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EVALUATION OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING TURKISH TO TURKISH CHILDREN ABROAD

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ABSTRACT

Each year, the Ministry of National Education deploys teachers with the aim of teaching Turkish to children of Turkish background living abroad. However, an examination of the subject areas of these teachers shows placements drawn from fields such as German, religious culture and ethics, English, primary education, social studies, Turkish language and literature, and Turkish language teaching. The fundamental reason for this situation is the absence of any undergraduate program in Turkey specifically devoted to teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad. Although no bachelor's program exists, there are currently six master's programs at the graduate level; no doctoral program has yet been established. Based on this observation, the present study aims to conduct a comparative evaluation of these master's programs. Its sub-objectives are to compare the programs in terms of faculty expertise and academic staff, program establishment years, objectives and learning outcomes, duration of study, admission and acceptance requirements, student quotas over the last three semesters, graduation requirements, course content, and courses offered in the last three semesters. This qualitative research takes the form of a case study. The study group comprises six master's programs—five titled “Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad” and one titled “Turkish Language Teaching to Turkish Children Abroad”—offered at Akdeniz University, Gazi University, Hacettepe University, Necmettin Erbakan University, Sakarya University, and Yıldız Technical University. Data were collected through document analysis of the official websites of these institutions and analyzed descriptively. The findings indicate that only Gazi University has a dedicated faculty member with expertise in this field. Program objectives and learning outcomes are generally similar, and program durations range from two to three years. While admission requirements are largely uniform, differences exist in the calculation of grade-point averages. It was also observed that the programs at Necmettin Erbakan University and Yıldız Technical University have not admitted students for at least the last three semesters, and enrollment numbers in the other programs remain very low. Graduation requirements across all programs are comparable. Although there are both similarities and differences in course offerings, the program at Gazi University exhibits the most distinctive curriculum.

Keywords: Teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad, graduate education, teacher training, educational policy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

When the term “Turks living abroad” is invoked, it primarily refers to the population that—having begun migrating to European countries as guest workers in the 1960s—now numbers approximately 7.5 million (Anadolu Agency, 2024), and who, whether they retain Turkish citizenship or adopt that of their host country, continue to maintain linguistic, cultural, and ethnic ties. Within its framework of responsible statehood, the Republic of Turkey has implemented various measures for its diaspora—most notably in the field of Turkish-language education, but also in matters of religion, social security, and legal affairs. Key initiatives in Turkish-language instruction include:

- Deployment of teachers abroad (Official Gazette, 2003)
- Development of curricula for Turkish language and culture instruction (Ministry of National Education, 2018)
- Production of instructional materials for Turkish language and culture courses (Ministry of National Education, 2019)
- Creation of supplementary materials to support Turkish-language skills (Ministry of National Education, 2021)
- Negotiation of bilateral educational and cultural cooperation agreements (Directorate General for EU and Foreign Relations, 2024)
- Provision of facilities, materials, and opportunities for Turkish language and culture education (Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, 2024)
- Development of support tools and mechanisms at every educational level, from preschool through graduate studies (Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, 2024)

Among these measures, the deployment of teachers for Turkish-language instruction began in 1965 with the assignment of seventeen teachers to Germany (Şen, 2016a, p. 1026) and has continued uninterrupted to the present. The first appointees were selected from among school principals, and no records exist regarding their subject-area specializations. Today, however, the Ministry of National Education publishes the subject areas eligible for overseas placement: German, English, French, Italian, guidance counseling, religious culture and ethics, primary education, social studies, Turkish language and literature, and Turkish language teaching (MEB, 2024). As a result, teachers from diverse academic backgrounds are tasked with delivering Turkish and Turkish-culture courses.

“Assigning teachers who serve in different subjects and school levels in Turkey—and who lack any background in Turkish-language pedagogy—to teach Turkish and Turkish Culture abroad undermines the effectiveness of these courses” (Arıcı & Kırkkılıç, 2017, p. 497; Arıcı, 2019, p. 18). In light of this finding, the need for educators trained specifically in teaching Turkish to bilingual Turkish children is evident.

No associate- or bachelor’s-level program exists in Turkish universities for preparing such teachers. At the graduate level, six master’s programs have been identified—and no doctoral program—under the titles “Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad” or “Turkish Language Teaching to Turkish

Children Abroad,” offered at Akdeniz University, Gazi University, Necmettin Erbakan University, Hacettepe University, Sakarya University, and Yıldız Technical University¹.

A literature survey in Dergi Park, the National Thesis Center, Google Scholar, and the TR Dizin database—using the keywords “Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad + master’s program + thesis-based master’s program”—revealed no studies examining or evaluating the content, structure, or operation of these existing master’s programs, with the sole exception of Şen’s (2016b) study on undergraduate and graduate programs in the context of teacher preparation for Turkish-language instruction to bilingual Turkish children. Şen (2016b, p. 524) reported that, apart from the master’s program within the Department of Turkish Language Education at Gazi University’s Institute of Educational Sciences, no other program was identified, and he detailed that program’s objectives and course offerings.

Given the absence of further research and the establishment of five additional master’s programs since 2016, this study is both timely and necessary. It is essential to determine the number of faculty members in the relevant departments and whether their areas of expertise align with the field. Comparing similarities and differences in program objectives and learning outcomes will provide a comprehensive overview. Furthermore, technical details—such as program launch years, duration of study, course content, admission and acceptance requirements, and graduation criteria—must be known to enable a meaningful comparative evaluation. To assess and compare current program status, it is also crucial to examine student-intake quotas and course offerings over the last three semesters. This research is expected to contribute to the formulation of policy for training Turkish-language teachers for children abroad and to establishing standards for the preparation of subject-matter experts and doctoral candidates.

Based on the problem statement above, the primary and sub-objectives of the study have been defined. The primary objective is to conduct a comparative evaluation of Turkey’s graduate programs for teaching Turkish to children living abroad. The sub-objectives are to evaluate these programs in terms of:

- Faculty expertise and academic staff
- Program establishment years
- Objectives and learning outcomes
- Duration of study
- Admission and acceptance requirements
- Student quotas for the last three semesters
- Graduation requirements
- Course content
- Courses offered in the last three semesters

2. METHOD

¹ The establishment of these programs at Akdeniz University, Necmettin Erbakan University, Hacettepe University, Sakarya University, and Yıldız Technical University was effected in 2018 through a protocol signed with the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities. The provisions of this protocol—which also include objectives such as enabling Turkish citizens living abroad to apply to the programs and facilitating the employment of graduates in Turkish-language instruction abroad—warrant further evaluation.

