



A RESEARCH TO DETERMINE THE CULTURAL CODES OF TURKS WHO LIVING IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Kuzey Makedonya Cumhuriyetinde Yaşayan Türklerin Kültürel Kodlarını Tespit Etmeye Yönelik Bir Araştırma

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ABSTRACT

Within the scope of this study, the most important cultural codes that will better introduce and remind the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia in Turkey have been tried to be determined. For this purpose, a field study was conducted for the Turks living in North Macedonia. In the field research carried out within the scope of the post-doctoral research fellowship carried out within the scope of the support given by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK), interviews were conducted with the Turks living in the region. Approval for these interviews was obtained from the International Vision University Research and Publication Ethics Committee in line with the decision dated 24.10.2020. Survey questions were prepared in line with the data obtained from these interviews. The content of the survey questions is to determine which movies, TV series, artists, folk songs, dishes, desserts, athletes, events and people can represent the Turks living in North Macedonia. A total of 11 questions were prepared. The answer choices that are considered important are included in each question. There is no limitation in the choices. The prepared questions were asked to 11 people and their answers were briefly evaluated. With the answers given to these questions, it was tried to determine with which elements the Turks living in Macedonia should be introduced. Thus, a draft was created about the cultural codes of the Turks living in the region.

Keywords: Balkan Turks, North Macedonian Turks, Turkish culture, cultural codes, culture.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma kapsamında Kuzey Makedonya Cumhuriyeti'nde yaşayan Türkleri, Türkiye'de daha iyi tanıtabilecek ve hatırlatacak en önemli kültürel kodlar tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu amaçla Kuzey Makedonya'da yaşayan Türklere yönelik saha araştırması yapılmıştır. Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu TÜBİTAK'ın verdiği destek kapsamında yürütülen doktora sonrası araştırma bursu kapsamında yü-

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rütülen saha araştırmasında bölgede yaşayan Türklerle mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Bu görüşmeler için Uluslararası Vizyon Üniversitesi Araştırma ve Yayın Etik Kurulu'ndan 24.10.2020 tarihli karar doğrultusunda onay alınmıştır. Bu mülakatlardan elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda anket soruları hazırlanmıştır. Anket sorularının içeriği Kuzey Makedonya'da yaşayan Türkleri hangi filmlerin, dizilerin, sanatçıların, türkülerin, yemeklerin, tatlıların, sporcuların, etkinliklerin ve kişilerin temsil edebileceğini tespit etmeye yöneliktir. Toplam 11 soru hazırlanmıştır. Her bir soru içerisinde önemli görülen cevap şıkları konulmuştur. Şıklarda bir sınırlama yapılmamıştır. Hazırlanan sorular 11 kişiye sorulmuştur ve bu kişilerin verdikleri cevaplar kısaca değerlendirilmiştir. Bu sorulara verilen cevaplarla Makedonya'da yaşayan Türklerin hangi unsurlarla tanıtılması gerektiği tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Böylelikle bölgede yaşayan Türklerin kültürel kodları ile ilgili bir taslak oluşturulmuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Balkan Türkleri, Kuzey Makedonya Türkleri, Türk kültürü, kültürel kodlar, kültür.

Introduction

According to the realist approach, contrary to the idealist approach, Nation-States act with the aim of increasing their power in every field (Ateş, 2009; Jackson & Sorensen, 2007). One of these power struggles takes place in the cultural field. Countries try to prove that their own culture is “better” than the cultures of other countries. However, each country wants its own culture to be adopted and loved by other countries. Of course, this situation has different effects. At least, loving other cultures increases the touristic visit to that culture. This causes an increase in the tourism revenues of the countries. However, there will be those who want to study and work in countries whose culture is loved. This situation contributes to the production of quality labor in countries. In addition, the recognition and sympathy of a country by the youth of another country may cause these young people, who will become bureaucrats / diplomats in their own country in the future, to develop policies for the benefit of the country where they are educated (Uğurlu, 2021: 2). For this reason, countries want to apply cultural coding for other countries. Although cultural coding is used in different meanings¹, Uğurlu's definition of “cultural code” was used in our

¹ Terms such as “cultural code“, “culture coding”, “code culture” can be used with different meanings. According to V.N. Teliya the term “code culture” is expressed as “all words and phrases that contain various cultural phenomena in addition to their own meaning”, according to Gudkov it is expressed as “names and noun sets, which are capable of carrying some additional (secondary) meanings, apart from fulfilling the basic (first) meaning function of any (natural or artificial) object around human beings”, according to Krasnih it is expressed as “a

study. According to Uğurlu, the cultural code means “Each of the cultural assets, beliefs and practices included in the traditions and customs of a society” or “Each of the cultural values accepted by a society as its own”. The term “cultural coding” means “transferring the cultural values of one society to another society/individual” (2021: 4).

