



## TEACHING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEVELOPING READING SKILLS OF UZBEK TURKS

**Zebo Fazliddinova**

teaching assistant Journalism and Mass  
Communications University of Uzbekistan

E-mail: [zebo.apply@gmail.com](mailto:zebo.apply@gmail.com)

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7984023>

### ABSTRACT

Reading is the most basic achievement expected from a student and a prerequisite for the knowledge acquisition that he/she needs to achieve. It is a very natural result that individuals who cannot be effective readers encounter intense difficulties in their educational life. Since reading skill is found to be very important especially academically compared to other language skills, students learning Turkish as a foreign language also appear as the most important skill in the target language. In this context, it would be appropriate for students to be aware of the factors affecting the reading process and to keep their reading processes under control in this direction. While learning a foreign language, reading and understanding the texts of that language shows that the learning process of that language continues effectively. In order to improve speaking skills in a language, it is necessary to develop reading and listening skills first. Today, the demand for learning Turkish is increasing, especially in Central Asia, we can see many learners who learn Turkish and want to improve their speaking skills in this language. In this article, we will explain some of our views on how we can teach reading skills of Uzbeks while learning Turkish more practically and effectively.

**Keywords:** *Turkish as a Foreign Language, Uzbek Turks, reading, speaking skills*

### Introduction

Reading is a very complex skill with many linguistic and cognitive components (Gillon, 2004). In its most general definition, it can be defined as the knowledge of matching the symbols (letters) in the literacy language with phonemes (phonemes) and the interpretation of written information. Reading, perceiving printed or written words through sense organs, understanding and understanding them; It is a mental and intellectual act, engaging in a communicative activity with printed and written symbols, a reception, interpretation and reaction process consisting of some perceptual and cognitive processes. (Özdemir, 1998, s. 9; Yağcıoğlu ve Değer, 2002, s. 34). Reading a text while learning a language strengthens your visual memory, giving you the opportunity to see the stack of words belonging to that language together. While teaching Turkish in Uzbekistan, the book Istanbul Turkish for Foreigners, Yedi İklim, Orhun and the like are used as the main material. All of these books have reading, writing, speaking and listening sections. The convenience of this book is that students will become accustomed to a system as they learn. In other words, they will read the reading section of the subject they will learn and will mentally perceive the ways of using grammatical suffixes. We can describe this situation as the student's pre-understanding. Our aim in this study is to show which additional materials we have benefited from besides these books and to convey some of our experiences through students.

### What is Reading?

Reading, in its simplest sense, is the process of perceiving and interpreting linguistically coded written information (Urquart and Weir 1998: 22). It is a very complex process that brings together thought and perception. The first of the most important phenomena in the reading process is the perception and definition of words by the reader. The reader first decodes individual words by matching the visual image of the word with its representation in declarative information stored in long-term memory. This decryption is lexical access. What is important in lexical access is the matching of words in short-term memory with information in long-term memory, which allows us to define the meanings of individual words (Day and Bamford 1998: 12-13). The second and most important phenomenon in the reading process is the comprehension process. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and ultimately the entire text. Along with linguistic structures and rules, readers use their background knowledge, vocabulary, experiences with the text and many other strategies to make sense of what they read (Pang et al. 2003: 6). According to Keskin and Okur (2013), the acquisition of reading skills in foreign language teaching is closely related to the situation of the target audience. Since students do not have sufficient knowledge of the language they are learning, namely sentence knowledge, vocabulary and background knowledge, my reading instruction basically strives to reach meaning. In other words, reading in a foreign language is reading to understand the text.

### Methods

The number of people who want to learn Turkish as a foreign language, which is in the fifth place in terms of number of native speakers in the world, is increasing rapidly day by day due to the positive mobility in the number of foreigners coming for various reasons. The number of studies in this field has increased gradually, especially in recent years, it has gained a different intensity. In recent years, it has been ensured that there is at least one university in every city in Turkey; With a decision taken in 2010, the Foreign Student Examination (YÖS), which was held under the supervision of YÖK, was abolished, and it was aimed to remove the psychological barrier between those who want to receive undergraduate and graduate education in Turkey and Turkish universities. Universities that accept students on their own admission requirements; In the face of the emerging demand, a great majority of these students have started to create TÖMERs within their own structure in order to prepare them for the courses in Turkish education departments (Durmuş, 2013:109-110). Language is a versatile and highly developed system that enables the transfer of thoughts, feelings and wishes to others by making use of common elements and rules in terms of sound and meaning (Aksan, 1977: 55). Europe, which was in a great political turmoil and fragmentation as of the first half of the 20th century, entered a rapid process of continental globalization and integration after the First World War and the Second World War. In this continental globalization and integration process, the concept of language has been included as well as concepts such as trade, art and culture. The European Commission was established on 5 May 1949 with the participation of 10 countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, England, Ireland, Sweden, Italy and Norway). Türkiye was also included in the commission in the same year. The headquarters of the Commission is in Strasbourg, France. The European Union and the European Commission are independent organizations, but the 27 member states of the European Union are also members of the European Commission. Today, the Commission consists of 47 member countries (Council of Europe, 2007: 7). Literary works, in which the language is used in the best and most effective way, on the one hand reflect the cultural values