This research, designed using a qualitative method, is a case study. A case study is defined as “a research method that allows the researcher to examine in depth a phenomenon or event that they cannot control, based on ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 301). In the embedded multiple-case design—one of the case study designs—“each case under consideration or included in the research can be studied by dividing it into various subunits” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 314). Standard data-collection methods enable comparisons between cases (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

This study employs an embedded multiple-case design in which the selected master’s programs are examined and comparatively evaluated exactly as they are, without intervention, across the following variables:

- Faculty expertise and academic staff
- Program establishment years
- Objectives and learning outcomes
- Duration of study
- Admission and acceptance requirements
- Student quotas for the last three semesters
- Graduation requirements
- Course content
- Courses offered in the last three semesters

The study group consists of six master’s programs—five titled “Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad” and one titled “Turkish Language Teaching to Turkish Children Abroad”—offered at six Turkish universities. No other master’s program in this field exists in Turkey. In other words, all existing programs in this area have been included. The programs, with their respective universities and institutes, are:

- Akdeniz University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad
- Gazi University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad
- Hacettepe University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad
- Necmettin Erbakan University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad
- Sakarya University, Institute of Educational Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad
- Yıldız Technical University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad

Data were collected through document analysis, a technique defined as “the analysis of written materials containing information about the phenomenon(s) under investigation” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p. 190). Information was gathered from the official websites of the institutions hosting these programs: [Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, (t.y. a.); Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, (t.y. b.); Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, (t.y.); Akdeniz Üniversitesi OBS, (t.y.); Gazi Üniversitesi GEF Türkçe Eğitimi, (t.y.); Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, (2019); Gazi Üniversitesi OBS, (t.y.); Hacettepe Üniversitesi AKTS, (t.y.); Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkçe Eğitimi, (t.y.); Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, (t.y.); Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, (t.y.); Sakarya Üniversitesi Türkçe, (t.y.); Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi SBT Türkçe, (t.y.); Yıldız Teknik

Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (t.y. a.); Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, (t.y. b.)].

A “checklist,” developed by the researchers and validated through feedback from two field experts and one assessment-and-evaluation specialist, served as the data-collection tool. This checklist comprised the variables listed above. Following expert review, one variable was removed and two were modified. To ensure reliability, two researchers independently examined the collected data.

For data analysis, descriptive analysis was employed: data were defined, explained, and interpreted according to pre-determined themes (Yıldırım & ŐimŐek, 2016). The findings were then presented under headings corresponding to the study’s sub-objectives, each reflecting one of the variables from the checklist.

3. FINDINGS

Findings related to the graduate programs in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad—concerning faculty expertise and academic-staff numbers, program establishment years, objectives and learning outcomes, duration of study, admission and acceptance requirements, student quotas for the last three semesters, graduation requirements, course content, and courses offered in the last three semesters—are presented in this section.

3.1 Findings on Expert Faculty and Academic Staff Numbers

- Akdeniz University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad is housed in the Department of Turkish Language Education, whose academic staff comprises seventeen members: three full professors, seven associate professors, three assistant professors, and four doctoral research assistants. No faculty member specializes in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad (YDTÇTÖ).
- Gazi University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad, also in the Department of Turkish Language Education, has twenty-seven academic staff: eighteen full professors, four associate professors, one assistant professor, one doctoral research assistant, and three research assistants. One faculty member’s area of expertise is YDTÇTÖ.
- Hacettepe University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad, in its Department of Turkish Language Education, includes seven academic staff: five full professors and two research assistants. No faculty member specializes in YDTÇTÖ.
- Necmettin Erbakan University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad, in the Department of Turkish Language Education, comprises twelve academic staff: seven full professors, three associate professors, one assistant lecturer with a doctorate, and one research assistant. No faculty member specializes in YDTÇTÖ.
- Sakarya University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad, in the Department of Turkish Language Education, has ten academic staff: two full professors, two associate professors, two assistant professors, two doctoral research assistants, one assistant lecturer with a doctorate, and one research assistant. No faculty member specializes in YDTÇTÖ.

- Yıldız Technical University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad, in the Department of Turkish Language Education, comprises fourteen academic staff: four full professors, four associate professors, five assistant professors, and one research assistant. No faculty member specializes in YDTÇTÖ.

3.2 Findings on Program Establishment Years

The first graduate program in this field in Turkey—Gazi University’s Master’s Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad—was established after 2010. Information on establishment years for the programs at the other universities could not be accessed.

3.3 Findings on Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- Akdeniz University
 - Objective: Not available.
 - Learning Outcomes:
 1. Based on undergraduate qualifications, possesses theoretical and practical knowledge at an expert level in Turkish language education, and develops and deepens this knowledge.
 2. Discusses the interaction among disciplines related to Turkish language education.
 3. Applies theoretical and practical knowledge acquired at an expert level in Turkish language education, and further develops and deepens it.
 4. Functionally integrates knowledge from different disciplines with expertise in Turkish language education to generate new insights.
 5. Proposes solutions to specialized problems using quantitative and qualitative scientific research methods.
 6. Independently designs, implements, and evaluates solutions to problems in Turkish language education, applying results as needed.
 7. Develops new strategic approaches and takes responsibility to solve unforeseen complex situations in Turkish language-education practice.
 8. Actively participates in or leads team work related to Turkish language education.
 9. Critically appraises knowledge in Turkish language education and guides learning.
 10. Pursues scholarly activities in Turkish language education within a lifelong-learning framework.
 11. Communicates developments in Turkish language education and personal research systematically to in-field and out-of-field audiences, in written, oral, and visual forms.
 12. Critically examines social relations and governing norms in professional environments and, as needed, initiates improvements and provides leadership.
 13. Communicates orally and in writing in a foreign language at least at the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
 14. Shares knowledge in Turkish language education orally and in writing at national and international levels.

15. Uses information and communication technologies and relevant software at an advanced level.
 16. Interprets, develops, and evaluates strategies, policies, and implementation plans in Turkish language education within quality-assurance processes.
 17. Oversees the collection, interpretation, and dissemination of data in Turkish language education based on societal, scientific, and ethical values, and teaches these values.
 18. Applies interdisciplinary collaboration skills gained through expertise in Turkish language education.
 19. Evaluates current developments in the field in light of national values and country realities.
- Gazi University
 - Objective: To contribute to the training of leading researchers in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad and to educate authoritative teachers and researchers.
 - Target: To train competent and qualified teachers and researchers—with academic and professional scientific perspectives and researcher-educator identities—for Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad.
 - Learning Outcomes:
 1. Develops and deepens field-specific knowledge at an expert level based on undergraduate qualifications.
 2. Understands interactions among disciplines related to the field.
 3. Applies expert-level theoretical and practical knowledge in the field.
 4. Integrates and interprets knowledge acquired from related disciplines to generate new insights.
 5. Solves field-specific problems using scientific research methods.
 6. Independently conducts specialized research in the field.
 7. Develops new approaches to complex problems encountered in practice.
 8. Takes responsibility and generates solutions for complex problems in practice.
 9. Takes initiative in environments requiring problem-solving related to the field.
 10. Critically appraises field-related knowledge and guides learning.
 11. Communicates field developments and personal research systematically in written, oral, and visual forms.
 12. Critically develops and transforms social relations and governing values.
 13. Communicates orally and in writing in a foreign language at the B2 CEFR level.
 14. Uses software required by the field at an advanced level.
 15. Uses information and communication technologies at an advanced level.
 16. Collects, interprets, finalizes, and shares data in the field, adhering to ethical values.

