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A Study on Text Modification in the Field of Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language

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ABSTRACT

Language teaching is a process the purpose of which differs in individual and social dimensions. These differences and the insufficiency of mechanical and structured materials offered to students until recently led students as well as educators to seek more diverse, fun, and interesting tools. With the value given to the authentic text by the communicative approach, literary texts have also taken their old place in education. In foreign language teaching, presenting many reading texts in various text types to the student contributes to the teaching of words and the use of words in context and to the development of writing skills, as well as improving students' reading comprehension skills. However, to benefit effectively from the texts, the texts should be suitable for the students' language and interest level. When it comes to level-oriented material, text modification using criteria based on solid theoretical foundations is in the foreground. This study aims to determine the criteria needed for modifying stories for the learners of Turkish as a foreign language. To that end, Nation's (2001) and Sandom's (2013) classifications were discussed and adapted, and the modification criteria were set forth. After the text was modified to the A1, A2, and B1 levels, the linguistic features of the texts were compared, and the readability scores of the authentic and modified texts were evaluated by Bezirci & Yılmaz's (2010) formula. The results showed that the authentic text, B1 text, A2 text, and A1 text, respectively, follow a top-down structure in terms of educational levels. To have a qualitative evaluation of the modified texts, these texts were also presented to five (5) experts with a questionnaire. The results suggested that the criteria were mostly applicable; however, it's difficult to modify stories especially at the A1 level.

Key Words: Teaching Turkish as a foreign language, reading skill, text modification, narrative texts, story.

Yabancılar Türkçe Öğretiminde Metin Değiştirimi üzerine bir Çalışma

ÖZET

Yabancı dil öğretiminde, öğretim özellikle sınıf ortamıyla sınırlı kaldığında, okuma metinleri temel dil girdisini oluşturmaktadır. Son dönemlerde üzerinde durulan iletişimci yaklaşımın özgün metne yaptığı vurguyla yazınsal metinler de öğretimdeki eski yerini almıştır. Ayrıca okuma metinleri olarak yazınsal eserlerin öğretimde etkili olduğu; yazma ve okuma anlama becerilerinin yanı sıra sözcük öğrenimine de katkısı olduğu çalışmalarla ortaya konmuştur. Ancak metinlerden etkin bir şekilde yararlanılabilmesi için öğrencilere sunulan metinlerin dil ve ilgi düzeylerine uygun olması gerekmektedir. Dilsel zorluklar özellikle başlangıç ve orta seviyedeki öğrenciler için söz konusu eserlerin düzeye göre uyarlanmasını/değiştirilmesini gerektirmektedir. Bu nedenle bu çalışmada öykülerin değiştirilmesine yönelik ölçütlerin belirlenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Bu amaçla Nation'ın (2001) ve Sandom'un (2013) sınıflandırmaları üzerinde durulmuş ve değiştirim ölçütleri ortaya konmuştur. Metin A1, A2 ve B1 düzeylerine uyarlandıktan sonra metinlerin dilsel özellikleri doğrultusunda Bezirci ve Yılmaz'ın (2010) formülü kullanılarak özgün ve değiştirilmiş metinlerin okunabilirlik puanları hesaplanmıştır. Sonuçlar; özgün metnin, B1 metninin, A2 metninin ve A1 metninin eğitim düzeyleri açısından yukarıdan aşağıya (zordan kolayca) bir yapı izlediğini göstermiştir. Okunabilirlik puanlarının yanı sıra nitel bir değerlendirme için bir sormaca hazırlanmış ve beş (5) uzmandan metinlerle ilgili görüş alınmıştır. Sormaca sonuçları, ölçütlerin büyük oranda uygulanabilir olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte A1 düzeyinde değişiklik yapmanın zorluğu ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancılar Türkçe öğretimi, okuma becerisi, metin değiştirim, anlatı metinleri, öykü.

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1. Introduction^{3 4}

Since they are valuable original texts, provide cultural and linguistic enrichment, and support reading, writing, speaking, listening, and communication skills, literature in general and stories in particular are used in language teaching. Many studies (Da Silva, 2001; Erkaya, 2005; Mixon & Temu, 2006; Georgopoulou & Griva, 2012; Nasirahmadi, Madarsara & Aghdam, 2014; Karabacak & Erdem, 2015) have shown that the inclusion of stories in foreign language teaching environments increases motivation and success. It has also been stated that it develops students' high-level thinking skills and attracts the attention of students as it provides individual and emotional participation. However, considering the language levels, making certain lexical, morphological, and syntactic modifications for the stories to be applied with the beginning and intermediate level students has become necessary.

In the study, it was aimed to reveal the methodological principles necessary for the production of appropriate learning materials in the field of teaching Turkish to foreigners, modification of the stories to the students' levels by adopting applicable text modification criteria, and paving the way for more literary texts for extensive reading.

1.1. Narrative Texts - Stories

With concepts such as autonomous learning controlled by individuals by organizing their learning activities, teaching has begun to be student-centered, and the trend towards out-of-classroom teaching and teaching/learning materials have increased. Aydoğdu (2009, p. 70) stated that "for the process to take place effectively, various resources in written, oral, visual and computer media should be available to the students". In this sense, among the literary works, the story stands out as an important source that can be referenced both inside and outside the classroom.

The stories are extremely suitable for use in teaching, in the classroom environment, especially because of their relative shortness - that they can be read in one blow- the scarcity of heroes, the simplicity of intrigue, the relative scarcity of descriptions, and partly due to these characteristics, conveying the subject and emotion in the most striking and impressive words -or structures-. It is known that the stories are effective in foreign language learning and have managed to attract the attention of students with their lingual richness and diversity. Rossiter (2002, p. 2) also mentions the need to appreciate the power of stories in teaching and learning, referring to the centrality of the narrative in human experience.

It is thought that tension and intrigue in -well-structured- stories will increase the students' motivation in teaching environments with their interesting and engaging features. Besides, stories with actions involving motion keep the reader alive.