Today, Turks still live in the lands lost by the Ottoman Empire, which suffered great land loss after the Balkan Wars and the First World War, which took place at the beginning of the 20th century. The most important of these lands is the Balkans. Today, Turks still live in the Balkans region. One of the regions where Turks live is the Republic of North Macedonia. The oral culture of the Turks in North Macedonia, whose demographic and strategic importance in the Balkans is known, still continues to exist today, despite the extremely difficult and troublesome process experienced especially since the beginning of the 20th century. However, the Turks living here want to be remembered more by the Republic of Turkey, which they have adopted as their Motherland. They complain that people living in Turkey do not know the Turks in North Macedonia. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the cultural codes of the Turks living here. Based on this problem, this study was conducted.

Objective and Method of the Research

The aim of the study is to determine the common ties and cultural codes of the Turks living in North Macedonia in order to be better known and remembered in Turkey. For this purpose, firstly, interviews were conducted with Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia. For these interviews International Vision University Research and Publication Ethics Committee approval was obtained in accordance with the decision dated 24.10.2020. As a result of the interviews with tree source person (S.P.1; S.P.2; S.P.3) survey questions were prepared to determine which movies, TV series, artists, folk songs, dishes, desserts, athletes, events and people could represent

kind of invisible web through which culture divides, classifies, structures and values those around people.” (Saraç, 2019: 157). In Saraç’s work, “code cultures” or “culture codes” have meaning as follows: “Thanks to its dynamic, collective and systematic structure, all cultural data of societies from past to present are stored in cultural memory. The transfer of this valuable data to the next generations takes place in the language. For this, language records the universal, national and cultural values in the cultural memory of societies on language indicators. There are various codes in the language of almost every society that encrypt and decode this data. This cultural information plays a key role in learning and recognizing different societies and their cultures. These universal and national values are called code cultures or culture codes.” (2019: 157).

the Turks living in Macedonia. A total of 11 questions were prepared. The answer choices that are considered important are included in each question. There is no limitation in the choices. The prepared questions were asked to 11 persons, and the answers were briefly evaluated. If the sample of 11 people in our study is increased, more accurate data could be obtained. In addition, if this sampling takes place in other cities of northern Macedonia, the accuracy of the result will be even stronger. With the answers given to these questions, it was tried to determine what would better introduce the Turks living in Macedonia.

Survey Questions, Answers and Findings

<i>Question 1.</i> Which of the following films do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Bal Ülkesi (Honeyland)	7
b	En Zor Şey (The Hardest Thing)	-
c	Bal Kaymak (Honey Cream)	2
d	Acı Kiraz (Bitter Cherry)	-
e	All	2
f	None	-
g	No Idea	2

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that the movie “Bal Ülkesi (Honeyland)” will introduce them well, another movie that will introduce themselves well is the movie “Bal Kaymak (Honey Cream)”, and they think that the movies named “En Zor Şey (The Hardest Thing)” and “Acı Kiraz (Bitter Cherry)” should not be used to promote themselves. Since the leading actress of the movie Bal Ülkesi is a Turkish woman (Hatice) and this movie is an Oscar nominee, it was thought that it would introduce Turkish culture well. Hatice, the leading actress of the Oscar-nominated documentary film, is an ordinary Yörük woman and is very respectful to nature. She earns her money from beekeeping. She shares half of the honey she collects from the bees with the bees. This shows her respect for nature. For this reason, she has a very good image (Uğurlu, 2020). Therefore, it was thought that this movie would represent the Turks well.

Table 1. Question 1, Its Answers and Findings

Question 2. Which of the following TV series do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Elveda Rumeli (Goodbye Rumelia)	11
b	Balkan Düğünü (Balkan Wedding)	-
c	Son Yaz Balkanlar (Last Summer Balkans)	-
d	All	1
e	None	-
f	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that the TV series “Elveda Rumeli (Goodbye Rumelia)” will introduce themselves well. The series Farewell Rumeli tells about the Turkish culture of the Balkan lands becoming active. It shows the lives of peoples of different ethnic origins living in the region in a common or hybrid cultural structure. It presents one of the most successful examples of storytelling by discussing the cultures of living together (Akova & Demirkıran, 2013: 12). Because of all these features, it has been preferred as an element that is desired to be used in the promotion of Turks.

