Assessment and Evaluation in the 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum and the Levels of Turkish Teachers in Using the Assessment and Evaluation Tools[1]

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Abstract

Assessment and evaluation activities are very important since they ensure the diagnosis of the interests, attitudes, ability, knowledge and skills of students, and education and training is planned accordingly. Assessment and evaluation is one of the building blocks of education. In line with the changing interests and needs and developing science and technology, innovation became a requirement in assessment and evaluation as in all areas of education. Since traditional methods are only the results of a result-oriented assessment and evaluation approach, they were determined to be inadequate in evaluating the education process, and therefore, alternative assessment and evaluation methods were adopted and applied. In this study, it was aimed to determine how frequently Turkish Course teachers used the assessment and evaluation tools in the 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum prepared in accordance with the constructivist approach. In this study, the survey model, which is among the quantitative research models, was used, and additionally, the opinions of Turkish teachers were taken with a survey in order to determine the frequency they use the evaluation tools and materials. According to the research findings, it was determined that Turkish teachers do not thoroughly use (supplementary) assessment and evaluation tools based on the student performance, but instead, they prefer the traditional tools more.

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Introduction

It is through the mother tongue that individuals become capable to communicate with others, to express their feelings and thoughts, and to meet their needs. Individuals acquire their native language without a system until they reach the school age. After the school age, systematic, planned, and programmed mother tongue activities start. The main aim of mother tongue education in schools is to improve the comprehension power of students, to gain the ability to explain, to create listening and reading habits, to teach basic grammar rules, to gain language awareness and love of language (Kavcar, Oğuzkan and Sever, 2003). Turkish language education is also done with a systematic program based on understanding and narrative skills. Reading and listening skills comprise the comprehension skill, while speaking and writing constitute the skills of narrative. The necessary curriculums are prepared and implemented for the students to acquire these skills. In this regard, assessment and evaluation applications are carried out in order to determine to what extent the knowledge and skills aimed in the program are acquired.

The 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum emphasizes that assessment and evaluation activities should be continuous and process-oriented. The before-process assessment applied prior to the teaching process provides an information about the level of the student at the start of the process and supports determining the necessary objectives accordingly, while the during-process assessment provides feedbacks to the student and to the teacher, and post-process assessment ensures determining to what extent the objectives are achieved and deciding which changes should be made (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2019).

Each skill must be considered and evaluated separately in teaching Turkish, which is a skill course. This requires embracing contemporary, alternative and diagnostic measurement instruments, rather than traditional assessment and evaluation approaches. In the result-oriented approaches, the assessment of student achievement is generally considered separate from the teaching process with a higher emphasis on the product, and in this regard, multiple-choice and short-answer tests and written and oral examinations are prioritized (MEB, 2018). Therefore, new approaches have been developed that measure the process in addition to the result-oriented assessment methods that measure only the product.

Within the scope of the education process, the evaluation efforts are discussed under three headings according to the intended use of the measurement results. These are the *diagnostic evaluation* intending to recognize the student, *formative evaluation* that is conducted during the process in order to reveal the defections in the education process, and to detect the learning deficiencies, and *summative evaluation* conducted at the end of the process in order to make decisions about the student (Kilmen, 2017).

In order to measure high level skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, evaluation, prediction, induction, deduction, and creative thinking, Kutlu, Doğan and Karakaya (2014) suggest performance-oriented assessment, student portfolio and assessment studies under the heading of *new evaluation methods*. Alıcı (2011) names the evaluation of the efforts and activities that students perform through active learning during the process and the products at the end of the process as the *performance evaluation*. Additionally, it was also reported that performance evaluation is named differently such as alternative evaluation, supplementary evaluation, and authentic evaluation in various foreign or domestic sources, stressing that the assessment methods such as multiple choice tests, short answer tests, and long answer exams are classified as traditional assessment tools.

While the written examinations with usually only one correct answer, short-answer questions, true-false questions, multiple-choice tests, and matching questions are classified under traditional assessment techniques, the tools such as grade scoring keys, diagnostic tree, structured grid, word association test, and student portfolio are classified under the supplementary assessment and evaluation methods (Bahar, Nartgün Durmuş and Bıçak, 2015).