Studies on the use of literary works and especially stories in language teaching (Da Silva, 2001; Erkaya, 2005; Nasirahmadi et al., 2014; Karabacak & Erdem, 2015) also emphasized that using stories improves reading, writing, listening, speaking, and communication skills. Murdoch (2002) stated that short stories are an appropriate educational tool for integrating reading skills with productive skills

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(writing and speaking) and will help to teach five basic language skills at all language levels (cited in Nasirahmadi et al., 2014, p.1327). Rossiter (2002, p. 5) argued that the actual use of narrative and story in adult learning -in particular- is limitless because they are endless expressions of interpretive interaction between teachers, students, and the content.

Erkaya (2005) and Nasirahmadi et al. (2014) stated that using stories in foreign language teaching not only improves fundamental skills but also flourishes high-level thinking skills such as critical thinking.

Since literary works are not structured for a specific purpose such as language teaching, they are linguistic materials that can be interpreted differently no matter when they are written and offer different language uses (Da Silva, 2001, p. 172). Collie and Slater (1997) also stated that "a literary work can transcend both time and culture to speak directly with the reader in another country or a different period of history" (cited in Da Silva, 2001, p. 172). In terms of usage of different languages, literary texts provide students with a meaningful and catchy context, as they include words or phrases, expressions, grammar structures, and in some cases different types of text (memoir, letter, etc.).

In short, the use of stories in language teaching/learning will increase linguistic, social, and cultural awareness, bring individuality and subjectivity to the forefront and help the development of cognitive skills. Zipes (1995) and Morgan and Rinvoluceri (1992) evaluated the story as a fundamental part of the approach that targets all aspects of language in learning by reaching "a person as a whole" and addressing the subconscious (cited in Mixon & Temu, 2006, p. 14). The opinions of different researchers discussed above also support this idea.

1.2. Reading Skill and the Readability of the Texts

Reading texts are one of the critical tools in teaching, as they are the main source of linguistic input (textbooks, worksheets, written exams) for foreign language learners, especially in the classroom environment. When evaluated in terms of autonomous learning, graded books, which are supplementary sources for individuals who learn the target language in a country where that language is not spoken, are also one of the important resources for improving reading skills. In foreign language teaching, presenting reading texts in various text types to the student contributes to the teaching of words and the use of words in context and to the development of writing skills, as well as improving their reading comprehension skills. However, to benefit effectively from the texts, the texts presented to the students are to be suitable for their language and interest level. A text that is above the students' level causes them to lose their self-confidence by decreasing their motivation, while a text below their level may cause the loss of student's interest. For this reason, it is important to determine the texts by the target student group and to teach the language following their purpose. Çoban (2014, p.97) also states that the structural and semantic dimensions should be addressed in the meaning of the text and the concrete and abstract codes that make up these dimensions should be resolved, in this context, the text should be semantically and structurally appropriate to the student's level.

Various studies have been conducted over the years to define the readability levels to determine the suitability of the texts to the students' level. As a result of these studies, it was stated that especially the sentence length affects the readability of the text (cited in Çetinkaya, 2010, p. 19). In terms of the

word variable, Chall (1988, p. 3-4) mentions that it is difficult for the reader to interpret the text in texts with words with a low frequency of use or with a large number of unknown words (cited in Çetinkaya, 2010, p. 23). Similarly, Budak (2005) states that readability can be determined by known and unknown words in the text rather than word length and sentence length, and the more the number of unknown words increases, the harder the text becomes (cited in Çoban, 2014, p. 100). However, the findings of the research reveal that the main effect on readability was mainly due to sentence and word features. Therefore, in the formulas put forward for estimating the readability, the number of words in the sentence and the number of syllables in the word are taken into account.

In the study, the readability values were estimated using Bezirci & Yılmaz (2010) formula.

In their study, Bezirci and Yılmaz stated that the features which affect readability in Turkish are the average sentence length and the frequency values of the syllables. Researchers stated that for Turkish texts, readability changes according to the ratio of words with three or more syllables in the text (2010, pp. 57-58). Therefore, frequency values of the syllables are evaluated as the ratio of words with 3, 4, 5, 6 or more syllables to total number of words, excluding words with one and two syllables. In line with these ratios, the coefficients were determined for words with three or more syllables and the square roots of the values were taken to form a link between the numbers. Accordingly, the new formula is defined as follows:

$$YOD = \sqrt{OKS \times ((H3 \times 0,84) + (H4 \times 1,5) + (H5 \times 3,5) + (H6 \times 26,25))}$$

In the formula, YOD refers to the new readability value while OKS refers to average word number and H to the number of syllables. With the result of the formula, a text is classified as easy at 3.03, moderate at 8.30, and difficult at 18.82.

Readability formula is believed to be based on the number of syllables, words, and sentences in the text and that complicated linguistic structures are reduced or shortened in the modified texts greatly affects the results obtained. In this sense, taking expert opinions to evaluate the comprehensibility of the modified texts and their propriety to the level will be complementary to their readability in foreign language teaching.

1.3. Text Modification in Foreign Language Teaching

With the prioritization of reading activities in second/foreign language teaching, written and literary texts in particular come to the fore among authentic materials. In the studies on the use of authentic texts in language teaching, literary texts have been stated to be quite useful, and they can make reading lessons in foreign language teaching fun due to the preconditions for presenting new and interesting information as they are aimed for native speakers.

Besides, authentic texts seem to be highly important because they are real discourses, increase motivation, provide information about what is happening in the world, include various text types, contain language uses not embodied in textbooks, offer a creative approach to teaching, and encourage extensive reading (Tamo, 2009. p. 75-76). Cathcart (1989) also emphasizes that the use of authentic texts in foreign language teaching contributes to the development of students' communication skills (cited in Lüleci, 2010, p. 543). However, it is not always possible to use these texts in their original form. Under the criteria addressed in text selection, it cannot be considered right

to present each authentic text to each student group. The fact that a text is too easy or too difficult for a student can prevent the achievement of the desired goal in teaching.

