanca)	English Gloss
<b>İbrahim:</b> “Arkadaşlar Şevket Bey bu toplantıyı neden <u>set</u> etti bilginiz var mı?”	Folks! Do any of you know why Şevket Bey set this meeting?
<b>Yeter:</b> “Sanırım geçen günkü <u>brief</u> sonuçlarını <u>discuss</u> etmek istemiş olabilir.”	I guess he might want to discuss the brief results of the other day.
<b>Nezaket:</b> “O zaman bilançoyu <u>compare</u> etmemiz lazım.”	Then we need to compare our assets and equities.
<b>Fikri:</b> “Arkadaşlar önümüzdeki ayı <u>schedule</u> ettik mi?”	Folks! Have we planned the next month’s schedule?
<b>Bahadır:</b> “ <u>Deadline</u> a göre all sort ettik.”	We sorted out everything according to the deadline.
<b>İbrahim:</b> “Üretim <u>departmanını</u> <u>push</u> etmezsek <u>process</u> <u>in</u> gerisinde kalıp altımıza edebiliriz bu da bizim <u>motivationımızı</u> <u>down</u> eder hemen bir toplantı <u>set</u> edip Şevket Bey’e bunu iletelim derim.”	If we do not push the production department, we can fall behind the process and screw up, which can reduce our motivation. What I suggest is that we set a meeting straightaway and inform Şevket Bey about this.

the absence of bi/multilingual foreigners in interaction. It is therefore highly likely that the English linguistic elements embedded in this form of language use are already part of each speaker's vocabulary repertoire, which explains why conversation flows smoothly among speakers.

Additionally, the sentences are formed according to the rules of Turkish syntax in which, unlike the canonical word order of English ('subject + verb + object'), verbs are put at the end of sentences and change of place between verbs and objects is possible. Morphologically, it is Turkish rules that shape the word formation, too. For example, case suffixes are employed in Turkish instead of some English prepositions, e.g. 'to', 'from', 'at', and 'in'. These suffixes are attached to proper names and nouns (people, cities, countries). Take, for example, the case of motiveyişinimizi 'our motivation' in the above example in which the accusative case suffix follows the English word (i.e. motive + işinimizi) as a result of applying rules of Turkish morphology to English words.

Turning now to the question whether Tarzanish form of language use can be considered a pidgin, we can, in the light of the examples illustrated and overall features of it described above, aptly conclude that it is not a pidgin variety because English acts as the common language when the interaction is between Turkish people and foreigners and serves as an additional language when the interaction occurs among Turkish people who already have a common mother tongue. That is, the features of Tarzanish described above do not carry any characteristics of a pidgin variety.

### Is It a Case of Foreigner Talk or an Outcome of Imperfectly Learned English?

Another predominant view postulates that since so-called Tarzanish is largely used by Turkish people in their contacts with foreigners, but not by foreigners in their contacts with Turkish people, as Bakker (1994, p. 26) argues, "it is probably not a pidgin but either a form of foreigner talk or an imperfectly learned second language." Some Turkish scholars, such as Malkoç (2009), also equate Tarzanish with the notion of foreigner-talk. First coined and used by Ferguson (1971), the notion of foreigner-talk refers to the way native speakers modify and simplify their talk, often using ungrammatical structures when interacting with non-native speakers.

Describing Tarzanish as foreigner talk does not match the definition of the term, foreigner talk, and the way people use a mixture of Turkish and English. Firstly, it is because the use of Tarzanish mainly occurs when Turkish speakers address other Turkish speakers to a large extent through Turkish peppered with English words, phrases, and grammar constructions. Sometimes, it might be predominantly Turkish used among speakers but by intermixing "their conversations with foreign words and phrases, and ... starting to use English grammar and constructions with Turkish words" (Boss, 1999, p. 3). Additionally, Turkish people chiefly make use of this form of language when interacting with foreigners whose first language is not English. Finally, as distinct from the definition of foreigner talk, it is not, in the case of Tarzanish,

native speakers who modify and simplify their language use, but Turkish people using simple and ungrammatical language forms in their talk with Turkish people, and with foreigners whose level of English is far better than theirs. Hence, it could be conceivably hypothesized that Tarzanish forms of language use are indeed a form of broken language that emerged out of people's efforts to simplify the target language in several ways due to their being at different levels of proficiency and imperfect competence in the language. Tureng, one of the most used bilingual dictionaries by Turkish people, defines Tarzanca as Broken English, too ("Tarzanca", 2018c).