17. Develops diverse perspectives, sets policies, plans strategies, and evaluates outcomes within a quality framework.
 18. Internalizes acquired knowledge, transforms it into skills, and applies it in interdisciplinary studies.
- Hacettepe University
 - Objective: "...to meet the demand for experts in teaching Turkish to bilingual Turkish children abroad. In doing so, it seeks to expand the body of knowledge in this field, train academic researchers for universities, and address the need for qualified specialist teachers in public and private institutions."
 - Learning Outcomes:
 1. Possesses theoretical and practical knowledge at a graduate-level in the discipline of Turkish language education.
 2. Discusses interactions among disciplines related to Turkish language education.
 3. Integrates knowledge produced in Turkish language education with insights from other disciplines to generate new understanding.
 4. Develops new strategic approaches and takes responsibility to resolve unforeseen complex situations in practice.
 5. Actively participates in and leads team work in Turkish language education.
 6. Critically appraises knowledge in Turkish language education and guides learning.
 7. Communicates orally and in writing in a foreign language at the B2 CEFR level.
 8. Uses software and ICT tools required by the discipline at an advanced level.
 9. Interprets, develops, and evaluates strategies, policies, and implementation plans within quality processes.
 10. Applies acquired knowledge and skills in interdisciplinary studies.
 11. Evaluates current developments in the field in light of national values and country realities.
 - Necmettin Erbakan University
 - Objective: "...to meet the demand for experts in teaching Turkish to bilingual Turkish children abroad. In doing so, it seeks to expand the body of knowledge in this field, train academic researchers for universities, and address the need for qualified specialist teachers in public and private institutions."
 - Learning Outcomes: Not available.
 - Sakarya University
 - Objective: "The Master's Program in Teaching Turkish and Turkish Culture to Turks Abroad and Non-Turks aims to train the Turkish-language teachers needed for both Turkish courses offered in schools established by Turkish entrepreneurs abroad—and planned by the Turkey Maarif Foundation—and for Turkish courses organized by civil society organizations."
 - Learning Outcomes: Not available.

- Yıldız Technical University
 - Objective: "...to meet the demand for experts in teaching Turkish to bilingual Turkish children abroad. In doing so, it seeks to expand the body of knowledge in this field, train academic researchers for universities, and address the need for qualified specialist teachers in public and private institutions."
 - Learning Outcomes: Not available.

3.4 Findings on Duration of Study

The normal duration of the relevant master's programs at Akdeniz University and Gazi University is two years, with a maximum completion period of three years. The programs at Hacettepe University and Necmettin Erbakan University each have a fixed duration of two years. The duration for Sakarya University's Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad and Yıldız Technical University's Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad is not specified explicitly. However, at Sakarya University's Institute of Educational Sciences, master's programs require a minimum of three semesters and allow up to six semesters for completion. At Yıldız Technical University's Institute of Social Sciences, the standard duration for master's programs is six semesters.

3.5 Findings on Admission and Acceptance Requirements

General information on admission and acceptance requirements for the programs is presented in Table 1, and the weighting of grade-point average calculations is shown in Table 2.

Table 1

Admission and Acceptance Requirements

Requirement	Akdeniz Univ.	Gazi Univ.	Hacettepe Univ.	Necmettin Erbakan Univ.	Sakarya Univ.
Bachelor's degree	German Language and Literature; German Education; American Language and Literature; Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Translation Studies; Linguistics; French Language and Literature;	Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Foreign Language Education; Turkish Language and Literature; Education; Turkish Language and Literature;	Language and Literature; Translation; Linguistics; Foreign Language Education; Translation and Interpretation; Preschool Education; Primary Education; Turkish Language and Literature Education;	Language and Literature; Translation; Linguistics; Foreign Language Education; Translation and Interpretation; Preschool Education; Primary Education; Turkish Language and Literature Education;	German Language and Literature; German Education; American Language and Literature; Computer and Instructional Technology Education; Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Translation Studies;

	French Education; English Language and Literature; English Education; Preschool Education; Primary Education; Social Studies Education; Turkish Language and Literature Education; Turkish Language and Literature; Turkish Education	Turkish Folklore	Turkish Education	Turkish Education	Linguistics; Philology; French Language and Literature; French Education; English Language and Literature; English Education; Preschool Education; Primary Education; Social Studies Education; Turkish Language and Literature Education; Turkish Language and Literature Education
GPA	-	3.00	2.50	2.50	–
Pedagogical formation	Yes	No	No	No	No
ALES score	Verbal 55	Verbal 70	Verbal 55	Verbal 55	Verbal 60
Foreign language score	55	30	70	70	–
Scientific exam	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
MEB teaching experience	No	No	No	No	Yes
Bachelor's degree	–	Turkology	–	–	–
GPA	–	2.30	–	–	–

Turkish language certificate	C1	C1	C1	C1	–
Scientific exam	Yes	No	–	–	–

Table 2

Score Weightings

Category	Akdeniz Univ.	Gazi Univ.	Hacettepe Univ.	Necmettin Erbakan Univ.	Sakarya Univ.
Passing score	General 65	–	Oral 50 / General 60	Oral 50 / General 60	–
Turkish citizens					
Bachelor's graduation score	10%	15%	20%	25%	50%
ALES score	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Foreign language score	10%	10%	–	–	–
Scientific exam score	30%	25%	30%	25%	–
International students					
Bachelor's graduation score	40%	100%	–	–	–
Scientific exam score	60%	–	–	–	–

Akdeniz University (2024–2025 Fall)

- Bachelor's degree in one of:
 - Faculties of Education: Turkish Language Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature Teaching; English-German-French Teaching; Primary Education; Preschool Education; Social Studies Teaching

- Faculties of Arts and Sciences (or equivalent): Turkish Language and Literature; Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Linguistics; Translation Studies; English Language and Literature; American Language and Literature; German Language and Literature; French Language and Literature
- Graduates from non-Education faculties must hold a pedagogical formation certificate.
- ALES (verbal) ≥ 55 .
- YDS (or equivalent) ≥ 55 .
- International students require a C1-level Turkish certificate from Akdeniz University TÖMER or Yunus Emre Institute; no ALES or foreign-language exam is required for them.
- Score calculation (Turkish citizens): ALES 50%, YDS 10%, GPA 10%, scientific exam/interview 30%.
- Score calculation (international students): GPA 40%, scientific exam/interview 60%.
- Scientific exam and/or interview administered by the department; a total score ≥ 65 is considered successful. Placement is by ranking within the quota.

Gazi University (2024–2025 Fall)

- Bachelor's degree in one of:
Turkish Education/Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature Education/Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature; Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Turkish Folklore; Linguistics; Foreign Language Education (e.g., German, French); Turkology (only for international applicants).
- No pedagogical formation required (those outside the Turkish Language Education major undertake one year of scientific preparatory training).
- ALES (verbal) ≥ 70 .
- Foreign language exam ≥ 30 .
- GPA ≥ 3.00 (Turkish citizens), ≥ 2.30 (international).
- No ALES or foreign-language requirement for international students; must hold at least a C1 certificate from Gazi University TÖMER.
- Score calculation (Turkish citizens): ALES 50%, foreign-language exam 10%, GPA 15%, oral exam 25%.
- Score calculation (international students): GPA 100% (oral exam only for Turkish citizens). Placement by ranking within the quota.