Anani Sarab and Karimi (2008, p. 30) state that Krashen proposed two solutions to make the input comprehensible, one being the use of context by the learner and the other using simplified input by the teacher. In this sense, besides the real context presented with a communicative approach, text modifications are made to make the most of the richness of the language and to reveal more material for students at all levels.

Text modifications are linguistic changes and adaptations on a text so that students can better understand it. The main purpose of the modified texts is to take advantage of the diversity offered by the authentic texts related to the target language and culture, to reduce the students' anxiety in the teaching environment, and to increase the comprehensibility of the text. For this purpose, various morphological, syntactic, and lexical changes are made on them, and in some cases simplification is made by reducing, deleting, and summarizing to preserve the message, and in some cases, it is expanded with elaborations and explanations. Several methods are used together in line with the students' needs. It was stated that the basis of these practices is to provide understandable input to the student on the one hand and to improve the interaction and functioning in the classroom on the other.

The use of authentic texts for beginner and intermediate levels in language teaching seems difficult. Researchers who want to get away from the artificiality of the texts in the teaching materials and benefit from the positive features of the authentic texts mentioned above, go through certain changes/adaptations according to the levels.

Text modification is mainly achieved through simplification, elaboration, or easification.

Nation (2001) and Sandom (2013) discussed text modification in three categories: simplification, elaboration, and easification. While the text is shortened in simplification, the grammatical and lexical difficulty decreases accordingly. Simplification includes shorter sentences, simpler syntactic structure and easier vocabulary, a canonical sequence. In general, the purpose of simplification is to increase the comprehensibility of the text for low-level readers in terms of literacy level. The concept of elaboration, which has a similar purpose, can be expressed as adding explanations next to the words that are difficult for the reader to understand while preserving the words or structures in the authentic text. However, contrary to simplification, the text gets longer due to annotations here. Elaboration increases the redundant knowledge (repetitions, synonyms, etc.) and clarifies the basic thematic relationships (Oh, 2001, p. 70). These two concepts, simplification and elaboration, are considered the most emphasized and applied types of change in text modification.

Ragan (2006) states that the simplified text will reduce the linguistic and cognitive load that the student will have to deal with, allowing them to focus on the main meaning in the text (cited in Durmuş, 2013a, p. 143-144). The results of experimental studies (Choi, 1996; Jeong, 1987; Kim, 1985; Lee, 1986) in which written inputs were simplified both in syntactic and lexical levels showed that these simplified texts had positive effects on students' reading comprehension skills (cited in Oh, 2001, p. 71). Again, in the study of Oh (2001), contrary to the common belief, it was revealed that especially high-level students achieved higher scores in simplified texts compared to the authentic and elaborated texts.

However, Ragan (2006) stated that encountering only easy texts would not activate students' strategic thinking skills, thus emphasizing that the long-term effects of simplified texts could be negative (cited in Durmuş, 2013a, p.144). For these reasons, it has been stated with the experimental studies that in some cases, depending on the student level, elaboration may be more effective than simplification; furthermore, it increases comprehension while preserving the authentic text, thus more emphasis has been given on elaboration in recent years.

Nation (2001) defines easification as “making a text easy to read by adding different types of supports such as diagrams, pictures, graphics and tables, text summaries, dictionaries/explanations, orientation questions, and titles without changing the words in the text” (Sandom, 2013, p. 68). In different studies it has also been stated that the procedures under easification can be used to preserve the authenticity of the text instead of simplification and to make the reading experience more realistic (Reading Skills, n.d.). Sandom (2013, p. 68) also states that easification differs from simplification and elaboration that it does not include in-text lexical changes. It was emphasized that the support tools addressed with easification instead of these changes would be more useful, and it was stated that the student could directly benefit from the authentic texts and that the possibility of a harsh transition from the modified texts to the authentic texts would be reduced. Selection of appropriate authentic texts and presenting the aforementioned easification tools to students will enable students to encounter authentic texts at the early stages of teaching. Besides, the presentation of necessary explanations and visual materials, etc. together with the text will increase the motivation level of the student by creating a sense of trust.

It is seen that the analyzed modification methods address similar points and offer related processes. However, it seems more appropriate to elaborate the classification to make them a little clearer and to facilitate applicability.

Nation (2001, pp.270-271) suggested four (4) ways to modify a text as simplification, elaboration, easification, and negotiation to make the reading of a text better, more understandable, and more accessible for vocabulary learning. The fourth dimension was not included in the study because negotiation concerns classroom management and classroom interaction issues, and this study is mostly text-based, and the types of simplification, elaboration, and easification discussed in this section in general terms are emphasized in the study. For simplification, three dimensions that were determined by Sandom (2013, 57-58), mostly based on the research of Mountford (1976), Kim and Snow (2009), Leow (1997), and West (cited in Tickoo, 1993, xiii) are addressed, and the classification is presented by making certain changes. For elaboration and easification, the basic classification by Sandom is discussed.

The classification arranged for the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Classification adapted for the study*

1. Simplification

1.1. Syntactic simplification

- 1.1.1. Dividing complex sentences into multiple simple sentences
- 1.1.2. Resolving noun clauses, relative clauses and adverbial clauses into separate sentences
- 1.1.3. Standardizing tense relationships
- 1.1.4. Filling in anaphoric links
- 1.1.5. Reducing the use of reported speech
- 1.1.6. Resolving passive sentences into active ones
- 1.1.7. Restructuring inverted sentences

1.2. Lexical simplification

- 1.2.1. Substituting lower frequency words for higher frequency words (including idioms)
- 1.2.2. Rewriting
- 1.2.3. Deleting unnecessary or difficult words
- 1.2.4. Lexicalizing modal meanings
- 1.2.5. Reducing unconventional use of words (semantic)

1.3. Content simplification

Using narrative schema

2. Elaboration

- 2.1. Elaborating lower frequency words with higher frequency words (paraphrasing)
- 2.2. Clarifying implicit concepts, presuppositions through repetition and paraphrasing
- 2.3. Making connections explicit (using conjunctions and identifiers)
- 2.4. Highlighting main concepts by repetition, derivation

3. Easification

Glossary.