### Tarzanish Phenomenon in EMI Universities

Tarzanish form of language use in EMI universities may share common features with those described above in relation to its use in non-educational domains. Nevertheless, it is also probable that the use of Tarzanish in EMI contexts might contain unique features, as both lecturers and students are required to have a certain level of English to be able to fulfill their academic tasks (Karakaş, 2016a; Karakaş, 2016b). All activities, e.g. lectures, seminars, discussions, and thesis defenses, need to be carried out through English and all materials used are therefore in English. This is why most EMI universities require their academic staff and incoming students to certify their English proficiency for admission and employment by obtaining certain scores in either standardized international (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS) or in-house English language entry tests (Jenkins, 2014). This means that unlike the users of Tarzanish whose English competence is rather low as shown above, the stakeholders of EMI institutions have a sufficient command of English. Therefore, they may have different motivations and purposes for resorting to a form of Tarzanish.

The phenomenon of Tarzanish has become so well-established in EMI institutions that the term is even coupled with local institutions, like Bogazici Tarzanish and METU Tarzanish. It is largely Turkish functioning as the main code in such language use, with a judicious amount of linguistic units of English, e.g. words, phrases, and clauses.

From the examples of actual classroom dialogues and the dialogues outside of the classroom (between students/lecturers and non-academic personnel) which have been obtained from EMI students' entries and comments in several blogs and discussion boards/forums, it has become noticeable that its use is predominantly shaped by code-mixing at the word and phrase level and, to a lesser degree, by code-switching. This is exemplified in the following conversation exchanges that were observed in some major EMI universities, such as Bogazici University and METU.

It becomes apparent from the below examples that the use of English does not go much beyond the role of being a lexifier since English, being a language of high prestige, largely provides the basis for most of the technical vocabulary related to course content and acts as superstrate, while Turkish, being a language of lesser prestige compared to English, provides the basis for the majority of non-technical vocabulary, thereby serving as a substrate (non-dominant language (Velupillai,

**Table 3:** Examples of a Mixed-up Turkish and English (Tarzanish) Use in EMI Settings

Tarzanish	English Gloss
<b>Lecturer:</b> “ <i>Hadi let’s.</i> ”	Let’s start [the class].
<b>Student A:</b> “ <i>Recistir [register] ofis ne tarafta kalıyo?</i> ” <b>Student B:</b> “ <i>Dorma gelmeden sağda.</i> ”	Where is the registrar’s office? It’s on the right before the dorm.
<b>Student:</b> “ <i>Hocam, şimdi bu körv [curve] şift [shift] edince indifrins level [indifference level] kanstint [constant] mı kalıyor?</i> ”	Teacher, does the indifference level remain constant when this curve shifts?
<b>Student:</b> “ <i>Ya şu ed-dırop [ad-drop] zamanı gelsin, açıcım recistir [register], ekonu dırop edecem, ondan sonra göndercem edvayzıra, hele bi epruv etmesin ...</i> ”	When the add-drop period comes I’ll log into registration, drop ekonu [the course code] and then send it to the advisor if s/he has the balls to not approve...
<b>Charwoman to a freshman student:</b> “ <i>Şimdi güzelim sen skeculunu alacan recistrardan şurda 3. erkek yurdunun aşşağısında kalıyor git oraya sor.</i> ”	You see darling you’ll get your schedule from the registrar’s office it’s just there down the third male dorm go ask them.
<b>Lecturer:</b> “ <i>Resistance to change görölür o durumlarda ee tabi bir de barriers to entry var.</i> ”	Resistance to change is observed in such conditions and also there are barriers to entry.
<b>Student to student:</b> “ <i>When you call me, banyodan yeni çıkmıştım.</i> ”	When you call me, I just got out of the shower.

Sources: Boğaziçi Tarzancası (2018, p. 1), Tarzanca ve Kelimelerin Gücü (2018, p. 4)

2015). However, some researchers, such as Selbach (2008), argue that the notions of *substrates* and *superstrates* are out of the question when two languages are used in a mixed-up manner as the languages act equally as *adstrates*, i.e. languages in contact with one another with no clear recognizable lower or higher prestige. From this perspective, Turkish plays the role of a lexifier because the majority of the lexicon in Tarzanish are Turkish in most cases, yet it is still not the dominant language that contributes most of the technical words in the use of Tarzanish.