Hacettepe University

- General admission conditions:
 - Four-year bachelor's in one of:
 - Faculties of Education: Preschool Teaching; Primary Education; Foreign-Language Teaching; Turkish Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature Teaching

- Faculties of Arts and Sciences (or equivalent): Language and Literature; Translation and Interpretation; Translation and Linguistics
- ALES (verbal) ≥ 55 (or equivalent).
- YDS (or equivalent) ≥ 70 .
- GPA ≥ 2.50 .
- Must pass the entrance exam.
- YTB-sponsored students are exempt from ALES and foreign-language requirements.
- International candidates must hold a TÖMER C1 certificate.
- Score calculation (Turkish citizens): ALES 50%, GPA 20%, entrance-exam score 30%; oral exam $\geq 50\%$ and overall $\geq 60\%$ are required to pass. Placement by ranking.
- No information available on score calculation for international students.

Necmettin Erbakan University

- General admission conditions:
 - Four-year bachelor's in one of:
 - Faculties of Education: Preschool Teaching; Primary Education; Foreign-Language Teaching; Turkish Language Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature Teaching
 - Faculties of Arts and Sciences (or equivalent): Language and Literature; Translation and Interpretation; Translation and Linguistics
- ALES (verbal) ≥ 55 (or equivalent).
- YDS (or equivalent) ≥ 70 .
- GPA ≥ 2.50 .
- Must pass the entrance exam.
- YTB-sponsored students are exempt from ALES and foreign-language requirements.
- International candidates must either hold a degree from a Turkish-taught program at any higher-education institution (domestic or abroad) or present an official document showing at least C1 (or equivalent) on a Turkish-proficiency test approved by YÖK or Yunus Emre Institute.
- Score calculation (Turkish citizens): Scientific-exam score 25%, ALES 50%, GPA 25%; candidates with ≥ 50 on the scientific exam and overall ≥ 60 are successful. Placement by ranking.

Sakarya University

- Admission conditions:
 - Four-year bachelor's in one of:
 - Faculties of Education: Turkish Language Teaching; Turkish Language and Literature Teaching; English-German-French Teaching; Primary Education;

Computer and Instructional Technology Teaching; Preschool Teaching; Social Studies Teaching

- Faculties of Arts and Sciences (or equivalent): Turkish Language and Literature; Philology; Contemporary Turkic Languages and Literatures; Linguistics; Translation Studies; English Language and Literature; American Language and Literature; German Language and Literature; French Language and Literature
 - Minimum 3 years of teaching experience in MEB-affiliated schools.
 - ALE S (verbal) ≥ 60 .
- Score calculation: ALES 50%, GPA 50%. Placement by ranking within the quota.

Yıldız Technical University

- No information on admission and acceptance requirements could be accessed.

3.6 Findings on Student Quotas for the Last Three Semesters

Information on student quotas for the last three semesters is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Student Quotas for the Last Three Semesters

Term	Akdeniz Univ.	Gazi Univ.	Hacettepe Univ.	Sakarya Univ.
2023-2024 Fall	Quota: 10+1	Quota: 5+5	-	-
	Applications: 3	Applications: 0		
	Accepted: 1	Accepted: 0		
2023-2024 Spring	Quota: 10+0	Quota: 5+5	-	-
	Applications: 3	Applications: 2		
	Accepted: 2	Accepted: 2		
2024-2025 Fall	Quota: 15+1	Quota: 10+5	Quota: 5	Quota: 3
	Applications: 5	Applications: 1		
	Accepted: 4	Accepted: 0		

Akdeniz University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- The capacity for the 2023-2024 fall semester is 10, with a foreign student quota of 1. The number of applicants is 3, and the number of admitted students is 1.
- The capacity for the 2023-2024 spring semester is 10, with no foreign student quota. The number of applicants is 3, and the number of admitted students is 2.
- The capacity for the 2024-2025 fall semester is 15, with a foreign student quota of 1. The number of applicants is 5, and the number of admitted students is 4.

Gazi University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- The capacity for the 2023-2024 fall semester is 5, with a foreign student quota of 5. There are no applicants or admitted students.
- The capacity for the 2023-2024 spring semester is 5, with a foreign student quota of 5. The number of applicants is 2, and the number of admitted students is 2.
- The capacity for the 2024-2025 fall semester is 10, with a foreign student quota of 5. The number of applicants is 1, and there are no admitted students.

Hacettepe University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- The capacity for the 2024-2025 fall semester is 5. Information regarding the number of admitted students and previous semesters is not available.

Necmettin Erbakan University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- No students have been admitted in the last three semesters.

Sakarya University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- The capacity for the 2024-2025 fall semester is 3. Information regarding the number of admitted students and previous semesters is not available.

Yıldız Technical University, Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

- No students have been admitted in the last three semesters.

3.7 Findings on Graduation Requirements

Information regarding the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Akdeniz University is not available. According to the general graduation requirements of the Institute of Educational Sciences at Akdeniz University:

- Students must select 30 ECTS credits worth of courses each semester and pass these courses.
- The course period must be completed in no more than 4 semesters.
- The thesis work must begin no later than the beginning of the 3rd semester.
- The thesis must be defended and successfully completed by the end of the 6th semester.

According to the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Gazi University:

- A minimum of 120 ECTS credits must be earned, including mandatory and elective field courses, a course on scientific research techniques and research and publication ethics, a seminar course, thesis preparation, and thesis work, with no less than 60 ECTS credits.
- A scientific publication must be prepared in collaboration with the thesis advisor on the thesis topic.
- A field-specific master's thesis must be written and successfully defended.

According to the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Hacettepe University:

- A total of at least 60 ECTS credits worth of courses, including seminars and ethics, must be successfully completed.
- A master's thesis must be prepared and successfully defended in the thesis examination.

According to the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Necmettin Erbakan University:

- A total of at least 60 ECTS credits worth of courses, including seminars and ethics, must be successfully completed.
- A master's thesis must be prepared and successfully defended in the thesis examination.

According to the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Sakarya University:

- At least seven courses must be taken, along with a seminar course, with no less than 120 ECTS credits, and each semester must include completion of a specialization course and thesis work.
- To proceed to the thesis stage, at least 48 ECTS credits worth of courses must be passed, including at least two specialization courses and a seminar course, totaling 66 ECTS credits, with a minimum GPA of 2.5 out of 4.