2. Method

This study aims to reveal understandable and readable narrative texts in accordance with A1, A2, and B1 levels with text modification criteria adopted in the field of teaching Turkish to foreigners. In this section, the methods followed for this purpose are explained in detail and the findings are presented with examples from the stories. Due to the constraints, one example will be given for each criterion in the modification phase.

Descriptive research constitute the design of this research. In the study, the modification criteria are described and the results of this procedure are explained.

2.1. Instruments

Ankara University TÖMER Yeni Hitit 1 (Beginner, A1 & A2), Yeni Hitit 2 (Intermediate, B1) Turkish textbooks for foreigners, which are prepared in line with the descriptors of the European Language Portfolio, were scanned and grammar subjects on A1, A2, and B1 levels were determined. The vocabulary lists in Yeni Hitit textbook were obtained through the vocabulary study in which Aydın (2015) examined the frequency of words in Turkish teaching books such as Yeni Hitit, Gazi TÖMER, Gökkuşuğu, İstanbul, İzmir, and Lale books. For the study on vocabulary, Turkish National Corpus (<http://www.tnc.org.tr/index.php/tr/>), TDK Yazılı Türkçenin Kelime Sıklığı Sözlüğü (Word Frequency Dictionary of Written Turkish) (hereinafter called KSS) and online Turkish dictionary (TDK Güncel Türkçe Sözlük) were referenced. Besides, the vocabulary, the numbers of syllables, words, and sentences in both the authentic text and the modified texts were determined and processed in MS Excel and the readability scores were calculated with the readability formula of Bezirci & Yılmaz (2010). A questionnaire was also prepared to obtain expert opinion on the suitability of the modified texts to the levels.

2.2. Procedures

In the first phase of the study, the vocabulary lists in the Yeni Hitit textbook presented by Aydın (2015) were processed in an Excel to facilitate the word search. The grammar topics specified in the Yeni Hitit textbook were also listed similarly for the three levels: A1, A2, and B1. The vocabulary of the final form of the texts, modified by using these lists and modification criteria, was processed in Excel. The total number of words, the number of words per sentence, the number of syllables (3, 4, 5, 6+ syllable words), the number of sentences, and the number of paragraphs were calculated from these lists to reveal the linguistic features and to measure the readability levels of the texts. The readability scores of the modified texts were obtained through the readability formula of Bezirci and Yılmaz (2010). However, to determine the comprehensibility of the text and its suitability to the level (Terence Project, 2012), a questionnaire was applied with five experts.

2.3. Selection of the Stories

First, the stories to be modified were determined for the study. While determining the stories, both the works of the leading names of classical Turkish literature and the stories of contemporary authors were addressed by scanning the anthologies ("Güzel Yazılar ve Hikâyeler 1" and "Güzel Yazılar ve Hikâyeler 2" by Turkish Language Society; İş Bankası anthology; YKY anthology; the stories of the authors covered in the book "Romanda ve Öyküde Gerçeklik Arayışları: Edebiyatımızın Yol Haritası" by Feridun Andaç). Observing the reflection of the applied text modification criteria in classical and

contemporary stories has been effective during this choice. While determining the anthologies, authors and stories, the experts in the field of Turkish Language and Literature and Turkish Education were also consulted. Besides, the following criteria were taken into account in the selection of the stories:

- a. The text has fabula,
- b. The event in the text is interesting and it arouses a sense of curiosity,
- c. The event in the text is realistic,
- d. The event in the text is universal,
- e. The story does not contain very intense rhetoric, has a relatively simple narrative,
- f. The story is short enough to be covered in the lesson,
- g. The story is up-to-date/accessible.

Based on the criteria, six (6) stories were chosen. These are Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu by Murat Gülsoy; Fındık by Sait Faik Abasıyanık; Heykel by Haldun Taner; Kalemler by Yaşar Kemal; O Bakış by Cemil Kavukçu; and Perili Köşk by Ömer Seyfettin. The information related to the focalization and narrator types in the stories are shown in the table below:

Table 2. Selected stories, focalization and narrator type

	Story	Author	Focalization	Narrator Type
1	Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu	Murat Gülsoy	Internal focaliser	Autodiegetic narrator & Heterodiegetic narrator
2	Fındık	Sait Faik Abasıyanık	Internal focaliser	Heterodiegetic narrator
3	Heykel	Haldun Taner	Internal focaliser	Autodiegetic narrator
4	Kalemler	Yaşar Kemal	Internal focaliser	Homodiegetic narrator & Heterodiegetic narrator
5	O Bakış	Cemil Kavukçu	Internal focaliser	Autodiegetic narrator
6	Perili Köşk	Ömer Seyfettin	Internal focaliser	Heterodiegetic narrator

It's thought that the themes /mercy/ (Fındık), /love/ (Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu), /friendship/ (O Bakış), /greed/ (Perili Köşk), /arrogance/ (Heykel), /poverty/ (Kalemler and Fındık), and /shame/ (Kalemler and Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu) are universal and this may arouse the interest of the learners.

2.4. Modification of the Texts by the Determined Criteria

2.4.1. Simplification

2.4.1.1. Content Simplification: Narratological Analysis

Through Greimas' canonical narrative schema, the texts were evaluated at the narrative level. The narrative schema ensures that the basic structure of the narrative is revealed by excluding all descriptions and auxiliary/secondary components. The narrative schema is important to preserve the essence and to make simplification as much as possible. Apart from this, long descriptions that form

the background, the events and dialogues that do not affect the main event much and that can be considered secondary were reduced.

2.4.1.2. Syntactic and Lexical Simplification

a. Analysis and Transformation

In the analysis phase, the text was divided into sentences, and each sentence was numbered. Taking into account the content simplification, some sentences were deleted due to the aforementioned criteria. Then, lexical and morphological elements that are complex and difficult for the level in question were marked.