Apart from these examples obtained from different internet sources, recent research into a mixed-up use of Turkish and English has presented examples that are more illustrative as to the use of English along with Turkish at varying levels of the mixture. For instance, Raman and Nuroğlu (2015) presented several excerpts providing instances of code-switching for different purposes in their findings based on their observation on EMI lecturers’ code-switching practices in classes. Two of these instances are given below:

**Excerpt 1:** Teacher: What happened to the boy and the chocolates? Was he found guilty? Think about the boy who stole the chocolates. Was he found guilty? **Suçlu bulundu mu?** [Was he found guilty?; emphasis in original] (p. 7).

**Excerpt 2:** Teacher: ... We are looking for some words related to technology. Okay. And then we are going to find some words about money and business. **Peki nerden bulucaz bunları?** [Okay, from where will we find these?] (Wait time: four seconds). From the text. Okay... (pp. 10-11; emphasis in original).

Similar examples also exist in the international research context. Take, for example, the case of Norwegian students in Ljosland’s (2010) study on monolingual and multilingual practices in a Norwegian EMI university. The following excerpt

comes from a group meeting in which group members (except one, all are Norwegian students) work together for preparing a presentation. For the sake of saving space, only the part that includes instances of code-switching is presented below:

**Excerpt 3:** Student 1: Kan vi bare defi nere ordet **perform?** Og så lager vi et lite skuespill om LCA? Og så bare er vi ferdig. [Student 1: Can we not just define the word **perform?** And make a little play about LCA (Life Cycle Assessment; the name of the module)? And then we’re just finished.] (p. 109; emphasis in original).

It is evident that in addition to code-mixing, there are instances of code-switching in the last two examples in Table 3 and in Excerpts 1, 2 and 3. This shows that speakers of Tarzanish do not follow a particular pattern of language mixing because they can either mix languages at the phrase or word level or even alternate “between two or more languages [Turkish and English in our case] simultaneously or interchangeably within one conversation” (Grosjean, 1982, p. 145). Considering the earlier and above examples, compared to code-mixing, code-switching is a rare case in Tarzanish use, though. Thus, unlike code-mixing, code-switching may not be a strong defining feature of Tarzanish compared to code-switching. In summary, we can infer that users determine the extent to which they will mix their Turkish use with English and which linguistic elements to include in their talk on an *ad hoc* basis. However, what is more important than the extent of language mixture is the driving force that leads lecturers to use a mixed-up version of Turkish and English. The findings of previous studies suggest that the driving force may be manifold, ranging from facilitating students’ content comprehension, eliciting responses from students, sustaining students’ interest in classes to giving additional information and correcting students’ errors in language use (Karakaş, 2016a, Küçük, 2018; Raman & Yiğitoğlu, 2015).

**Table 4:** Examples of a Written Mixed-up Turkish and English (Tarzanish) Use in EMI Settings

Tarzanish	English
<i>“Objectionı olanlar asistanla görüşünler.”</i>	Those who have objections, talk to the assistant.
<i>“Withdraw edilen bir ders takip eden ilk acıldığı donem icinde tekrar alınmak zorundadır.”</i>	If one <u>withdraws</u> from a course, it has to be taken again in the next semester.
<i>“Midterm’un ‘objection’i için ‘office’ime ‘office hour’da gelin.”</i>	For <u>objections</u> to the <u>midterm</u> exam [results] come to the <u>office</u> in my <u>office hours</u> .

So far, we have seen examples of spoken Tarzanish form. However, there are particular spots, especially in EMI universities, where the written form of Tarzanish can be seen in their linguistic landscape (Karakaş & Bayyurt, 2019). One of such spots is the notice boards within university buildings. Although it is dictated in the policy documents that English is the official working language of EMI universities/programs, it is probable to see that even academics might feel obliged to violate this policy by resorting to Tarzanish rather than English or Turkish. Table 4 illustrates some examples of such language use from notice boards of different EMI universities.