According to the graduation requirements of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Yıldız Technical University:

- At least 7 courses worth 21 credits (with at least one being a program requirement), a seminar course, a course on research methods, and a course on scientific ethics must be taken.
- The publication requirement must be fulfilled.
- Thesis work must be successfully defended.
- A minimum grade of CB must be achieved in all courses, with at least 120 ECTS credits earned and a weighted GPA of at least 2.50/4.00

3.8 Findings on Course Content

The courses included in the course pool of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Akdeniz University are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Courses of the Akdeniz University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

<i>Required Courses</i>			
First Semester	ECTS	Second Semester	ECTS
Master's Advising	1	Master's Advising	1
Scientific Research Methods and Ethics	8	Educational Statistics	8
Language Teaching Methods	5	Learning Language Skills	5

Turkish Grammar	4	Elective 2	
Elective 1			
Third Semester	ECTS	Fourth Semester	ECTS
Master's Advising	1	Master's Advising	1
Master's Specialization Course	8	Master's Specialization Course	8
Master's Thesis	21	Master's Thesis	21
<i>Elective Courses ½</i>	ECTS	<i>Elective Courses 1/2</i>	ECTS
Master's Seminar	7	Text Usage in Language Education	4
Language and Culture	5	Migration and Adaptation Issues	4
Character and Value Education	5	Language Acquisition	4

The courses included in the course pool of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Gazi University are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Courses of the Gazi University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

<i>Required Courses</i>		ECTS
Teaching Listening and Reading to Turkish Children Abroad		8
Teaching Speaking and Writing to Turkish Children Abroad		8
Seminar		5
Scientific Research Methods and Ethics		6
Preparation for Master's Thesis		5
Master's Thesis Work		30
<i>Elective Courses</i>	ECTS	<i>Elective Courses</i> ECTS
Children's Literature	6	Contemporary Teaching of Turkish Grammar
Teaching Language Skills		8
Assessment of Language Skills		Development of Language Skills
Language Acquisition		Teaching Turkish as a Native Language in a Bilingual Environment
Text Usage in Language Education		Bilingualism and Bilingual Education
Language Teaching Methods		Teaching Classical Turkish Literature
Language and Culture		Subject Area Teaching Programs and Textbooks
General Turkish History and Teaching		
Studies in Migration Literature		

Migration and Adaptation Issues	Intercultural Communication
Character and Value Education	Material Design
Comparative Linguistics	Genre Characteristics and Language Structures of Texts
Intercultural Communication	Turkish Culture and Civilization
Social Pedagogy	Teaching Turkey Turkish to Turkish Communities
Social Psychology	History of Turkish Language Teaching
Sociolinguistics	Contemporary Approaches in Turkish Language Teaching
History of Turkish Culture and Civilization	Historical Stages of Teaching and Education of Turkish
Turkish Grammar	Reading Education in Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language
Material Design in Turkish Education	Teaching Turkey Turkish Outside of Turkey
Socio-Political Situation in Turkey	International Education Systems and Language Policies
	The Role of Children's Literature in Teaching Turkish to Foreigners
	Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

The courses included in the course pool of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Hacettepe University are presented in Table 6. All courses are worth 6 ECTS.

Table 6

Courses of the Hacettepe University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

<i>Required Courses</i>	<i>Elective Courses</i>
Teaching Language Skills	Children's Literature
Language Teaching Methods	Assessment of Language Skills
Turkish Grammar	Language Acquisition
Research Methods in Education	Text Usage in Language Education
Seminar	Language and Culture

General Turkish History and Teaching
 Migration and Adaptation Issues
 Character and Value Education
 Comparative Linguistics
 Intercultural Communication
 Social Pedagogy
 Social Psychology
 Sociolinguistics
 History of Turkish Culture and Civilization
 Material Design in Turkish Education
 Socio-Political Situation in Turkey

Information regarding the course content of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Necmettin Erbakan University is not available. The courses included in the course pool of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Sakarya University are presented in Table 7. The thesis work is worth 54 ECTS, while other courses are worth 6 ECTS.

Table 7

Courses of the Sakarya University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
Specialization Course (Master's)	Specialization Course (Master's)	Specialization Course (Master's)
Turkish Grammar	Teaching Language Skills	Thesis Work
Scientific Research Techniques and Seminar	3 Elective Courses	
Language Teaching Methods		
Migration and Adaptation Issues		
<i>Elective Courses</i>		
Children's Literature		Intercultural Communication
Assessment of Language Skills		Social Pedagogy
Language Acquisition		Social Psychology
Text Usage in Language Education		Sociolinguistics
Language and Culture		History of Turkish Culture and Civilization

General Turkish History and Teaching	Material Design in Turkish Education
Character and Value Education	Socio-Political Situation in Turkey
Comparative Linguistics	

The courses included in the course pool of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Yıldız Technical University are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Courses of the Yıldız Technical University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad

<i>Required Courses</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Elective Courses</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Seminar	0	Teaching Language Skills	3
Research Methods and Scientific Ethics	2	Assessment of Language Skills	
Research Methods in Education	3	Text Application in Language Education	
Migration and Adaptation Issues	3	Language and Culture	
Language Teaching Methods	3	General Turkish History and Teaching	
		Character and Value Education	
		Comparative Linguistics	
		Intercultural Communication	
		Social Pedagogy	
		Social Psychology	
		Sociolinguistics	
		History of Turkish Culture and Civilization	
		Turkish Grammar	
		Material Design in Turkish Education	
		Socio-Political Situation in Turkey	

3.9 Findings on Courses Offered in the Last Three Semesters

The courses offered in the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Akdeniz University during the 2023-2024 Fall, 2023-2024 Spring, and 2024-2025 Fall semesters are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Courses of the Akdeniz University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad for 2023-2024 Fall, 2023-2024 Spring, and 2024-2025 Fall

2023-2024 Fall	2023-2024 Spring	2024-2025 Fall
Scientific Research Techniques and Ethics	Learning Language Skills	Scientific Research Techniques and Ethics
Text Usage in Language Education	Language and Culture	Language Acquisition
Language Teaching Methods	Educational Statistics	Text Usage in Language Education
Migration and Adaptation Issues	Character and Value Education	Language Teaching Methods
Turkish Grammar		Migration and Adaptation Issues
		Turkish Grammar

No courses were offered in the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Gazi University during the 2024-2025 Fall semester. The courses offered in the 2023-2024 Fall and 2023-2024 Spring semesters are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Courses of the Gazi University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad for 2023-2024 Fall and 2023-2024 Spring

2023-2024 Fall	2023-2024 Spring
Scientific Research Methods and Ethics	Fundamental Issues in Teaching Turkish as a Native Language in a Bilingual Environment
Studies in Migration Literature	Seminar
Intercultural Communication	History of Turkish Language Teaching
Seminar	Teaching Speaking and Writing to Turkish Children Abroad
Teaching Listening and Reading to Turkish Children Abroad	

The courses offered in the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Hacettepe University during the 2023-2024 Fall, 2023-2024 Spring, and 2024-2025 Fall semesters are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Courses of the Hacettepe University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad for 2023-2024 Fall, 2023-2024 Spring, and 2024-2025 Fall

2023-2024 Fall	2023-2024 Spring	2024-2025 Fall
Language Acquisition	Teaching Language Skills	Teaching Language Skills
Text Usage in Language Education	Language and Culture	Language and Culture
Language Teaching Methods	Research Methods in Education	Seminar
Character and Value Education	Seminar	Material Design in Turkish Education
Turkish Grammar	Material Design in Turkish Education	

No courses have been offered in the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Necmettin Erbakan University during the last three semesters. Information regarding the courses offered in the 2023-2024 Spring and Fall semesters of the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Sakarya University is not available. The courses offered in the 2024-2025 Fall semester are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Courses of the Sakarya University Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad for the 2024-2025 Fall Semester

2024-2025 Fall
Scientific Research Techniques and Seminar
Assessment of Language Skills
Text Usage in Language Education
Turkish Grammar

No courses have been offered in the Master's Program in Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Yıldız Technical University during the last three semesters.

4. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the results regarding the number of specialized teaching staff and academic personnel in master's programs for teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad, the years the programs were established, their objectives and learning outcomes, duration of education, admission and acceptance criteria, student quotas in the last three terms, graduation requirements, course content, and the courses offered in the last three terms.

When examining the data on the number of specialized teaching staff and academic personnel, it is observed that the academic staff of the six master's programs affiliated with the departments of Turkish language education consists of seventeen at Akdeniz University, twenty-seven at Gazi University, seven at Hacettepe University, twelve at Necmettin Erbakan University, ten at Sakarya University, and

fourteen at Yıldız Technical University. Only one faculty member specializes in teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad. The faculty member whose area of expertise is Teaching Turkish to Foreigners is affiliated with Gazi University. One of the most important factors in training qualified individuals in higher education is the teaching staff (CoŐkun, 1988). The size and quality of the academic staff directly affect the quality of a master's program. Since graduate education encompasses not only the teaching process but also consultancy, thesis supervision, and academic guidance, the adequacy of the number of teaching staff is crucial (Arslan, 2010). In this context, it can be said that departments with a high academic staff, such as Gazi University (27 people) and Akdeniz University (17 people), have the potential to provide more academic support to students. Conversely, Hacettepe University's having only seven academic staff may increase the burden of graduate education and create limitations in individual academic guidance. Furthermore, considering that the areas of expertise of teaching staff are significant in enhancing the quality of educational activities (Doykun, 2022), the presence of faculty members who are experts in their fields and can provide education suitable for the objectives and content of graduate programs is also important. Particularly in master's programs, the concentration of faculty members in specific areas of expertise allows students to deepen their knowledge in the relevant field. However, it is noteworthy that only one faculty member specializes in teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad. This situation can be interpreted as a problem of specialization in teaching Turkish to Turkish children living abroad. Additionally, managing a field through a single expert is not sustainable in the long term. The number of specialized academic staff should be increased, and academic diversity should be ensured.

Information regarding the years of program establishment is only available for Gazi University. However, a specific date has not been provided. It has been concluded that the Master's Program for Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Gazi University was established after 2010 and is the first in the field. Although information regarding the years of establishment of the relevant programs at the other five universities could not be obtained from the data sources of the study, documents outside the data source (YTB, 2021) indicate that the programs were opened in 2018. The years of establishment are important as they provide information about the beginning of interest in this field and the process of training specialists. Considering that the planned and systematic process of teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad began in 1969 (Ően, 2016a), it can be said that there has been a delay in training field specialists within higher education.

When examining the data on objectives and learning outcomes, it has been observed that the objectives of the master's programs at Hacettepe University, Necmettin Erbakan University, and Yıldız Technical University are identical. The main points are meeting the need for specialists in the field, training scientists for universities, and addressing the need for qualified specialist teachers. The main objectives of the program at Gazi University are to train qualified teachers and researchers in the relevant field. The primary objective of the program at Sakarya University is to train Turkish teachers who will teach Turkish abroad. The common aim of the programs at the five universities is to train specialized teachers in the field, while the common aim of the four programs, excluding Sakarya University, is to train competent researchers in the field. It has been concluded that the objectives of the programs are fundamentally similar. Data regarding the objectives of Akdeniz University could not be accessed. It has been observed that the learning outcomes of the programs at Akdeniz University, Gazi University, and Hacettepe University are similar to each other. The learning outcomes are not only field-specific but also oriented towards different areas such as language learning and technology use. Information regarding the learning outcomes of the other programs could not be obtained. When evaluating the objectives and learning outcomes of the master's programs, the similarity of the objectives can be

considered normal due to the nature of a specific discipline. Particularly in programs focused on teacher training and academic specialization, the establishment of certain quality standards is natural (Erişen, 2001). The sharing of similar objectives among programs in the field of educational sciences is expected in terms of meeting international quality standards and responding to the needs in the field (Higher Education Council Presidency, 2025). However, the importance of program diversity is also frequently emphasized in the academic literature. For instance, Barnett (2009) argues that diversity and differentiation in higher education are critical for academic development and that different universities should focus on different areas of expertise. Therefore, the identical objectives of Hacettepe University, Necmettin Erbakan University, and Yıldız Technical University may hinder academic differentiation and create deficiencies in providing unique academic pathways for students. Additionally, the emphasis of Gazi University's program on not only training teachers but also researchers can be associated with the "teacher-researcher model" found in the literature of educational sciences (Erdem, 2018). This model encourages teachers to be individuals who not only transmit knowledge but also conduct research to improve their own teaching processes. The focus of Sakarya University's program on teaching Turkish abroad can be evaluated in the context of Turkey's language policies and educational strategies aimed at Turks living abroad and Turkish communities (Şen, 2016b; Kavak and Başkan, 2001; Küçük, 2006). While this differentiation can provide significant contributions in terms of language education and cultural diplomacy, if this program does not have a goal of training researchers, it can be considered a deficiency in terms of academic development. The fact that the learning outcomes encompass not only field knowledge but also areas such as language learning and technology use is compatible with an interdisciplinary learning approach (Yıldırım, 1996). Today, it is expected that teacher education programs include technology integration (Beyazıt and Seferoğlu, 2009; Şimşek, Direkci, and Koparan, 2021). However, the lack of knowledge about the learning outcomes of other programs may suggest deficiencies in the standardization of teacher training programs in Turkey. The lack of data regarding some programs, such as Akdeniz University, and the occasional impossibility of accessing data indicate areas that need to be improved in terms of accountability and accessibility in higher education.

When examining the data on education durations, it is observed that the education duration of the relevant programs at Akdeniz University and Gazi University is 2 years, with a maximum education duration of 3 years; the education duration of the relevant programs at Hacettepe University and Necmettin Erbakan University is 2 years. At Sakarya University, the education duration of the institute to which the program is affiliated is at least 3 semesters, with a maximum education duration of 6 semesters. At Yıldız Technical University, the normal education duration of the institute to which the program is affiliated is 6 semesters. It has been concluded that the education durations of the relevant programs are either 2 or 3 years.