The text obtained after the determination of the structures to be deleted and changed in the analysis phase formed the input of the transformation phase, and the modification procedures were taken up. Below, for each criterion determined before, the procedures are explained with an example from language proficiency levels.

2.4.1.2.1. Syntactic Simplification

Seven procedures are specified for syntactic simplification. In line with these procedures, the texts were modified for the relevant levels. However, following the "input hypothesis" for language acquisition in teaching, some grammatical structures that are not covered at that level, and words that are not included in the vocabulary lists of the mentioned level remained the same.

Dividing complex sentences into multiple simple sentences

The first procedure was to divide long and complex sentences of the text. Two or more sentences were formed by dividing linked sentences and long-ordered sentences after determining sentence boundaries. The aim was to provide ease of reading by reducing the number of words per sentence.

In Example 1, a divided sentence for A1 level is presented. This ordered sentence, from the Heykel story, was divided into two sentences by the first verb boundary, which is linked by a comma.

Example 1

AT⁵: [...] "Peki meseleyi bir kere şehir meclisine arzeder, neticeyi size bildiririz" dedi, ayağa kalktı.

MT⁶-A1: [...] "Peki, bu konuyu belediye meclisinde anlatacağım. Sonucu size söyleyeceğim" dedi, ayağa kalktı.

Resolving noun clauses, relative clauses, and adverbial clauses into separate sentences

Sentences with such clauses are either divided or deleted. In the case of division, clauses containing nominalization, qualifiers containing participles (relative clauses), and expressions with gerunds are marked as boundaries.

⁵ Authentic text

⁶ Modified text

Example 2 shows the separation of the nominalization structure in a sentence from the Heykel story and the modified form of the sentence containing B1 level structure – namely nominalization – according to the A2 level. The verb “olmak” was deleted and the first sentence was left as a nominal sentence. A noun was referred to the previous sentence in the second one, and the word “şahit” in the vocabulary of the B1 level was replaced with another word with a close meaning from the A2 level word list.

Example 2

AT: Dürüst bir tüccar olduğuma yüzlerce şahit gösterebilirim.

MT-A2: Dürüst bir tüccarım. Buna yüzlerce tanık gösterebilirim.

Standardizing tense relationships

With the standardization of tense relations, the use of time expressions and morphemes taught at related levels, especially for A1 students, comes to the fore.

In Example 3, a modified form of a sentence from the Kalemler story is presented. Since "zaman + ol-" structure in AT is not known at the B1 level, present tense was used with the verb. Adding time expression, the links became clear.

Example 3

AT: Altın yüzük çıktığı da olur.

MT-B1: Bazen altın yüzük de çıkar.

Filling in anaphoric links

In the authentic text, the sentences where the subject or another element was deleted were filled with the name or pronoun to make the relevant subject (or any other element) clear and comprehensible. To avoid repetition, the empty pronoun is also used in divided complex sentences where the agent or the patient was the same.

The following example is from the Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu story. In the A1 level text, the sentence is completed by adding a subject (hiç kimse) and a pronoun referring to the previous sentence as a whole (bunu). The participle suffix -(y)An was removed and the verb of the sentence was changed to "sormak".

Example 4

AT: Kemal'e soran olmamıştı.

MT-A1: Hiç kimse bunu Kemal'e sormadı.

Reducing the use of reported speech

The reported speech was transformed into dialogues. Since reported speech is taught at the B1 level, this process was carried out especially for the A1 and A2 level texts.

Conversations and structures such as "he said", "he asked" were also preserved in the texts.

In Example 5, the indirect statement (clause formed with subordinating suffix –Dik) in the sentence from the Heykel story was deleted since it was above the students' level and the sentence was re-formed in a direct speech.

Example 5

AT: Sonra kapıcı geldi, memurların beni görmek istediklerini söyledi.

MT-A2: Sonra kapıcı geldi, "Memurlar sizi görmek istiyor", dedi.

Resolving passive sentences into active ones

Sentences with active voices were formed by changing passive and causative voices especially for students at A1 and A2 levels.

In Example 6, the passive structures in the sentence taken from the Heykel story were changed for the A2 level. The passive voice verbs "incelemek" and "karara varmak" in the text were changed for the level in question, and the active voice verb "incelemek" with an agent and a noun were introduced. Since the word "başvurmak" is in the B1 level vocabulary, the word was replaced with "gitmek" from the A1 level vocabulary. The verb "savsaklamak", which is far above the level, was deleted.

Example 6

AT: Bir ay sonra başvurduğum, "Daha inceleniyor, henüz bir karara varılmadı" diye savsakladılar.

MT-A2: Bir ay sonra tekrar gittim, "İnceliyoruz, henüz bir karar yok" dediler.

Restructuring inverted sentences

The sentences that were not in the "Subject-Object-Verb" order were changed and canonical structures were formed. However, to show flexibility in syntax, a few sentences were kept in their original forms.

The following sentence was taken from the Perili Köşk story. In the example where the inverted structure was re-arranged and the canonical sequence was provided, the metonymy was removed, and the omitted element was added.

Example 7

AT: On iki kişi nasıl sığarız beş odaya!

MT-B1: On iki kişiyiz, beş odalı eve nasıl sığarız?

2. 4. 1. 2. 2. Lexical Simplification

For lexical substitution process under lexical simplification, the word list of Yeni Hitit coursebook, which was listed in Aydın's (2015) study, Turkish National Corpus and online Turkish dictionary (TDK Güncel Türkçe Sözlük) were referenced. At the same time, KSS prepared by Göz (2003) was used to replace the words by frequency. Words with a high frequency of use increase readability and intelligibility, which makes it easier for foreign language students to feel included and to better understand the text. The titles of the characters in the stories were largely preserved (Çöpçü Mehmet, Rüstem Çavuş, Hacı Niyazi Efendi, Sermet Bey).

Substituting higher frequency words for lower frequency words (including idioms)

Words with high frequency were substituted for words with low frequency. It is thought that particularly for beginner-level students, not having many unknown words in the text will increase motivation and encourage students for reading.

