

A CONTENT ANALYSIS RELATED TO THE CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN THREE ‘TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE’ TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract: This study aims to examine three A2 level Turkish as a foreign language textbooks from a cultural point of view. The analysis focuses on the reflection of Turkish culture and traditions of one single theme -food- in terms of two criteria - text and visual materials used in the textbooks. The research further investigates the cultural elements regarding food in terms of three cultural goal areas, ‘products, practices and perspectives’ retrieved from the Standards for Foreign Language Education by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1993). The research reveals that no matter how successful the textbooks are in using cultural elements, they still suffer from some deficiencies in transmitting them through texts and visuals in terms of the cultural goal areas; therefore, they need certain revisions and improvement for better cultural transmission.

Key words: Foreign language, content analysis, cultural elements, food, drinks.

Yabancı Dil Olarak Türkçe Öğretiminde Kullanılan Üç Kitaptaki Kültürel Öğelerin İçerik Analizi

Öz: Bu çalışmada A2 seviyesindeki üç yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğretimi ders kitabı kültürel açıdan incelenmiştir. Çalışmada yapılan analizler Türkçe kitaplarının Türk yemek kültürünün metin ve görseller aracılığıyla Türkçe öğrenen yabancılara yansıtılması üzerine odaklanmıştır. Amerikan Yabancı Diller Öğretimi Kurulu tarafından hazırlanan Yabancı Dil Eğitim Standartlarından alınan kültür hedef alanı altındaki ‘ürün, eylem ve bakış’ alt kategorilerine göre Türk yemek kültürüne ait unsurlar incelenmiştir. Çalışma, ders kitaplarının Türk yemek kültürüne başarılı olarak yer vermesine rağmen, Yabancı Dil Eğitim Standartlarının kültür hedef alanına göre Türk yemek kültürünü metin ve görsellerle aktarımda yetersiz olduğunu ve çeşitli iyileştirmelere ve değişikliklere ihtiyacı olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil, içerik analizi, kültürel unsurlar, yiyecek, içecekler.

Introduction

In recent years, through globalization, culture has gained a great deal of importance in language learning education. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) prepared National Standards for Foreign Language Education for the 21st Century (SFLE) to improve foreign language education in the USA, and according to SFLE, culture takes place among the five C goal areas of foreign language education (*Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities*). Within the framework of standards, the elements used in various definitions of culture have been categorized under three subtitles as *Practices* (the knowledge of what to do when and where such as greetings/ slangs/ gestures), *Products* (tangible or intangible cultural elements such as food/ song/ dance) and *Perspectives* (beliefs/ values/ ideas/ attitudes) under the Culture goal area. Accordingly, practices, products and perspectives are inextricably intertwined elements in learning a culture; when one is missing, no mastery learning of culture occurs. Of these three subtitles, perspectives have been offered to play the most significant role in understanding one's own and the target culture.

Among a limited number of key macrostrategies for language teaching presented by Kumaravadivelu (2002) is raising cultural consciousness. He makes a general discussion on the concept of culture, offers teachers some microstrategies for raising cultural consciousness and sums up by saying 'In the fast-emerging world of economic, cultural, and communicational globalization, creating critical cultural consciousness in the L2 classroom is not an option but an obligation'.

Furthermore, Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) emphasize in their guideline for teachers that cross-cultural competence is as important as linguistic competence in foreign language education since it prepares learners for interaction with people of other cultures, enables them to understand and accept others as individuals with other perspectives, values, behaviors and attitudes. However, it has been noted by several researchers that language classes have suffered from deficiency in cross-cultural competence for many years (Byram, 2003; Jiang, 2000; Kramersch, 1998; Lange, 1998; Thanasoulas, 2001). Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) provide some answers to many language teachers who are interested in the cross-cultural dimension of language classes. The content of the concept, methods to include cross-cultural dimension in language classes and materials needed to promote it alongside must-read-books are suggested for teachers interested in raising cross-cultural awareness in their classes.

As a way of introducing the target culture to the language learners, there is no doubt that textbooks are still at the core of most foreign language curricula in

the 21st century. Through technological developments, changes and advancement in education, textbooks have greatly improved to meet the learners' needs, and to enhance and foster learning. Now, learning a language is not just about having competence over its vocabulary or grammar. Thanks to globalization, language learning has evolved so that, contrary to the past, it is more than performing the four basic skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking; it is about communicating with native speakers of the target language through understanding their way of life, values, attitudes and behaviors, all of which are elements of culture (Saluveer, 2004). Obviously, the importance of culture in language learning has been emphasized best by Winston L. Brembeck in his saying "To know another's language and not his culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of one's self". Today, culture is an inevitable aspect in foreign language textbooks.