In 2006 Turkish Course Curriculum, a wide coverage was given to assessment and evaluation tools. In the curriculum prepared in 2017, it was stated that assessment and evaluation efforts will be conducted in three ways: diagnosis-oriented, monitoring-oriented and outcome-oriented. The assessment tools specified in the curriculum are short-answer items, multiple-choice items, matching

items, true-false items, open-ended questions, attitude scales, student portfolios, performance tasks, and project assignments. As per the evaluation tools, they are interview, self-evaluation form, listening/watching skills observation form, speaking-skill evaluation form, reading-skill observation form, written narrative evaluation form, reading-skill checklist, student self-evaluation form on the product file, performance and project evaluation forms (MEB, 2017). These assessment and evaluation tools, which focus on the educational process and which considers evaluation of the students through following their development as a part of learning, differ from the result-oriented (summative) assessment tools in many aspects.

Göçer (2014) reports that process evaluation is effective in the development of cognitive, affective and psycho-motor skills of the students, and also in determining their ability to use all these skills complementary to each other. Additionally, it is also reported that product-oriented evaluation is inadequate since the development of language and intelligent skills of the students are evaluated together in language teaching.

Traditional assessment and evaluation activities are the outcomes of an understanding where assessments are made on the student answers during the exam, with an inadequacy in measuring the high-level skills, and mostly based on rote learning. This kind of an assessment approach is partially inadequate in measuring and evaluating high-level cognitive skills since the teacher is in an active role and the student is passive. Furthermore, with the traditional assessment tools, the skills and development potentials of the students in the system cannot be evaluated and recognized together (Sefer, 2006; Baki and Birgin, 2004).

In this respect, the starting point of this study was, on the one hand, an overview of the assessment and evaluation approaches in the curriculum prepared in the light of constructivist educational philosophy, and on the other hand, a determination of the levels of Turkish teachers, who are the practitioners of the program, in using performance-based (supplementary) assessment and evaluation tools in measuring the performances of students in the process. It is thought that determining the levels of the teachers will fill an important gap in the field in order to plan further activities and take necessary measures in education and training. Therefore, the study sought answers to the following questions:

- What are the assessment and evaluation approaches in the Turkish Course Curriculum?
- How often do Turkish teachers use the traditional and supplementary tools specified in the curriculum to measure students' performance in the process?

Method

The study was conducted using quantitative research methods, and the views of Turkish course teachers were taken through a survey to determine their awareness levels and the extent they use the assessment and evaluation tools. "Studies aimed at collecting data to determine specific characteristics of a group are called as *survey studies*." (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2016: 15). In this study, the survey model was used to determine the extent that Turkish course teachers use the assessment and evaluation tools by taking teacher opinions.

Population and Sample

The accessible population of the study was comprised of Turkish teachers working in Malatya province, and the sample, which was determined through simple random sampling method, consists of voluntary Turkish teachers, who could be reached by the researcher and who were working in secondary schools in Yeşilyurt District of Malatya province. A total of 120 teachers participated in the research. 53 of the participants were men and 67 were women. 80 of the sample are graduates of Department of Turkish Language Teaching, Faculty of Education. The rest of the teachers are either the graduates of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences or graduates of a different branch in the Faculty of Education. Among the teachers,104 completed bachelors' degrees and 13 completed postgraduate degrees. 3 participant teachers did not provide information about their educational level.

Data Collection Tool

In this study, in order to determine the extent that Turkish teachers use the assessment tools, a survey form was prepared in which the traditional and performance-based (supplementary) measurement tools that were included in the Turkish Course Curriculums of 2017, 2018 and 2019 were listed and which included statements questioning the frequency of using these tools. The content of the form concerning the assessment and evaluation tools in the programs were asked to two field experts in assessment and evaluation field and Turkish language education field through e-mail, and the form was given its final form based on their opinions.

Data Analysis

The form, which was prepared to determine the frequency of teachers in using the supplementary assessment-evaluation tools and traditional assessment-evaluation tools for detecting the performances of students in the process, was implemented on the sample and the outcomes were reported through simple statistical methods such as frequency and percentage.

Findings

Examining the "assessment and evaluation" parts of the MNE 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum, MNE 2018 Turkish Course Curriculum, and MNE 2017 Turkish Course Curriculum, it was determined that the assessment-evaluation practices identified in the program were classified as diagnostic evaluation, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation. As per the assessment and evaluation tools, they are rather supplementary tools for determining student performance than traditional ones. Furthermore, it was determined that certain tools were recommended such as attitude scale, student portfolios, authentic task, project assignments, interview, self-assessment, peer assessment, readiness testing, observation, grade scoring key, structured grid, diagnostic tree, word association test, group evaluation, checklist, and concept map.