In Example 8, there is a sentence from the story O Bakış. In this sentence, which was changed for the A1 level, the verb "dinmek", which is not in the vocabulary of the Yeni Hitit course book was replaced with the verb "durmak" in the vocabulary of the A1 level. In KSS, the frequency of the word "dinmek" is determined as 13, while the frequency of the word "durmak" is 1091. In the National Corpus, when considered in terms of all written sources, the word "dinmek" has a frequency of 24.79, while the word "durmak" has a frequency of 1125.86. When the search is limited to the imaginative prose section, and fiction and verse text type, the frequency of the word "dinmek" is 10.49, and the frequency of the word "durmak" is 460.86.

Example 8

AT: "Dinmedi, değil mi?" dedi araya giren suskunluğu bozmak için.

MT-A1: "Yağmur durmadı, değil mi?" dedi.

Rewriting

Especially for beginners, rewriting was used for long, complex, difficult-to-understand sentences containing advanced syntactic and morphological structures. This procedure is applied only when the lexical or morphological substitution was not sufficient.

An example of rewriting for level A2 is presented in Example 9 below. The original sentence in the Perili Köşk story was given in two sentences in the MT and the order was changed. Lexical (hükmetmek, kovuk) and morphological (-(y)A, -IncA) difficulties in AT were eliminated in MT, and nominalization and words familiar to the A2 level were preferred. With the postposition "göre" the references are also clear.

Example 9

AT: Eliyle sıkı sıkıya tutup hissetmeyince bir şeyin varlığına hükmetmezdi, gözle kulak

onca birer yalan kovuğuydu.

MT-A2: Sermet Bey'e göre göz ve kulak yalan doluydu. Bir şeye inanmak için dokunmak gerekirdi.

Deleting unnecessary or difficult words

The elements that would not affect the meaning of the sentence to a great extent, and that would not help facilitate reading comprehension for the students, were determined and removed from the sentence.

Example 10 shows how a sentence from the O Bakış story was changed to the B1 level in line with the procedure. The words "dayamak" and "sarsılmak", which are not in the vocabulary of the level in question, were deleted. Only the structure with converbial suffix (-(y)ken) was moved to the MT, and the sentence was completed by adding the adverb "orada".

Example 10

AT: Onu, alnını masaya dayamış sarsıla sarsıla ağlarken bıraktım.

MT-B1: Onu orada ağlarken bıraktım.

Lexicalizing modals

The meaning of the dependent morphemes (-mElİ, -(y)Ebil-) used for modalities such as imperative, possibility, ability, permission was given with independent morphemes (gerek, gerekli, olası, bence etc.).

The grammatical marker of necessity (-mElİ) in Turkish in the sentence taken from the story Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu was deleted, and the verb "gerekmek" was used in the MT in Example 11.

Example 11

AT: Hayır, buna kesinlikle bir son vermeliydi.

MT-A1: Buna kesinlikle bir son vermek gerekiyordu.

Reducing unconventional use of words (semantic)

The words that were used other than their basic meanings, such as connotation or figurative meaning in the texts were replaced with the ones which express the said meaning as the basic meaning, especially at level A1 and A2.

Example 12 contains an example from the story O Bakış. In the text prepared for the A2 level, the first clause in the AT was deleted. The expression "bakarsın", which shows prediction and possibility, was replaced with "belki" as a unit of discourse to increase intelligibility. The verb "yağmak" was used instead of the verb "çevirmek", the meaning of which is "to start to have a different quality" in the sentence.

Example 12

AT: Burası yüksek tabii, bakarsın gece kara çevirir.

MT-A2: Belki gece kar yağar.

2.4.2. Elaboration

In elaboration the aim is to increase the students' level of understanding, which is performed by adding information next to unknown or difficult words in the text, by using the necessary conjunctions in the transitions between sentences, and by completing the words and grammatical structures that are omitted in the sentence. For this purpose, four processes were carried out in the study.

Elaborating lower frequency words with higher frequency words (paraphrasing)

Some words or phrases that were thought to be difficult for students to understand were re-expressed through explanation, paraphrasing, or the use of superordinates.

The example below is taken from the Perili Köşk story. The sentence was elaborated with the explanation given with the word "koru", which is not included in the vocabulary of the A2 level. With the explanation, the MT can be used at the level.

Example 13

AT: Ertesi akşam koruya gitti.

MT-A2: Ertesi akşam koruya, ağaçların arasına gitti.

Clarifying implicit concepts, presuppositions through repetition and paraphrasing

Elliptical expressions were completed with the repetition of words and phrases, and implicit expressions were made explicit.

In the example below taken from the Perili Köşk story, the deleted element (head of the noun phrase) in the sentence was added and made clear in the MT. In addition, the tense on the verb in the AT was changed according to the level.

Example 14

AT: Ama üç seneliğini peşin isterim.

MT-A1: Ama üç yılın kirasını peşin istiyorum.

Making connections explicit (using conjunctions and identifiers)

The relations provided by grammatical structures or perceived by the reader through inference were made visible.

In Example 15, the second sentence in AT is in a sense of warning for the hearer/receiver and connects a conditional statement to the previous sentence. The link was made explicit by using the conjunction "ama" at the beginning of the second sentence in the MT.

Moreover, lexical elements such as "katlanmak (B1)", and morphemes such as subordinator (nominalization) (A2), future tense (A2), and conditional suffix (B1), which are above the A1 level, were changed. Thus, the sentence presented with the conditional structure in the AT is given with the adverb "bu yüzden" in the MT.

Example 15

AT: Diyeceğim şu, Ankara'ya bir gün, iki gün için gitmen önemli değil. Bu işi yapacaksan zorluklarına da katlanacaksın.

MT-A1: Bir gün, iki gün için git, önemli değil. Ama bu senin işin, bu yüzden zorluklarına da hazır ol.