Learning a culture along with a language is important for many reasons. Firstly, it broadens the learners' horizons in many ways; geography, history, beliefs, values, society etc. By helping learners understand both non-verbal communication and what to say where and how (register/ formality vs informality), it provides learners with an understanding of the target culture. Last but not least, it motivates learners who enjoy culturally based activities; hence, it quickens the process of learning. Therefore, today, cultural transmission in foreign language textbooks is as important as teaching the four basic skills.

Two of the most commonly used means of cultural transmission in textbooks are images and texts. Through texts, learners can reach cultural elements which are presented in a way appealing to both their interest and level. They can find relevant information which is appropriate for their level in terms of both amount and difficulty. Furthermore, they can practice speaking through communicative activities (what to say where and how), and they can reinforce their competence over recently learned cultural elements through exercises. Images which are another aspect of the textbooks are of great importance in cultural transmission. When used in coherence with texts, they can be unique resources in helping learners understand the target culture smoothly.

A number of criteria regarding cultural transmission has been listed in the Common European Framework (2000) with an aim to be included in foreign language textbooks. These are weekends, leisure, art, music, body language, gifts, special days, sports, timetables, daily life, cultural relations, customs, clothes, celebrations, humor, political relations, and food and drinks. These cultural items are presented in an order from easy to difficult or from concrete to abstract parallel to the level of textbooks (daily life > humor).

A number of content-analysis studies have been carried out to investigate the cultural items in Turkish textbooks as a foreign language. However, none of them compared separate Turkish textbooks of the same level by focusing on a single cultural theme in terms of texts and images within the framework of the Culture goal area in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning (2002). The present study investigates the usage of cultural elements related to the core theme of 'food' in texts and images on three A2 level Turkish textbooks. Texts and visuals in textbooks are analyzed in terms of practices, products and perspectives of the culture goal area of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning.

Methodology

This study has been conducted on three separate Common European Framework (CEFR)-based Turkish textbooks in order to analyze one single cultural theme – food and drinks- and the usage of cultural items in texts and images regarding the main theme. In order to sustain reliability of comparison among the textbooks, an analysis has been done on the A2 level textbooks of each series being taught in various Turkish teaching centers: *Yeni Hitit 1* (for A1 and A2) published by Ankara University, TÖMER (founded in 1984), *İstanbul A2* by İstanbul University, Language Center (2000) and *Yunus Emre A2* by Yunus Emre Institute (2009). The three textbooks are taken as sample in this study because, initially, *Yeni Hitit* was the very first textbook used in teaching Turkish as a foreign language and is used widely around Turkey in various Turkish Teaching Centers; *İstanbul* is used in a variety of centers in Turkey as well; and *Yunus Emre* book is the product of an influential institute in teaching Turkish and Turkish culture around the world.

Yeni Hitit 1, revised in 2008, is divided into twelve chapters, each consisting of three parts that address related topics. As the textbook covers both A1 and A2 levels, only the last six chapters have been included in this study in order to have a reliable comparison among the textbooks. *İstanbul*, revised in 2013, has six chapters, each containing three subcategories related to the main title. *Yunus Emre*, a very recent textbook, still in its pilot experiment, consists of eight units each of which includes three subtitles.

All textbooks are prepared by Turkish authors and published in Turkey. Each has its components, workbooks, and CDs. However, in this study, the workbooks and listening tracks have been excluded from the study, and the main focus remained on the texts and visuals on the textbooks of the same level. Following the cultures goal area -products, practices and perspectives- of the Standards for Foreign Language Education for the 21st Century (SFLE) these textbooks are analyzed and their success in presenting Turkish food culture to foreign learners is evaluated.