According to the data on admission and acceptance criteria, the prerequisites for Turkish citizens applying to master's programs include undergraduate graduation, undergraduate GPA, ALES, and foreign language exam scores. After the preliminary evaluation, students take a written/oral scientific exam conducted by the main departments and can be placed in the program within the quota. It is observed that students graduating from various faculties and undergraduate programs are accepted into the master's programs for teaching Turkish to Turkish children abroad. The acceptance areas include Turkish education, Turkish language and literature education, foreign language education (German/French/English, etc.), preschool education, classroom education, social studies education, computer and instructional technologies education; as well as foreign languages and literatures (German/American/French/English, etc.), contemporary Turkish dialects and literatures, translation studies, linguistics, philology, Turkish folklore, and translation and interpreting, indicating a very broad

acceptance area. The pedagogical formation requirement for students who are not graduates of education faculties is only sought at Akdeniz University, while at Gazi University, students graduating from undergraduate programs other than Turkish language teaching/education receive one year of mandatory scientific preparation training. The undergraduate GPA requirement is 3.00 at Gazi University and 2.50 at Hacettepe University and Necmettin Erbakan University. Information regarding the programs at other universities could not be accessed. The ALES verbal score requirement is 55 at Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, and Necmettin Erbakan University, 70 at Gazi University, and 60 at Sakarya University. The foreign language exam score requirement is 55 at Akdeniz University, 30 at Gazi University, and 70 at Hacettepe University and Necmettin Erbakan University. At Sakarya University, the foreign language exam score requirement is not specified. Only at Sakarya University is there a requirement to have worked as a teacher within the Ministry of National Education for 3 years. For students who pass the preliminary evaluation, the scientific exam is conducted orally or in writing. Information regarding the application requirements for the program at Yıldız Technical University could not be accessed. A common requirement for international students is a C1 level Turkish language certificate, which is required for all programs. Only at Gazi University is there a requirement to be a graduate of Turkish Studies. While international students take the scientific exam at Akdeniz University, there is no such requirement at Gazi University. No information could be accessed regarding this condition for other programs. The student admission processes for graduate education programs are generally shaped within the framework of criteria based on academic success and measuring knowledge in the relevant field. In Turkey, student admission to master's programs is conducted according to the Graduate Education and Training Regulation (2016). According to the regulation, candidates applying to the program must have a "bachelor's degree and an ALES (Academic Personnel and Graduate Education Entrance Exam) score determined by the senate that is not less than 55 in the score type of the program they are applying to" (Official Gazette, 2016). The regulation also states that higher education institutions may admit students to relevant programs solely based on ALES scores, but they may also consider the undergraduate GPA, written scientific evaluation, and/or interview results in addition to the ALES score. The use of criteria such as undergraduate graduation GPA, ALES, and foreign language scores in master's applications is thought to be compatible with policies for ensuring quality assurance in higher education (Higher Education Quality Board, 2025). However, the existence of different GPA requirements, such as 3.00 in some programs and 2.50 in others (while allowing each university to set its own academic standards) may also indicate inconsistencies in the student selection processes. Similarly, the establishment of different criteria for foreign language scores, such as 70 in some universities and 30 in others, shows that threshold values regarding academic language proficiency have not been standardized. The existence of different ALES and foreign language minimum scores among universities indicates variations in the student selection process, but it is generally debatable whether such exams are directly related to academic success. Some researchers state that ALES and foreign language exams negatively affect academic success (Kılıç, 2015; Adıgüzel, 2002; Arıcı, 1997), while others have made positive critiques of such exams (Gümgüm, 2002; Kuncel, Hezlett, and Ones, 2001). The acceptance of students from different disciplines in fields such as Turkish education and foreign language teaching can facilitate a broad academic base for the programs. However, the necessity of additional programs such as scientific preparation or pedagogical formation to support the academic success of students with different undergraduate backgrounds can be debated academically. The fact that only Akdeniz University requires a pedagogical formation for students who are not graduates of education faculties or that only Gazi University mandates scientific preparation reveals a lack of standardization compared to other universities that do not require pedagogical formation or scientific preparation. The requirement for international students to have a C1 level of Turkish proficiency can be

seen as a measure that could enhance their academic success. While Akdeniz University subjects international students to a scientific exam, Gazi University does not impose such a requirement, and the condition of being a graduate of Turkish Studies is only found at Gazi University, which may lead to inconsistencies in the criteria for accepting international students. The requirement for professional experience at Sakarya University, while other universities do not seek such a necessity, indicates that there is no national standard in the student admission processes.

When examining the weight percentages for admission calculations, it has been observed that the ALES score is effective at 50% for all programs for Turkish citizens. The undergraduate graduation score is effective at 10% at Akdeniz University, 15% at Gazi University, 20% at Hacettepe University, 25% at Necmettin Erbakan University, and 50% at Sakarya University. The foreign language score is effective at 10% at both Akdeniz University and Gazi University. The science exam score is effective at 25% at Akdeniz University and Hacettepe University, and 30% at Gazi University and Necmettin Erbakan University. For international students, it is seen that the undergraduate graduation score is effective at 40% and the science exam score at 60% at Akdeniz University, while at Gazi University, the undergraduate graduation score is 100% effective. Information regarding other programs could not be accessed. It is noted that there is a lack of uniformity in the programs regarding the impact rate of the ALES score. As mentioned above, the ALES score is a fundamental requirement for master's applications and has a certain level of impact on academic success. It can be said that the fixed rate of the ALES score (50%) across all universities ensures equality of opportunity for candidates. The undergraduate graduation score varies between 10% and 50% among universities. This difference reflects the diversity in the student selection policies of higher education institutions. However, the difference in rates can lead to imbalances in terms of academic success and potential. For example, the 50% impact of the graduation score at Sakarya University emphasizes academic success but may lead to the exclusion of students with high academic potential but lower GPAs. On the other hand, evaluating the graduation score with a low weight (10%) at Akdeniz University may lead to the neglect of academic performance. The fact that the foreign language score is only 10% effective may create the perception that language proficiency is not considered important for graduate education. However, it is argued that language skills should be given more importance in terms of access to international literature and sharing academic studies (Tuncer, Dikmen, Tanaş, Bahadır, and Uluğ, 2018). The impact rate of the science exam also varies among universities (25%-30%). Science exams are considered an important admission criterion as they provide a direct measure of candidates' academic knowledge and research skills. However, it is also noted in the literature that science exams may lack objectivity and carry the risk of subjectivity in the evaluation process (Gümgüm, 2002).

When examining the information regarding student quotas in the last three terms, it is observed that Akdeniz University has a total quota of 37, but only 7 students were placed in the program; Gazi University has a total quota of 35, but only 2 students were placed in the program. At Hacettepe University, the total quota in the last term is 5, while at Sakarya University, it is 3. Information regarding previous terms and the number of enrolled students could not be accessed. No students have been admitted to the relevant programs at Necmettin Erbakan University and Yıldız Technical University in the last three terms. The low occupancy rate of the quotas is considered a serious issue. Reasons for the low interest in some master's programs may include the quality of the program, workforce expectations in society, and insufficient job opportunities after graduation. The results obtained from this study indicate that there is a need for research to identify the reasons for the low interest in the Master's Program for Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad.