of the society, on the other hand, they mediate the development of people by appealing to their emotions. Literary texts; It carries cultural values in terms of society and various elements such as entertaining and pleasurable from an individual point of view. In this respect, literary texts; mother tongue and foreign language are indispensable elements of learning or teaching (Demir & Aık, 2011). As Aık (2008) states, it would be beneficial to prepare books that show the level of reading on the back cover and give the number of words, instead of having children aged 20 and over read simple stories because their Turkish knowledge is insufficient. This process is a demanding work. Until the reading books are written according to the level, the works of the existing authors should be scanned and the books for the beginner, middle and advanced students should be determined. Uzbeks are a dialect of Turkish belonging to the Karluk group, so it is natural for them to learn Turkish more quickly than other nationalities who want to learn it. But of course, due to geographical reasons, students may experience some difficulties while learning words/affixes that are never used in Turkish or Uzbek. Learn: they have some difficulty in pronunciation while teaching the negative question form of the imperative suffix -mAlI to the learner. The reason for this is that the same suffixes appear one after the other, for example: Affirmative sentence: Ahmet should come to class; Negative sentence: Ahmet should not come to class; Positive question sentence: Should Ahmet come to class? Negative question sentence: Shouldn't Ahmet come to class? Here, the progress of the teachers by giving additional root analysis will be more effective in the student's learning. At the same time, we ask our students to make sentences over and over again and make sentences in the form of positive, negative, positive questions, negative questions, and we continue our studies individually until they are more prone to their pronunciation, in this way, students learn faster.

As we mentioned above, while teaching Turkish in Uzbekistan, he uses books such as Istanbul Turkish for Foreigners, Yedi Climate and Orhun. The common feature of these books is that they all have reading texts. In each section, students meet new stories and information about that lesson. For example: On the first page of unit 2 of the Istanbul Turkish for Foreigners book, there is a short text about "Inventions and firsts in the world" and a specific past tense subject is taught to the student as grammar. The purpose of the book here is to show the student which grammar will more or less be encountered in that lesson by reading the first reading text of the student (of course, if the teacher briefly explained that there are five basic tenses in Turkish when he started to explain the tenses). So, should books that use easy and effective methods for learning be the only material sufficient to improve the student's reading, listening, speaking and writing skills? Of course, no matter how educational and effective the books are, additional materials are needed to develop language learning skills. Therefore, reading books and online materials can be given importance as additional materials to improve reading skills while teaching Turkish. Reading texts and educational videos can be used by looking at the age of the student. If the age group is not taken into account, the learning period may be extended, so video content of the student's class and age group can be prepared and made available.

### Conclusion

The principle of cultural transfer, which is one of the basic principles in foreign language education, is also a milestone in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In this context, it may be more beneficial if the cultural elements in the reading texts consist of simple functional information that will make the student feel that they are in Turkey. From

the end of the middle level, there are proverbs, aphorisms, etc. with intense expression that can represent the way of thinking, approach to events, practical intelligence of that society in the basic vocabulary. It can be said that it would be beneficial to include structures in reading texts.

By observing native and foreign language readers, Er (2005) reached the following conclusions from the definitions of reading compiled by the researchers:

1) The ability to give a meaning to written or printed symbols based on the information previously acquired in memory and to use this meaning for the perception of the message.

2) To be able to recognize written words in a time that can be measured in milliseconds.

3) Instant and automatic use of different levels and types of information: visual, phonic, sentence, lexical perception, perception of the meaning of the text, the intention of the author. As a result, based on the two definitions given, it can be said that reading education in a foreign language is the result of the student's previous knowledge, newly learned knowledge, grammar knowledge and knowledge of the mother tongue, and the phenomenological synthesis of current world knowledge. Looking at the examples above, there is no age for learning, but we think that teaching should have an age. Using materials that appeal to the age group can enable us to achieve more effective results in language learning. Most of the students who expressed their understanding of reading texts by having them read aloud were able to improve their speech even further. Sometimes we even tried the following with our students. Language is a living thing, we can keep it alive and develop it every day, every moment.

### References:

- A., K. F. (2013). Yabancılara Türkçe Öğretimi El Kitabı. Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları.
- AÇIK, F. (2008). Türkiye’de Yabancılara Türkçe Öğretilirken Karşılaşılan Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri. . Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Türkçe Eğitimi Bölümü “Uluslararası Türkçe Eğitimi ve Öğretimi Sempozyumu.
- AKSAN, D. (1977). Her Yönüyle Dil, Ana Çizgileriyle Dilbilim I. Ankara: TDK Yayınları.
- Carrell, P. D. (1988). "Interactive approaches to second language reading. Cambridge University Press.
- COUNCIL OF EUROPE. (2007). Procedures for Validation. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Modern Languages Divisio. European Language Portfolio.
- Day, R. R. (1998). Extensive reading in the second language classroom. New York: : Cambridge University Press.
- DEMİR, A. A. (2011). Türkçenin Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretiminde Kültürler Arası Yaklaşım ve Seçilecek Metinlerde Bulunması Gereken Özellikler. TÜBAR-XXX-Güz .
- DURMUŞ, M. ( 2013). Yabancılara Türkçe Öğretimi El Kitabı. Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları .
- ER, A. (2005). Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Okuma. Atatürk Üniversitesi Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, s. 208-218.
- Gillon, G. T. (2004). Phonological awareness: From research to practice. New York.
- Özdemir, E. ( 1998 ). Eleştirel Okuma. Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık.
- Pang, E. S. (2003). Teaching reading. Erişim adresi: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org>.

Urquhart, S. v. (1998). Reading in a second language: Process, product and practice.  
New York: Longman.

Walter, C. .. (2003). Reading in a second language. Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics  
and Area Studies Good Practice Guide.