Results

İstanbul A2

İstanbul is divided into six units each focusing on a certain theme. Out of six units, the first one titled 'Gezelim Gorelim' (Lesson 1A and 1B) is related to the food and drink culture of the Turkish. However, learners still come across some cultural elements about food in units three and six as well. In the examined food and drinks related texts, it has been found that most of the texts are fictional, created by the authors in order to teach their learners. At the end of each unit, the book provides a "from culture to culture" section which includes short and direct expository texts related to the main topic about both Turkish culture and other cultures; and this is a good way to learn the target culture and other cultures. In the table below, cultural elements regarding food have been analyzed in terms of the culture goal areas--products, practice, and perspectives from the Standards for Foreign Language Education mentioned in the introduction--are presented in detail including information about the unit and pictures.

Table 1. Elements on Turkish Food and Drinks Culture, *İstanbul A2*

Cultural Items	Product Practice Perceptives	Image	Unit Page
Title: <i>Şiş Kebap</i> Yapalım	Product	a	U1 P9
<i>Afiyet olsun.</i>	Practice	n/a	U1 P9
<i>Elinize sağlık!</i>	Practice	n/a	U1 P10
Çorbalar: Mercimek Çorbası/ İşkembe Çorbası / Ezogelin Çorbası /Yayla Çorbası Mezeler: Yaprak Sarma / Biber Dolması / Paçanga Böreği Ana Yemekler: İçli Köfte / Karışık Kebap / Adana Kebap / Urfa Kebap Tatlılar: Baklava/Kazandibi /Sütlaç / Künefe İçecekler: Ayran / Çay / Şalgam Suyu / Türk Kahvesi	Product	n/a	U1 P12
-Tatlılardan ne öneriyorsunuz? -Kadayıf ve baklavamız çok lezzetli.	Product	n/a	U1 P12
ısmarlamak/yemekten sonra/sana/baklava	Product	a	U1 P14
almak/Kapalı Çarşı/yarım/ lokum	Product	a	U1 P14

yemek/ <i>lahmacun</i> /bu lokanta	Product	a	U1 P14
<i>Türk Kahvesi</i> : Türkler genellikle kahvaltıdan sonra Türk Kahvesi içerler. Türkçe’de kahvaltı kelimesi (kahve altı) kahveden önceki yiyecekler demektir. Türk Kahvesini içtikten sonra fal bakmak için fincanı kapatırlar. İnsanlar dini bayramlarda ve kız isteme merasimlerinde her zaman Türk kahvesi içerler.	Product Practice Perspectives	a	U3 P48
Ortaköy’e gidip <i>kumpir</i> yiyelim.	Product	a	U6 P89
Güverteye sıkı giyinip çıkacaksınız, bir de <i>çay</i> söyleyeceksiniz. İsterseniz martılara <i>simit</i> de atabilir, Adalar’da veya Anadolu Kavağı’nda ise <i>balık</i> yiyebilirsiniz.	Product	n/a	U6 P89
Ekmeğin arasına köfte veya balık, midye koyarlar. Bu yemeğe , <i>Ekmeğ aras balık</i> ’ , <i>ekmeğ aras köfte</i> ’ derler. Seyyar satıcılar bunları kent sokaklarında satarlar.	Product	n/a	U6 P89
Metni dinleyelim. Metinde hangi yiyeceklerden bahsedilmiştir? İşaretleyelim. <i>Simit - kokoreç - döner - etli ekmeğ - midye dolma lahmacun</i>	Product	n/a a	U6 P91
<i>Gözlemenin</i> içine et, peynir ve sebze konur... <i>Lahmacunun</i> içinde domates ve peynir vardır....	Product	a	U6 P91
<i>Midye dolmasının</i> içinde pilav vardır.	Product	n/a	U6 P91
<i>Lahmacun</i> , Güneydoğu Anadolu’da yaygın bir yiyecek türüdür.	Product	a	U6 P91
<i>Kumpir</i> , ayranla tüketilir.	Product	a	U6 P91
<i>Simit</i> , susamlı halka şeklinde bir ekmeğ çeşididir.	Product	n/a	U6 P91

İstanbul A2 uses a variety of pictures on the first page of the textbook, including a big picture of the Grand Bazaar (Kapalıçarşı), four small images of two women in a restaurant, a famous sightseeing place in Turkey called Cappadocia, a dish of chicken with mushroom and green pepper, and a portrait of a woman-irrelevant to the topics. Even though the first page of the unit looks relevant to the content, it requires improvisation and a good warm-up section of exercises

related to the pictures and some vocabulary that the learners are expected to learn and use throughout the unit.