When examining the data on graduation requirements, it is seen that at Akdeniz University, Gazi University, Sakarya University, and Yıldız Technical University, a total of at least 120 ECTS must be obtained, while at Hacettepe University and Necmettin Erbakan University, at least 60 ECTS worth of courses must be taken. For each program, the successful defense of the master's thesis within the maximum duration is required. There is also a publication requirement at Gazi University and Yıldız Technical University. At Sakarya University and Yıldız Technical University, the GPA must be at least 2.50. Information regarding other programs could not be accessed. It is observed that the graduation requirements are similar. The ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) load represents the student workload and indicates the intensity of graduate education. A load of 120 ECTS means that students carry a high level of course and practical workload. A load of 60 ECTS may allow for intensive thesis work with a lighter course load. The thesis defense requirement in master's programs is an important criterion for evaluating students' research skills and their ability to make scientific contributions. The requirement for all programs to have this condition can be considered a reasonable practice. While the publication requirement is thought to contribute to the scientific productivity of graduate students, considering the challenges of publishing for early-career candidates, this requirement may create pressure on students. The GPA requirement of 2.50 in graduate programs is an important criterion for measuring students' academic performance. However, the absence of this requirement in every program indicates a lack of standardization in the evaluation processes.

When examining the data on course content, it is seen that, in addition to many common courses in the programs, Gazi University also offers different courses compared to other programs. Similarities have been identified in the compulsory courses of the programs, except for Gazi University. There are elective courses that are present in all programs or mostly available. Additionally, Gazi University offers different elective courses. The courses "Teaching (Learning) Language Skills" and "Turkish Grammar" are compulsory at Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, and Sakarya University, while they are elective at Gazi University and Yıldız Technical University. The course "Language Teaching Methods" is compulsory at Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, Sakarya University, and elective at Gazi University. The course "Migration and Adaptation Issues" is compulsory at Sakarya University and Yıldız Technical University, while it is elective at other universities. Unlike other programs, the compulsory courses at Gazi University are "Teaching Listening-Reading to Turkish Children Abroad" and "Teaching Speaking-Writing to Turkish Children Abroad." These courses are not available as compulsory or elective in other programs. The courses "Language and Culture," "Character and Value Education," and "Using Texts in Language Education" are elective in all programs. The course "Language Acquisition" is elective in all programs except for Yıldız Technical University. The courses "Children's Literature," "Measuring Language Skills," "General Turkish History and Teaching," "Migration and Adaptation Issues," "Comparative Linguistics," "Intercultural Communication," "Social Pedagogy," "Social Psychology," "Sociolinguistics," "History of Turkish Culture and Civilization," "Material Design in Turkish Education," and "Turkey's Socio-Political Situation" are elective in all programs except for Akdeniz University. Additionally, Gazi University offers nineteen different elective courses. The presence of common courses is important for ensuring national standards in higher education. This standardization provides students with a common knowledge base and supports the alignment of the competency levels of graduate graduates. However, the different course structures created by some universities also provide a positive contribution in terms of specialization and academic diversity. The abundance of elective courses in Gazi University's master's program can be interpreted as offering students more opportunities for specialization and pursuing personal interests.

When examining the data on the courses offered in the last three terms, it is observed that no courses were offered in the Master's Programs for Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Abroad at Necmettin Erbakan University and Yıldız Technical University in the last three terms. In the relevant program at Gazi University, no courses were opened in the Fall term of 2024-2025. Only the course schedule for the Fall term of 2024-2025 at Sakarya University could be accessed. In the last two Fall terms at Akdeniz University, the courses "Using Texts in Language Education," "Language Teaching Methods," "Migration and Adaptation Issues," and "Turkish Grammar" were offered. Additionally, the course "Language Acquisition" was also opened in the Fall term of 2024-2025. In the Spring term of 2023-2024, the courses "Learning Language Skills," "Language and Culture," and "Character and Value Education" were offered. At Gazi University, the courses "Migration Literature Studies," "Intercultural Communication," and "Teaching Listening-Reading to Turkish Children Abroad" were offered in the Fall term of 2023-2024; in the Spring term of 2023-2024, the courses "Fundamental Issues in Teaching Turkish as a Native Language in a Bilingual Environment," "History of Turkish Teaching," and "Teaching Speaking-Writing to Turkish Children Abroad" were offered. At Hacettepe University, the courses "Teaching Language Skills," "Language and Culture," and "Material Design in Turkish Education" were offered in the Spring term of 2023-2024 and the Fall term of 2024-2025. The course "Using Texts in Language Education" was offered in the Fall term of 2023-2024 and the Spring term of 2023-2024. Unlike other terms, the courses "Language Acquisition," "Language Teaching Methods," "Character and Value Education," and "Turkish Grammar" were offered in the Fall term of 2023-2024. At Sakarya University, the courses "Measuring Language Skills," "Using Texts in Language Education," and "Turkish Grammar" were offered in the Fall term of 2024-2025. When examining the courses offered in the relevant programs in the last three terms, it is seen that the courses "Using Texts in Language Education" and "Turkish Grammar" were offered at Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, and Sakarya University; the courses "Teaching (Learning) Language Skills," "Language Teaching Methods," and "Language and Culture" were offered at Akdeniz University and Hacettepe University. Additionally, different courses that have been opened have been mentioned above. The courses offered at Gazi University are completely different from those offered in the programs at other universities. When examining the frequency and diversity of the courses offered in the master's programs in the last three terms, significant differences between universities are observed. While certain courses are regularly offered at some universities, it is noted that no courses were offered at others or that there were periodic differences. The frequency of course offerings in higher education is generally related to student demand and the availability of academic staff (Şahin, Ökmen, Boyacı, Kılıç, and Adıgüzel, 2018). The irregular offering of courses may negatively impact the sustainability and quality of the program. Additionally, it may lead to results such as decreased student mobility and extended graduation times (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley, 2009). The existence of regularly offered courses indicates that the master's programs are conducted in accordance with the principle of academic continuity. This approach provides students with the opportunity for uninterrupted education and contributes to the timely completion of graduation processes. The different course structure at Gazi University can be seen as a strategy aimed at providing field-focused specialization in the master's program. This approach may particularly enhance specialization in teacher training for Turkish children living abroad. The common offering of certain courses demonstrates that the programs comply with fundamental academic standards. Language skills and language teaching methods are considered important components in the field of language teaching (Lüle Mert, 2014; Şahbaz, 2014). Overall, the variability in the course offering situations in master's programs by term and by university indicates that the programs are shaped

according to the principles of flexibility and sustainability. However, the lack of course offerings at some universities may negatively affect the program's effectiveness and graduation times.

In this study, as of 2025, all master's programs titled "Teaching Turkish to Turkish Children Living Abroad" in universities in Turkey have been comparatively evaluated based on the specified variables, including specialized teaching staff and academic personnel, program establishment years, objectives and learning outcomes, duration of education, admission and acceptance criteria, student quotas in the last three terms, graduation requirements, course content, and the courses offered in the last three terms. This study is limited to the use of the official websites of the relevant programs for the specified variables and data collection. Future studies on the relevant programs can examine the programs from different variable perspectives. In data collection, opinions can be obtained from various individuals such as program creators, heads of departments, teaching staff, and students, or different data collection tools can be used. Additionally, this study has identified that the occupancy rate of quotas in the programs is low and that the frequency of course offerings varies. Based on this finding, research can be conducted on the reasons why prospective students choose or do not choose the master's program for teaching Turkish to Turkish children living abroad.

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