Table 1. The levels of Turkish course teachers in using assessment-evaluation tools

Assessment Tools	Frequency and Percentage	I never use it	I rarely use it	I sometimes use it	I often use it	I always use it	Total
Short-answer	F	3	9	38	42	25	118
Items	%	2,5	7,5	31,6	35	20,8	100
Multiple-	F	1	3	17	59	39	119
Choice Items	%	0,83	2,5	14,1	49,1	32,5	100
Matching	F	1	6	35	50	25	117
Items	%	0,83	5	29,2	41,6	20,8	100
True-False	F	2	5	34	57	20	118
Items	%	1,6	4,1	28,3	47,5	16,6	100
Open Ended	F	0	11	23	49	36	119
Questions	%	0	8,3	19,1	40,8	30	100
Attitude	F	19	38	37	20	5	119
Scales	%	15,8	31,6	30,8	16,6	4,1	100
Student	F	18	26	44	23	8	119
Portfolios	%	15	21,6	36,6	19,1	6,6	100
Authentic	F	27	35	40	10	2	114
Tasks	%	22,5	29,1	33,3	8,3	1,6	100
Projects	F	11	8	36	30	33	118
	%	9,1	6,6	30	25	27,7	100
Interview	F	22	34	40	15	8	119
Forms	%	18,3	28,3	33,3	12,5	6,6	100
Self-	F	14	30	47	16	12	119
Assessment	%	11,6	25	39,1	13,3	10	100
Form							

Peer-Assessment Form	F	22	38	40	13	6	119
	%	18,3	31,6	33,3	10,8	5	100
Readiness Tests	F	11	20	43	30	14	118
	%	9,1	16,6	35,8	25	11,6	100
Observation Forms	F	21	19	51	19	8	118
	%	17,5	15,8	42,5	15,8	6,6	100
Grade Scoring Key	F	15	18	33	30	21	117
	%	12,5	15	27,5	25	17,5	100
Structured Grid	F	33	37	26	13	4	113
	%	27,5	30,8	21,6	10,8	3,3	100
Diagnostic Tree	F	33	32	35	9	6	115
	%	27,5	26,6	29,1	7,5	5	100
Word Association Test	F	17	17	37	37	9	117
	%	14,1	14,1	30,8	30,8	7,5	100
Group Evaluation Form	F	28	21	38	22	8	117
	%	23,3	17,5	31,6	18,3	6,6	100
Checklists	F	19	21	32	29	17	118
	%	15,8	17,	26,6	24,1	14,1	100
Concept Maps	F	15	14	33	33	24	119
	%	12,2	11,6	27,5	27,5	20	100

Based on the data in Table 1, it was determined that teachers responded that the most frequently used assessment-evaluation tools were multiple-choice items. Among the participant teachers, 49% reported that they often used multiple-choice items as an assessment tool, and 32,5% always. While 3 teachers reported that they rarely used multiple-choice items, only 1 teacher reported that he/she never used it.

Among the participant teachers, 30% stated that they always used open-ended questions. 78% of the teachers often and always use the open-ended questions. There is no teacher who doesn't use the open-ended question type.

When Table 1 is examined, it is observed that teachers never give up using the true-false items. According to this result, 47,7 % of the Turkish course teachers often, and 16,6 % of them always use true-false items. 2 teachers stated that they never used them.

Among the respondent teachers, 35 % often and 20,8% always use the short-answer items. Similarly, 41,6 % of the teachers often, and 20,8 % always used the matching items, which is among the traditional assessment tools.

31,6% of the participant Turkish teachers stated that they rarely used the attitude scales, which are among the diagnostic evaluation tools, while 30,8% of them stated to use them sometimes. On the other hand, a 4,1 % portion of the participants declared that they never used the attitude scales.

As per the student portfolio, which ensures a systematic monitoring of the student performance during the education process, 36,6% of the teachers mentioned that they sometimes used it. Total percentage of teacher using this method often and always is 25,7%.

Examining Table 1, it is understood that 42,5 % of the teachers often and always use the projects. 30 % of the teachers stated that they sometimes use the projects.

The participant teachers do not prefer using "often" the alternative assessment-evaluation tools such as interview, self-evaluation, peer and group evaluation, authentic tasks, and observation. While 33,3 % of the teachers state that they sometimes use the interview technique, 28,3 % state that they use it rarely. This comprises 61,6 % of the participant teachers in total. The total figure of the percentages of the teachers who sometimes (39,1%) and rarely (25%) use the self-evaluation forms is 64,1%. 33,3 % of the teachers use peer evaluation sometimes, and 31,6 % of them use it rarely. Group evaluation is

used by 31,6 % of the teachers sometimes, and 23,3 % of them never use it. Among the participant Turkish course teachers, 42,5 % reported that they sometimes used the observation forms and 33,3 % stated that they sometimes used the authentic tasks. The total percentage of the teachers who mentioned that they never or rarely used the authentic tasks was 51,6 %.