In the first unit, the expected contexts have been prepared for the theme such as dishes, a dialogue about ordering food in a restaurant, a menu, and a kebab recipe are used for cultural transmission. For the Şiş Kebab recipe a suitable picture has been used and it helps learners acquire a general idea of what Şiş Kebab looks like and its ingredients. However, it is difficult to state the same for a menu of many Turkish dishes with no pictures except for irrelevant images of ingredients like a lemon, pepper, carrot, beans and onion put separately on the tip of six forks. No doubt, it is impossible to include an image of each of the cultural elements mentioned in the textbook; yet, a few visuals would go well with the context and satisfy the learners' curiosity, and it might even create a good speaking opportunity.

In the exercise part, one image has been provided for each of the six unscrambled sentences. However, it is a bit difficult to figure out the objects and things in the pictures as they are too small. In the 'from culture to culture' section, six people and their favorite dishes from their own culture have been introduced briefly, so cross-cultural elements also take place in the textbook and students are given the opportunity to speak about their traditional food.

As mentioned earlier, cultural elements related to food are intensively included in Unit 1. Throughout Unit 3 and 6 some cultural pieces related to the main topic of the unit are also presented. Turkish, Indonesian and Yemeni coffees are introduced in the 'from culture to culture' section of Unit 3. Even though the expository text is short, significant and interesting information regarding Turkish coffee and its traditions is passed on to readers with the support of an image of Turkish coffee in a Turkish cup. Likewise, a small image of *simit*s is used on the introductory page of the Unit 6 as a warm-up activity, indicating that the unit covers some cultural items about Turkish food. As expected, in the last part of the unit, some of Turkish fast food are mentioned in the listening section. However, as listening tracks are out of the scope of this study, only the exercises are examined and have revealed that a great deal of practical (Ortaköy'e gidip *kumpir* yiyelim) and theoretical (*Simit*, susamlı halka şeklinde bir ekmek çeşididir) information on Turkish fast food is provided. Six visuals are presented in the first exercise for learners to practice speaking. However, the visuals, as said before, are too small for learners to make the out most of them.

Yunus Emre A2

Yunus Emre A2 consists of eight separate units on a certain theme and each unit is divided into three lessons connected to the main theme. At the end of each unit, there is a culture page including specific information about Turkish culture related to the topic of that unit. Throughout the units regarding the food culture,

all texts and dialogues where the characters try to describe food tradition, desserts and dishes of the Turkish cuisine are totally fictional. In Table 2 below, the Turkish food culture in *Yunus Emre A2* is analyzed and listed in terms of visuals and the culture goal areas in the Standards for Foreign Language Education (SFLE).

Table 2. Elements on Turkish Food Culture, *Yunus Emre A2*

Cultural Items	Products Practices Perceptives	Image	Unit Page
<i>Manti, pastırma, sucuk, yağlama, kabak çiçeği dolması ve içli köftesi</i> Kayseri mutfağının ünlü yiyecekleridir.	Products	n/a	U1 P23
<i>Kayseri Mantısı:</i> Mantı Türk mutfağının vazgeçilmez yemeklerindedir.	Products	a	U1 P23
Kurt gibi açım.	Practices	n/a	U2 P28
Tatlı Yiyelim Tatlı Konuşalım	Practices	n/a	U4 P68
Karadeniz Bölgesi: <i>Laz Böreği, Mısır unu Helvası, Karaçuval Helvası</i> Marmara Bölgesi: <i>Pişmaniye, Kemalpaşa Tatlısı, Peynir Helvası, Dilber Dudağı</i> Ege Bölgesi: <i>Ekmek Kadayıfı, Höşmerim, Şambali, İzmir Lokması</i> Akdeniz Bölgesi: <i>Künefe, Kadayıf Dolması, Kabak Tatlısı</i> Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi: <i>Baklava, Kadayıf, Nuriye Tatlısı</i>	Products	n/a	U4 P68
Zeynep, şu tatlıya bak! Adı <i>Laz Böreği</i> . Hem börek hem tatlı. <i>Laz Böreğinin</i> içinde tuz var mı?	Products	n/a	U4 P68
...Bu sefer şerbetli tatlı olsun. -O zaman Güneydoğu Anadolu standına gidelim. -Merhaba, <i>baklavanın</i> tadına bakabilir miyiz? -Tabii, buyrun. Ustalarımız kırk kat yufkadan yapıyorlar bu <i>baklavaları</i> . -Bu da çok lezzetli ama benim için fazla şekerli.	Products	n/a	U4 P68