Highlighting main concepts by repetition, derivation

Emphasizing key concepts can be made by not deleting different types of words and phrases that are on the basis of the narrative and keeping them in the foreground by repeating them in some sentences.

In Example 16, there is a sentence taken from the Perili Köşk story. In the MT, the word "hayal", which is one of the basic concepts in the narrative, was emphasized by adding another sentence including the word. The word "kerata", which is informal speech and is not included in the vocabulary of the examined source, was deleted.

Example 16

AT: -İnsanmış kerata!

MT-A2: -Hayal değil, insanmış bu!

2.4.3. Easification

Among the easification tools, only the glossary was used in the study. Glossaries were added to the end of the stories to make it easier to read. Words that cannot be discarded or changed due to the plot of the story, and some words and phrases that the students had not yet learned at that level were included in the glossaries.

In Figure 1, an example of glossary is given. Information such as parts of speech, the meaning and the words in English is given.

Figure 1. Sample glossary study for B1 level for the story *Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu*

Sözlükçe:

ajanda (ad): gerekli notların, telefon numaralarının vb. yazıldığı küçük defter (datebook)

akla hayale gelmeyecek (sıfat): inanması güç, inanılmaz (unbelievable)

günlük güneşlik (sıfat): açık, sıcak ve yağışsız hava (sunny)

hat (ad): bir aracın, otobüsün uğradığı, geçtiği yerlerin tümü (route)

ıvır zıvır (sıfat): küçük, önemsiz (trifling, bits and pieces)

söz açmak (eylem): bir konuda konuşmaya başlamak (to bring up a subject)

yazılmak (eylem): bir okula, programa, kursa kaydolmak (to enrol)

b. Regeneration of the stories

After the transformation phase was completed, the texts were restructured to take on their final form. Due to the fact that the operations were performed at the sentence level during the transformation phase, it is possible that there are inadequacies in the sentence ordering and transitions. Therefore, this last step is needed.

In example 17 from the *Perili Köşk* story, the order of the sentences in the divided sentences was revised in order not to break the unity of the theme in the text, and it was changed by the levels when necessary. Considering this example, another conjunction was needed in MT other than “fakat”, since the relationships between the sentences whose order was changed did not remain the same.

Example 17

AT: Eliyle sıkı sıkıya tutup hissetmeyince bir şeyin varlığına hükmetmezdi, gözle kulak onca birer yalan kovuyordu. Yalanlar hep bize bu dört kapıdan girerdi. Fakat el... fakat dokunma duyusu, hiç dolma yutmazdı.

MT-A1: Sermet Bey'e göre göz ve kulak yalan doluydu. Yalanlar bize hep bu dört kapıdan giriyordu. Bir şeye inanmak için dokunmak gerekiyordu. Çünkü el yanılmıyordu.

2.5. Readability Values of Authentic and Modified Texts

Once the modification process was over, the linguistic features of the texts were revealed and as a result, the readability values were obtained.

The readability formulas were used for a quantitative evaluation of the authentic and modified versions of the stories. The values obtained using the Bezirci and Yılmaz formula are given in this section.

Table 3. *The results obtained through the readability formula*

Story	Text	YOD	Bezirci & Yılmaz
Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu	Authentic	9.40	Moderate 9th-10th grade
	A1	5.54	Easy 5th-6th grade
	A2	6.65	Easy 6th-7th grade
	B1	7.88	Easy 7th-8th grade
Fındık	Authentic	6.26	Easy 6th-7th grade
	A1	4.42	Easy 4th-5th grade
	A2	4.79	Easy 4th-5th grade
	B1	5.43	Easy 5th-6th grade
Heykel	Authentic	7.66	Easy 7th-8th grade
	A1	4.95	Easy 4th-5th grade
	A2	5.35	Easy 5th-6th grade
	B1	6.08	Easy 6th grade
Kalemler	Authentic	7.30	Easy 7th-8th grade
	A1	5.49	Easy 5th-6th grade
	A2	5.72	Easy 5th-6th grade
	B1	6.11	Easy 6th grade
O Bakış	Authentic	5.23	Easy 5th grade
	A1	3.20	Easy 3rd-4th grade
	A2	3.53	Easy 3rd-4th grade
	B1	4.70	Easy 4th-5th grade
Perili Köşk	Authentic	6.24	Easy 6th grade

A1	3.66	Easy 3rd-4th grade
A2	4.22	Easy 4th-5th grade
B1	5.03	Easy 5th grade

The table reveals that Bezirci and Yılmaz's (2010) formula tangibly shows the changes made according to the levels. There is one step between each level in almost all of the stories. Based on the formula, it can be stated that only the texts at the A1 and A2 levels of Findık, Kalemler, and O Bakış stories are in the same educational level.

The formula describes the original forms of all stories as "easy". However, it is thought that this result does not reflect the reality. For instance, it is possible to say that O Bakış story, whose authentic version is evaluated to be suitable for the 5th grade according to the formula, is not an easy story with its two narratives and the intensity of meaning it takes on. For this reason, as stated in other sources, the readability data alone is not meaningful. Therefore, a questionnaire was also prepared, and expert opinion was sought to determine the language proficiency of the modified texts.

2.6. Expert Opinions on Language Proficiency of Modified Versions of Stories

After determining the readability scores of each text by revealing the linguistic features of the authentic and modified versions of the stories, a questionnaire was prepared to get the expert opinions for the qualitative evaluation of the stories in question. The research group consists of experts/faculty members who work in the field of teaching Turkish to foreigners at Çukurova University Turkish Education Application and Research Center and Istanbul University School of Foreign Languages.

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked to read the authentic texts and the modified versions, and to fill in a one-page five-point Likert type scale after each story they read. An open-ended question was also added at the end of the scale for the participants' comments about the story or the scale. After the scales were collected, the answers of the participants on separate scales for each level were combined into a single scale.