Unlike the former examples, the above examples show, from a descriptive point of view, that when used in written form, especially by those with a good command of English, the English words are orthographically grafted on the syntax of Turkish as they are in original without experiencing a Turkishification process. That is, English words are written in accordance with the original way they are spelled rather than the written form of their pronunciations in Turkish (e.g. approve [original] – epruv [Turkishified]). From a language policy and planning perspective, the display of above sentences in the notice boards reveals that the linguistic phenomenon of Tarzanish-English has been unofficially embraced by EMI shareholders and can even be used in formal spots, like notice boards, where English-only or Turkish announcements are supposed to take place (see, Karakaş and Bayyurt, 2019, for similar arguments). Based on the preceding examples, the observable fact is that EMI policy has not been successfully implemented as it has rather been sidestepped by massive language mixing and switching that does not allow clear and coherent expression in either English or Turkish, but a hybrid language form semantically penetrable to its users only.

In short, when compared to the use of Tarzanish by lay people, it is evident that the form of Tarzanish used in EMI settings is far cry from being labeled as broken English. As it stands now, it is more like technical parlance of a specific community, i.e. EMI group, that may prefer it for various reasons. In what follows, I will turn to the issue of why EMI people opt for Tarzanish.

#### Why do EMI Stakeholders (Lecturers and Students) Resort to It?

After seeing the paradox in the implementation of teaching strategies of EMI universities where the ideal of policymakers, i.e. EMI-only policy, is in conflict with the actual of lecturers and students, i.e. resorting to a mixture of Turkish and English, the question that needs to be addressed is why EMI people turn

to such form of language use rather than either using English or Turkish. Several reasons might be cited for EMI people’s such tendency. For instance, in academia, both teachers and students may desire to avoid fully breaching the English-only policy, at least, by preferring partial use of English in the form of Tarzanish, and mostly by letting scientific terms creeping into their Turkish during the classes. The main motivation for this may be that most scientific and technical terms do not have exact Turkish equivalences because of Turkish scientific terminology being less developed in most disciplinary areas compared to that of English.

Related to the excessive use of technical terms and words in their talk or writing, it may be the case that Tarzanish form emerges as a result of the fact that EMI people have not properly learned the Turkish equivalents of English terminology in their discipline or are not accustomed to using them in an academic register. Therefore, they may find it easier to code-mix by letting English terms and phrases infiltrate into their L1 (Costa, 2012; Küçük, 2018; Raman & Yiğitoğlu, 2015).

Even some lecturers believe that preferring to use Tarzanish over English-only or Turkish-only in classes is due to an instrumental purpose that serves maximizing students’ learning, especially those with weak language skills (e.g. Karakaş, 2016b). It is also believed that it is through this way rather than the sole use of Turkish in classes that students can develop adequate English scientific terminology related to their disciplines.

Above all, moreover, there is a value dimension behind using Tarzanish. Considering the status of English in Turkey and its significance for the Turkish public, it can be put that Turkish “[p]eople feel more valuable if they speak bad, broken English than correct English” (Boss, 1999, para. 16). A possible explanation for this is that mixing Turkish with English words is perceived to be a symptom of one’s linguistic superiority over those who cannot speak English. Accordingly, a mixture of Turkish and English is considered to enjoy greater prestige than speakers’ native language. Additionally, those using Turkish and English in a mixed manner prefer this type of language use to look cool, show off, and manufacture group cohesion by creating a small speech community whose doors are closed to those not speaking English (e.g. Boss, 1999). Namely, part of the function of Tarzanish use may be to deliberately obstruct the outsiders of EMI community.

However, the reason for resorting to Tarzanish via different forms of language mixing (e.g. code-mixing, code-switching)

when interacting with overseas students in classes may have a communicative purpose (e.g. Raman & Yiğitoğlu, 2015). For almost all EMI universities have international students, full time or part time, despite the number being not so high, it is possible for these students to develop some basic Turkish in time and engage in Tarzanish form of language use with Turkish students. In such a scenario, using Tarzanish might function as a language-contact strategy between Turkish students and overseas students given that mixing languages in communication might serve communicative functions (Hultgren & Thøgersen, 2014). Given that it is largely overseas students in Turkish universities having higher English proficiency than Turkish students, it is very probable that they can provide scaffolding in English to Turkish students while communicating through a form of Tarzanish. Likewise, Turkish students can provide scaffolding in Turkish to their foreign friends.