Aşçımız Sedat Usta ve yardımcıları size gün boyu lezzetli sütlü tatlılar yaptılar. <i>Kazandibi, tavuk göğsü, keşkül, muhallebi ve sütlaçlar</i> , restoran bölümümüzdeki masada sizi bekliyor.... Yarın da <i>aşure</i> ve çeşit çeşit <i>lokum</i> ikramımız olacak.	Products	n/a	U4 P70
<i>Afiyet Olsun!</i>	Practices	n/a	U4 P71
<i>Keşkül, Sütlaç, Tavuk Göğsü, Muhallebi</i> (Recipe)	Products	n/a	U4 P71
Geleneksel tatlılarımızdan diğeri de <i>aşuredir</i> .	Products	a	U4 P72
<i>Güllaç</i> geleneksel Türk tatlılarından biridir.	Products	a	U4 P72
Üzümle kayısıdan <i>hoşaf</i> yaparsın, soğuk soğuk içeriz.	Products	n/a	U5 P87
Boğazda <i>balık</i> yiyebilir, cami ve sarayları gezebilir, vapurla adalara gidebilirsiniz.	Products	n/a	U5 P96
Annem kahvaltıyı hazırlamış, diye düşündü. Onun için mutluluk, sıcak bir yuva, kızarmış ekmek kokusuydu....Ahmet'in babası onları <i>çay bahçesine</i> götürdü ve dondurma ısmarladı.	Products Perceptives	n/a	U5 P97
Gel kızım, <i>aşure</i> yaptım. Muharrem ayındayız..... <i>Aşure</i> , 'Muharrem ayının onuncu günü demektir.'... Kızım üst kata yeni komşularımız geldi. Onlara bir tabak <i>aşure</i> götürebilir misin?	Products Perceptives	n/a	U5 P99
-Teyzeciğim bunu annem yaptı, size de gönderdi. -Dur, ben tabağı boşaltayım kızım.... Biraz <i>kadayıf</i> koydum. Afiyet olsun.	Products Perceptives	n/a	U6 P100

In the textbook, towards the end of the first unit learners come across the first cultural item related to food in a short informative text about Kayseri and its traditional popular foods with no visuals. Thus, it is difficult for learners to understand what kind of foods are mentioned (dessert, pastry, dish etc.) However, the next page focuses on mantı, a specific, very famous and traditional dish in Kayseri, and it is introduced in detail in a short fictional text accompanied with a medium-sized picture of the food.

The last chapter of the fourth unit titled with a Turkish expression ‘Tatlı Yiyelim Tatlı Konuşalım’ starts with some popular traditional desserts from five regions of Turkey. A fictional dialogue at a traditional food festival is expounded to give information about two selected desserts in the list, Laz böreği and baklava. However, no visuals are used for the desserts, either in the list or in the dialogue, which prevents students from brainstorming and practicing speaking. In the same unit, under the title of everyday expression, ‘Afiyet Olsun!’, the recipes of four different Turkish puddings are shared without pictures. On the culture page, two more traditional Turkish desserts are introduced in two short informative paragraphs accompanied with two separate pictures, which makes transmission easier and long-lasting.

Apart from some expressions, until unit 6, the cultural elements in *Yunus Emre A2* are mostly tangible products. However in Unit 6, the importance of family breakfasts on Sundays and the concept of Turkish breakfast in general are introduced to learners by the means of a fictional text. Likewise, in two dialogues about aşure culture in Turkey in a specific time of year called Muharrem and related neighbor interaction (expressions about food -Ellerinize sağlık!/ Afiyet olsun!- are transmitted in the dialogue where a girl offers aşure to her new neighbor and the woman gives the girl some kadayıf in return) are conveyed.

Yeni Hitit 1

The *Yeni Hitit Turkish for Foreigners* education pack has been designed to cover two levels in one book. In the first book, of twelve units the first six belong to A1 level and the second to A2. In the present study, in order to reach a valid comparison among the textbooks, *Yeni Hitit* has been analyzed from the sixth unit to the end. Contrary to expectations, no food unit and no food cultural elements are available to the A2 level units. The only mention on food, according to the table of contents is in Unit 5 titled ‘Afiyet Olsun’. Thus since the unit does not correspond to A2 level requirements and because there is no mention to food in the following A2 level units, the *Yeni Hitit* textbook is not taken into consideration in this analysis.