When the results are scrutinized, the areas that are considered the least sufficient based on the criteria are lexical suitability (3.6) and glossary (3.7), followed by morphological suitability (3.8) and syntactic suitability (4), respectively. The areas deemed most adequate by the experts were determined as coherence (4.4), theme (4.4), and fluency (4.4). The cohesion category comes right behind the aforementioned text criteria with 4.1. The linguistic criteria for the stories seem to be partially sufficient according to the results. The reason may be that the language levels of the students of experts -in terms of grammar and vocabulary- do not overlap with the levels in the book discussed in this study, depending on the fact that the experts whose opinions were consulted use different materials than the textbook chosen for the research. This situation can be observed in the answers given to the open-ended question. Experts evaluated some grammatical structures and vocabulary in modified texts as above the level. However, it is seen that most of the words mentioned in the answers are included in the vocabulary of the relevant level of the Yeni Hitit book. For example, a suggestion was made to include the word "peri" in the glossary of the B1 level text of Perili Köşk story. When the vocabulary of the Yeni Hitit textbook is considered, the word appears at the A2 level.

3. Findings

The study consists of (I) (i) analysis, (ii) transformation, and (iii) regeneration of the stories, as well as (II) calculation of the readability values of the modified texts (stories) and (III) evaluation of their competence in line with the expert opinions. When considered in terms of readability values, it was

revealed that the formula developed by Bezirci and Yılmaz reflects the difference between the modified texts clearly. When the results obtained with the formula of Bezirci and Yılmaz are examined, it is seen that the authentic text, B1 text, A2 text, and A1 text, respectively, follow a top-down structure in terms of educational levels. In other words, the authentic text of a story is found to be suitable for 9th-10th grade whereas B1 text is for 7th-8th grade, A2 text for 6th-7th grade, and A1 text for 5th-6th grade. Although it shows the difference in this sense, the interpretation of all the results (except the authentic text of Kayıp Eşyalar Bürosu) as "easy" in the formula shows that these formulas alone are insufficient to provide a reliable measurement. That is why, in addition to the readability values obtained, five (5) experts were consulted regarding the language proficiency of the modified texts. With the questionnaire, the opinions were taken on a five-point scale about the variables of each story in terms of linguistic criteria, textual criteria, and lexicon, which is an easification tool, were evaluated. Stories that were mostly "good" and "fair" in terms of linguistic criteria such as syntactic suitability, morphological suitability, and lexical suitability and glossary were evaluated as "good" and "excellent" in terms of textual criteria such as cohesion, coherence, theme, and fluency.

In line with the answers given by the experts, the consistency of the stories in A1, A2, and B1 variables was also examined. The results showed that the levels were consistent in terms of method. According to the results, A1 texts are found to be "fair" in terms of morphological suitability, lexical suitability, and glossary, and "good" in terms of other categories, while A2 texts are "good" in terms of linguistic criteria, coherence, and glossary; it was found "excellent" in terms of coherence, theme, and fluency. While B1 texts are generally found to be "good", they are considered to be "excellent" in terms of coherence, plot, and fluency.

All in all, the criteria are largely applicable, but it is difficult to modify/adapt stories for the A1 level. The main factor underlying this difficulty is the fact that the lexical and grammatical structures required by the narrative are not known by the A1-level students yet. Considering that each genre has a unique narrative schema and structure, it has been observed that the story at the A1 level faces the danger of losing its genre characteristics.

Working with students on modified/adapted texts will help collect more data and identify problems and needs. Therefore, the feedback from the students and teachers will support the development of the study.

4. Conclusion

This study aims at presenting literary texts to students learning Turkish as a foreign language for extensive reading and for improving their reading comprehension skills. It is observed that there is a limited number of studies on text modification in the field. Determining the appropriate text modification criteria by diversifying the studies in question will provide many opportunities in terms of providing more resources to the students. The positive contributions of these resources, such as individual participation and interaction, increasing linguistic and cultural awareness, developing critical thinking and creativity, and making the content context-based, realistic and interesting, reveal the importance of the study.

In the study, we took pains to preserve the message in the stories. However, despite preserving the message, it was seen that the style at the A1 level was lost. The fact that especially the vocabulary and

grammatical structure taught/learned at the A1 level is quite limited caused the style and aesthetic aspects to be negatively affected. Considering that all of the linguistic elements in the text are the conscious choice of the author and that this constitutes the style, it is seen why some of them can be preserved at high levels, while the others are lost at low levels. In this respect, it can be stated that the author's choice and purpose in this selection were left out and only the meaning and function were focused on. Accordingly, it may be suggested to prefer narratives such as memoirs, anecdotes, and fairy tales instead of stories at A1 level, or to find stories with very simple language level.

Although the semantic sequence in some sentences was changed as a result of the division of the sentences during the modification process, the narrative sequence was kept in the text. The sequence of events in the text, and thus the rhetorical structure of the fiction was preserved. However, this led to the ease of reading sometimes being overlooked. At this point, the question of whether it is necessary to keep to the narrative sequence comes forward. Studying these issues requires an interdisciplinary approach. Since the study is in the fields of linguistics, textlinguistics, semiotics, lexicology, literature, and language teaching, it is thought that carrying out such comprehensive studies with a team of experts from these disciplines will yield more robust and beneficial results.

The methods used in the study will contribute to the field by enabling the testing and evaluation of literary texts in Turkish teaching books for foreigners. It is seen that these methods can be used for the use of literary texts in Turkish lessons for natives, as well.

The study also revealed that the narrative schema can be used efficiently in language teaching. These schemas can be applied with students in terms of developing different skills, especially in pre or post-reading/writing activities. Particularly, in reading activities, the use of these schemas will make analysis studies easier, as it allows to see the constituent features of the text.

The study can be applied to the target student group: It is necessary to obtain data on the results of the application in question through in-class practice, measurement-evaluation studies, or questions, and the opinions of the students as the beneficiary of these materials. The presentation of the modified texts to the student will widen the perspective and make the criteria more efficient and functional.

In the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it is essential to present texts which are prepared with these studies, and are suitable for the level and different age groups. These studies will contribute to the increase of knowledge about the possibilities of language and the development of the field.

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