Table 2. Question 2, Its Answers and Findings

Question 3. Which of the following artists do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Zeki Müren	3
b	Yılmaz Morgül	-
c	Teoman	1
d	Arif Şentürk	6
e	Ertan Şaban	1
f	Filiz Ahmet	3
g	Suzan Kardeş	4

h	All	1
i	None	-
j	No Idea	-

Finding: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that the artist named “Arif Şentürk” will introduce themselves better. It was determined that Suzan Kardeş and after her Zeki Müren and Filiz Ahmet would introduce them well. They think that Teoman and Ertan Şaban cannot introduce them very well, and Yılmaz Morgül cannot introduce them well at all. The song called “Deryalar” became very famous with Arif Şentürk and was played as the opening hora (a kind of Macedonian Turks folk dance) at all weddings for a while. Arif Şentürk also participated in most of the Rumeli festivities and Deryalar was remembered as a very popular song (Şengül, 2016: 86). For this reason, it has been the most preferred option.

Table 3. Question 3, Its Answers and Findings

Question 4. Which of the following wedding customs do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	You cannot marry with a relative	7
b	You cannot marry with a neighbor’s girl/boy	1
c	Men and women have fun separately	6
d	All	1
e	None	-
f	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that the wedding customs of “women and men having fun separately” will introduce themselves well, especially after “not marrying relatives”. It is understood that they are of the opinion that the custom of “don’t marry the girl next door” is not a cultural code that should be used to introduce themselves. It is seen that options (a) and (c) received very close votes. These two favorites are the most preferred options. This is important in terms of revealing a very important difference between the two

applications. Option (a) is not a practice prohibited by Islam. However, option (c) is a situation that Islam wants to be implemented. Considering that the people participating in the survey are Muslims, it is remarkable that the answers given are close to each other. Therefore, the answers given by the participants in the survey are considered to be cultural, not religious.

Table 4. Question 4, Its Answers and Findings

Question 5. Which of the following wedding songs do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Mutfakta Trupçe (Radish in the Kitchen)	5
b	Kalk gelin hanım, yürü aygın baygın (Get up lady bride, walk unconscious)	5
c	All	4
d	None	-
e	No Idea	1

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that wedding ballads such as “Mutfakta Trupçe (Radish in the Kitchen)” and “Kalk gelin hanım, yürü aygın baygın (Get up lady bride, walk unconscious)” will introduce themselves well. The closeness of options (a), (b) and (c) to each other is remarkable. It is understood that these styles are close to each other, that the Turks living in northern Macedonia think that all the folk songs belonging to their wedding traditions will introduce themselves better. Any of these folk songs can be preferred. The important thing is to have a cultural code that shows the wedding customs.

Table 5. Question 5, Its Answers and Findings

Question 6. Which of the following dishes do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Büryan	4
b	Yahni	-
c	Petulitsa	2

d	Ajvar	2
e	All	5
f	None	-
g	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that all dishes such as büryan, yahni, petulitsa, ajvar will introduce themselves well. We could actually ask this question by changing. For example, if we had asked “which food do you like more”, the same answers would probably had been given. Therefore, the most preferred all (e) option here is the right choice. Because taste preferences can vary from person to person. It is understood from this that all dishes that are specific to cultures should be transferred as a cultural code element.

Table 6. Question 6, Its Answers and Findings

Question 7. Which of the desserts below do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Konak Tatlısı	3
b	Şekerpare	8
c	Revani	1
d	Trileçe	2
e	Helva	-
f	All	4
g	None	-
h	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question by the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that all sweets such as konak dessert, revani, trileçe, especially Şekerpare, will introduce themselves well. This question is actually similar to the previous (6th) question. However, we get a different response from our determination in the previous question. We base this situation on the conclusion that preferences in eating and drinking taste vary according to the taste of people. It is understood from the common answers given to

both questions that meal and desserts should be transferred to different cultures as a cultural code.

Table 7. Question 7, Its Answers and Findings

Question 8. Which of the following athletes do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Cedi Osman	5
b	Elif Elmas	2
c	Serdar Aziz	1
d	All	3
e	None	1
f	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that all athletes such as Elif Elmas and Serdar Aziz, especially Cedi Osman, think that they will introduce themselves well. The remarkable point in the answer to this question is that the basketball player gets higher votes than the football player. As a basketball player, Cedi Osman, scored higher than a football player Serdar Aziz. In fact, it is judged that the more popular game the player should score higher. In other words, the player of the more popular game should get a higher score. This direct proportion is the equation of mathematical science. But the answers given do not confirm this equation. This is because different factors come into play in the social sciences. The evaluation that comes into play here is probably the level of recognition of the people. This person was probably chosen because Cedi Osman is a more recognizable person.