Discussion

Texts

For the reasons mentioned above, only two textbooks, the *Yunus Emre* and *İstanbul*, are the focus of analysis.

Overall, Table 1 and 2 suggest that Turkish food culture is presented very well through selected cultural elements. However, as can be seen in the Tables, there is no unity between the selections of cultural elements in the two textbooks. Whereas *Yunus Emre* mostly includes desserts, *İstanbul* deals with a wide range

of Turkish food (dishes, drinks, desserts, fast food). In both textbooks, adequate variety of contexts are presented for the transmission of the Turkish cuisine and food. However, neither of them suggests nonfictional texts. Yet, through informative texts, practical ideas on Turkish food and tips on what to eat and where to eat are conveyed to learners.

The analysis also reveals that both textbooks mostly focus on products of Turkish cuisine and food culture. However, the amount of practices on both textbooks are fewer than the products. The *İstanbul* book teaches learners two main expressions (*afiyet olsun* and *elinize sağlık*); whereas *Yunus Emre* skips one (*elinize sağlık*). Likewise, in *İstanbul* no proverb or idiom is taught; however, *Yunus Emre* includes the expressions '*Kurt gibi açım*' and '*Tatlı Yiyelim Tatlı Konuşalım*'. Additionally, in terms of practices, fortune telling of Turkish coffee cup is mentioned in the *İstanbul* book. However, the *Yunus Emre* textbook reflecting a more conservative institution does not provide detailed information on Turkish coffee. Conversely, it supplies learners with practical information about a traditional Turkish dessert, '*aşure*,' and how an average middle aged Turkish woman share it with neighbors during the religious month of Muharrem.

Perspectives of Turkish people about food are even fewer than practices in the analyzed textbooks. However, throughout different texts in separate units belonging to both textbooks, the importance of tea in Turkish way of life, having picnics and Sunday breakfast altogether with the whole family is indirectly taught to learners. Furthermore, in *İstanbul*, Turkish coffee and its tradition in ceremonies and in *Yunus Emre* offering *aşure* to neighbors on religious days are introduced as essential cultural value patterns.

Pictures

Visuals in *Yunus Emre* and *İstanbul* mostly reflect the Turkish cuisine and food culture well. The pictures accompanying the texts are suitable to the content in both textbooks. *İstanbul* includes numerically more pictures. As mentioned above, most of them are too small for students to discern and identify the variety of food although pages are relatively convenient for larger size pictures. On the other hand, the *Yunus Emre* textbook has an inadequate picture input, resulting in unanswered questions in the learners' minds. Hence, both textbooks need a rearrangement of pictures in order to provide learners with better opportunities to maximize cultural transmission.

Conclusion

The biggest problem seems to be that there is no framework on teaching Turkish as a foreign language for book publishers to follow, resulting to great differences in the degree of language difficulty even in textbooks of the same level of different publishers. Therefore, a detailed research should be done showing what vocabulary is most often used by Turkish people. According to the results, publishers should revise their textbooks firstly in terms of vocabulary and secondary in accordance to the difficulty of texts. As for cultural transmission, taking Standards for Foreign Language Education (SFLE) as reference, three elements –products, practices, perspectives- of culture should be presented to learners. Although most of the cultural elements presented in the textbooks deal with cultural products, and to a lesser extent with cultural practices, there is almost no information on cultural perspectives, an important point deserving revision.

Each textbook has some strong points and some weaknesses which need improvement. They present the Turkish food culture and tradition well, even if not enough, within the context used. Nevertheless, the biggest shortcoming in *İstanbul* and *Yunus Emre* is that they do not include any authentic texts and that the passages/dialogues are too simple and definitely not appealing to A2 level students and their interests. However, the level problem might be solved by following the criteria in CEFR. If the texts are revised annually in accordance with the UNESCO's cultural heritage list, Turkish textbooks might provide Turkish learners with more up-to-date information in accordance to their language competence.

On the other hand, the textbooks seriously suffer from a deficiency of communicative activities to improve learners' competence and performance over cultural elements and their traditions. More opportunities should be given to language learners to practice the language they have learned and to promote cultural transmission.

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