### **Solutions to the Discrepancy of 'EMI' Policy and Practice of a Mixed-up Turkish and English (Tarzanish) Use**

Having seen the above picture of EMI implementations in practice, it is crucial that we need to face and deliver effective and workable solutions to the use of Tarzanish. In this sense, one practical solution might be overturning the EMI policy by switching back to Turkish in teaching, especially in institutions where partial EMI has been adopted. The main reason for this proposal is because that most stakeholders, including students and lecturers at such partial EMI institutions, rarely use English in all academic activities in their classes. This conclusion is also supported by research-based evidence that has accumulated in the recent years, showing that most teaching staff and students have favored Turkish-only policy over partial or full EMI policy (e.g. Başibek et al., 2014; Kılıçkaya, 2006; Kırkgöz, 2008; Sert, 2008). What lies at the crux of the problem in such institutions is primarily the lack of teaching staff who can deliver their subject courses through English, and that students' level of English, particularly that of academic English, is too restricted to follow courses entirely in English (Byun et al., 2010; Kırkgöz, 2014; Sert, 2008). Additionally, in case of resistance to transmission to Turkish, it is, at least, advisable for universities to look for some innovative ways to prevent students' content learning attrition at the expense of using heavily Turkish or Tarzanish in classes. In this regard, a recent study by Macaro, Akincioğlu, and Dearden (2016) highlights the positive impact of collaboration between language teachers and content teachers on students' academic performance due to a high level of content comprehension.

As reported above, one key reason for lecturers to turn towards using Tarzanish is their claim that they prefer to use such kind of English in an effort to help students gain sufficient levels of content comprehension with a judicious amount of mixed Turkish and English use. In response to such a claim, several researchers (e.g. Brown, 2014) argue for a workable solution by deriving from the benefits of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach in EMI lectures. Because teaching language is not an explicit purpose in EMI (Airey, 2016; Smit & Dafouz, 2012), the integration of a CLIL approach,

"i.e. the teaching of content in the target language with little or no explicit effort to separately teach the language itself" (Krahnke, 1987, p. 2), might be to the advantage of students as they will get language support from content lecturers while learning discipline-specific courses. It is considerably likely that actual receipt of such support may persuade both lecturers and students against resorting to Tarzanish.

Finally, Turkish EMI universities can modify their language policies and learn some lessons from the Scandinavian reality by adopting the notion of parallel language use in practice. Parallel language refers to the use of English and other languages in research and education (as well as a range of other areas) in EMI programs in parallel with one another. The main tenet behind this practice is, as Hultgren (2016, p. 158) explains, "that no language should encroach upon another" and it is enacted as "a proposed solution to the threat of the 'domain loss'". It is highly likely that provided that Turkish and English are used concurrently without neither of them being abolished nor replacing one another, no need is bound to arise for lecturers and students to prefer using Tarzanish over Turkish or English. In addition, the dual use of Turkish and English can enable institutions "to strengthen the international dimension and at the same time to ensure the development of subject-specific terminology and disciplinary discourses" in the local language (Kuteeva & Airey, 2014, p. 536). As such, parallel language use can also contribute to stakeholders' acquisition of bilingual scientific literacy in such a way that students may conduct their disciplinary studies in Turkish and English quite easily. It is worth noting that parallel language use has no stable form of co-existence. That is, depending on some variables, e.g. students and lecturers' level of English proficiency, group composition and institutional policies, either of the languages can be used in varying quantities while carrying out different academic tasks (Shaw & McMillion, 2011). For example, in an engineering class, students may have to study the course literature through English if there has been domain loss in terms of textbooks on the subject, yet can shift to Turkish for instructional purposes, i.e. in lectures, seminars, and discussions.

### **CONCLUSION**

In this critical review, I explored a relatively controversial language use, i.e. so-called Tarzanish in Turkey, especially the higher education context. I have firstly outlined the current face of EMI as well as the historical background of it in Turkey, then moved on to the reactions to English being the medium of teaching shown by people of opposite camps. Having drawn an overall snapshot of EMI in Turkey, I have addressed several issues surrounding Tarzanish use, primarily beginning with its definition and then continuing with its defining characteristics based on some examples from different blogs and websites. These accounts were followed by some solutions, drawing on best practices implemented in similar contexts. It is my hope that the concerned authorities can find some feasible solutions to the Tarzanish dilemma bearing in mind the suggestions given.

However, it should be noted here that the current analysis and given suggestions are largely applicable to higher education institutions and do not have a scientific basis as they are not based on actual data, but a limited number of examples. Therefore, the solutions suggested in this paper are not one-size-fits-all and it is recommended that more concrete research be undertaken on this issue with actual qualitative data, classroom recordings, and interviews with students and lecturers, to more specifically see the nature of this code mixing and switching and bilingualism by those interested in foreign medium instruction and EMI.

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