Examining the Table 1, it is concluded that the supplementary assessment-evaluation tools measuring the performances of students in the process such as grade scoring key, structured grid, and diagnostic tree are not also being used often by the teachers. 27,5% of the teachers use the grade scoring key sometimes. The total percentage of the teachers, who rarely use (30,8%) and never use (27,5%) structured grid, points that more than half of the participant teachers never or rarely preferred this method. Among the participant teachers, 29,1% state that they sometimes use and 27,5% report that they never use the diagnostic tree.

It was determined that the participant Turkish course teachers use the readiness test, word association test, checklist, and concept map more compared to other supplementary tools. Among the teachers, 35 % use the readiness test sometimes, and 25 % often. The total percentage of the teachers who mentioned that they used the word association test sometimes (30,8%) and often (30,8%) is 61,6 %. The rates of the teachers who mention that they use the checklist sometimes is 26,6% and who use often is 24,4%. The proportion of the teachers who use the concept maps sometimes is 27,5% and who use it often is 27,5%, with a total percentage of 55%.

In general terms, Table 1 points to the fact that the majority of the participant Turkish language teachers are using the traditional assessment-evaluation tools.

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

In this study, which was conducted to determine the level of Turkish teachers in using the assessment-evaluation tools suggested in the 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum designed in accordance with the constructivist approach, participant Turkish language teachers reported that they use the traditional assessment tools (multiple choice items, matching test, short-answer items, true-false type items) more compared to the performance-based (supplementary) assessment-evaluation tools. It was revealed that Turkish teachers mostly use the multiple-choice items among the traditional assessment and evaluation tools. More than half of the teachers use the multiple-choice item type to determine student achievement in a skill course such as Turkish. However, in the Turkish course, the required skills can only be achieved by the development of four learning fields, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, together. Multiple choice tests can only be used to assess reading ability. In order to assess and evaluate other learning areas, assessment and evaluation tools should be used that are based on learning process.

It was observed that teachers often use the open-ended questions that can be included in the category of supplementary assessment-evaluation tools and that can be used to measure high-level knowledge and skills. It was also determined that certain tools such as concept maps, project studies and word association tests are used at a higher rate compared to other tools aimed at measuring and evaluating students' performance during the education process. One's attitude towards a profession is of significant importance in transforming it into a skill or being successful in that profession. In this respect, that approximately 60% of the teachers rarely or sometimes use measurement tools that measure students' attitudes in Turkish course and in a given learning field points that due diligence is not given to the performance-based (supplementary) assessment and evaluation tools.

Various studies have been conducted about the problems experienced by teachers in using assessment and evaluation tools. Based on these previous studies, the reasons behind the fact that teachers use supplementary assessment tools in a lower rate compared to the traditional methods are insufficient knowledge of the teachers, thinking that these evaluation methods are complicated, insufficient time, negative attitudes of the students, difficulty in applying these methods in crowded classrooms, long time requirement of these evaluation methods, and the negative impacts of test-type examinations (Anıl and Acar, 2008; Duban and Küçükyılmaz, 2008; Demir, 2015; Güneş et al., 2010; Sidekli ve Altıntaş, 2018; Şimşek, 2011; Gömleksiz, Yıldırım and Yetkiner, 2011; Çetinkaya and Duran, 2011). The findings of these previous studies are supporting those of this study.

According to the results of this study, Turkish teachers use traditional assessment and evaluation tools, which are easier to evaluate and apply, more often than performance-based supplementary assessment and evaluation tools. The use of traditional assessment and evaluation tools more frequently than supplementary tools is not in line with the assessment and evaluation approach of the MNE 2019 Turkish Course Curriculum.

In line with the results of the research, the following suggestions can be made in order to expand the use of supplementary assessment and evaluation tools for student performance in instructional programs:

In accordance with the constructivist educational approach, it is suggested that teachers should use traditional assessment tools such as multiple-choice tests, true-false tests, short-answer tests, matching tests, as well as projects, student portfolios, grade scoring keys, self and peer evaluation, and observation forms together and more effectively in evaluation of the achievement of the students. Skill assessment should be conducted in the reading, listening, speaking and writing skill fields.

Students and parents should be informed about the assessment and evaluation tools proposed to be used in the program designated in accordance with the constructivist approach and it is needed to make the most effective use of these tools.

The in-service training seminars, which will be planned to increase the levels that teachers use assessment and evaluation tools and to address the problems they face, can be given by scholars practically.

Guidelines with extensive descriptions of assessment and evaluation tools including numerous examples can be prepared for teachers.

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