Table 8. Question 8, Its Answers and Findings

Question 9. Which of the following people do you think would better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Abdulahkim Hikmet Doğan	4
b	İlhami Emin	1

c	Necati Zekeriya	1
d	Sabit Yusuf	2
e	Yahya Kemal Beyatlı	3
f	All	3
g	None	-
h	No Idea	-

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that people such as Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Sabit Yusuf, Necati Zekeriya and İlhami Emin, especially Abdulhakim Hikmet Doğan, think that they will introduce themselves well. The answers to this question show that there is no clear consensus among the evaluators. In fact, the most important reason for this situation is that the awareness or recognition level of the people in the question is not high. In addition, some of the people in the question (Abdulhakim Hikmet Doğan and Sabit Yusuf) are known locally (Gostivar City), but they are not generally (all of the North Macedonia) known. This situation caused the hesitation among the participants of our survey. If we had asked this question in another city other than Gostivar, we might have gotten a different answer. Because Abdulhakim Hikmet Doğan and Sabit Yusuf are mostly known people in the Gostivar city.

Table 9. Question 9, Its Answers and Findings

Question 10. Which of the following activities do you think will better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Çalıklı Festivali (Çalıklı Festival)	4
b	Türkçe Eğitim Bayramı (Turkish Education Day)	7
c	All	1
d	None	1
e	No Idea	1

Findings: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia; It has been determined that they think that celebrations such as Çalıklı Festivali (Çalıklı Festival) especially

“Türkçe Eğitim Bayramı” (Turkish Education Day) will introduce themselves well. The local effect is striking in the answers given to this question. Çalıkli is one of the villages in North Macedonia. Geographically, it is located in a different region from the city of Gostivar. Therefore, a relatively local effect can be seen in the answers given to this question. If we had asked this question in Çalıkli village, option (a) would probably have been chosen more. But in general, it can be said that the Turkish Education Day is a very important celebration for the Turks living in North Macedonia.

Table 10. Question 10, Its Answers and Findings

Question 11. Which of the following people do you think would better introduce the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia?		Total Votes of Survey Participants
a	Serdar Aziz	4
b	Hidayet Türkoğlu	5
c	Filiz Ahmet	4
d	All	3
e	None	-
f	No Idea	-

Finding: As a result of the answers given to this question, the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia think that people such as Hidayet Türkoğlu, Serdar Aziz and Filiz Ahmet they will introduce themselves well. This question is actually similar to 8th question. Some choices in both questions are different. Despite this, the evaluations of the answers given to these questions are close to each other. In the 8th question, Serdar Aziz as a football player, lost to a basketball player Hidayet Türkoğlu. Therefore it is not true that the more popular the game, the higher the player has to score. In other words, it is not true that the player of the more popular game should get a higher score. Since we cannot say that football is more popular than basketball, so football players should score higher than basketball players. So that this idea hasn't happened. Basketball player Hidayet Türkoğlu scored higher than football player Serdar Aziz. This situation is the same as the evaluation in 8th question.

Table 11. Question 11, Its Answers and Findings

Conclusion

As a result of the answers given to the questions prepared to determine the cultural codes of the Turks living in the Republic of North Macedonia, the following findings were obtained. They believe that these things (as below) will introduce themselves well: Among the TV series, especially the series named “Elveda Rumeli”; the customs of “You cannot marry with a relative” and “You cannot marry with a neighbor’s girl/boy”; the folk songs of “Trupçe in the Kitchen” and “Get up, bride lady, walk away unconscious”; dishes such as “büryan, yahni, petulitsa, ajvar”; desserts such as “konak dessert, revani, trileçe, especially şekerpare”; Cedi Osman and all athletes such as Elif Elmas and Serdar Aziz; artists such as Arif Şentürk, Suzan Kardeş, Zeki Müren and Filiz Ahmet, famous people Abdulhakim Hikmet Doğan and people like Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Sabit Yusuf, Necati Zekeriya, İlhami Emin, Hidayet Türkoğlu, Serdar Aziz and Filiz Ahmet; It has been determined that they think that celebrations such as the Çalıklı Festival, especially the Türkçe Eğitim Bayramı (Turkish Education Day).

The cultural codes identified in this research are the product of this small-scale study. If this study is expanded and a larger study is conducted, more reliable data on the cultural codes of the Turks living in North Macedonia can be obtained. Of course, these determinations are only the detection of code cultures. Also, how and with which tools these identified codes will be transferred to other cultures. Due to the scope of our study, we did not enter the scope of this problematic.

These identified elements should be used by the relevant institutions in Turkey. Basically, these data can be used in the education books of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey. Thus, students studying in the Republic of Turkey get to know their cognates living in the Balkans better and the ties between them are strengthened. Thus, Turkey applies cultural coding to both its own citizens and the Turks in the Balkans.

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