

## Views of Turkish Teachers on Skills-Based Turkish Questions

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Certain changes occurred in measurement and evaluation systems, centralized exams and exams implemented in schools in alignment with developments in the world. Our mean scores in exams including PISA and TIMSS were lower than other countries. This led the Ministry of Education to introduce skills-based questions in exams with the purpose of familiarizing students with such questions and get successful results in these exams. The purpose of this study is to identify teachers' views on skills-based questions introduced to exams in our country and provide solution options in alignment with these views. **Method:** 26 Turkish teachers voluntarily participated in the study. Interviews were held using semi-structured questions prepared in alignment with expert opinions on skills-based questions. A descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the data. **Findings:** The results showed that the majority of participants try to focus on skills-based questions when they conduct their classes. Participants try to ask skills-based questions in exams, but they don't prepare the questions. Instead, they use other resources for questions. Majority of participants stated that skills-based Turkish questions create exam stress in students and increase their exam anxiety. **Implications for research and practice:** This study revealed that it would be beneficial for students to encounter skills-based Turkish questions frequently. Within this scope, Turkish textbooks should be re-designed.

**Keywords:** Skills-Based Questions, Skills-Based Turkish Questions, PISA and TIMSS.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a vibrant and lively process that includes all educational activities carried out in accordance with certain rules and plans within a system. Education, by general definition, is a process in which an individual deliberately creates desired changes and improvements through using their own experiences and behaviors (Büyükkaragöz, 1998). Education is a process of raising people according to predetermined purposes (Fidan&Erden, 1993). Educational programs are created in parallel with these purposes and constitute a mechanism of learning provided through planned activities at school and outside of school for students. One purpose of programs is the content, the teaching process and the measurement and evaluation sections (Demirel, 2006). In the measurement and evaluation sections of the programs, the level that students reached in the expected learning outcomes is measured.

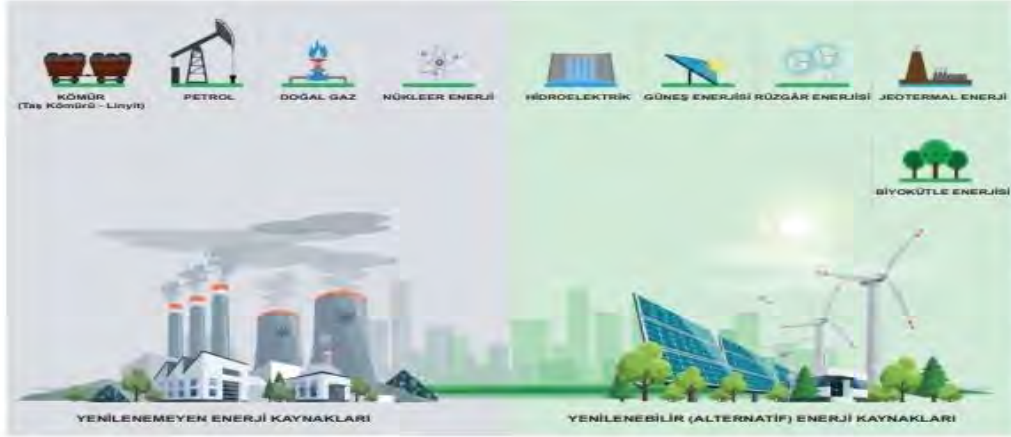
In Turkey, there are two types of exams that are central exams, and exams conducted by teachers to measure the achievements in the curriculum and school success (Büyüköztürk, 2016). These exams are described by various researchers as high-risk exams. As in the world, the exam system distances schools from educational purposes in Turkey. In this respect, schools are exam-oriented, and education remains secondary (Kumandaş & Kutlu, 2015). Departing from this point, the Ministry of Education prepared the 2023 Education Vision Document (EVD) to shift schools from being exam oriented. With the 2023 EVD, the purpose is to raise children who are interested and sensitive about culture, who are qualified, moral, and equipped with the skills of the current era and the future, and who can use these skills for the sake of humanity (2023 Eğitim Vizyon Belgesi, 2018).

Skills-based questions began to appear before students in central examinations with the understanding brought by the philosophy of measurement and evaluation in the EVD document. Skills-based questions measure the ability to use reasoning power over visuals, comprehension of texts through understanding the logical relationship, and make inferences based on comprehension to reach a solution or results, making inferences from various information, and to analyze and synthesize. The measurement and evaluation approach expressed in the Turkish Lesson Curriculum is as follows:

"Prepared materials should be enriched by including written (short text, poetry, painting, graphics, etc.) and visual elements (cartoons, photographs, pictures, etc.), graphics (concept maps, mind maps, etc.) as much as possible, and requiring their active use. Such materials will contribute to students' skills of making inferences, critical thinking, analysis, visual reading, reasoning, use and development of their spatial skills. Questions should require merging old and new information and associating with other disciplines and everyday life." (MEB, 2019, p.10).

This study focuses on the skills-based Turkish questions that are being used in the LGS (High School Entrance) exams for 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Skills-based Turkish questions and teacher opinions on the impact of these questions on students' exam anxiety was examined. Following the implementation in the LGS exam, skills-based questions were prepared and made accessible to students in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades by the General Directorate of Measurement, Evaluation and Examination Services (ÖDSGM, 2019). Skills-based questions include various visuals, graphics and diagrams, tables, various statistical values, and measurements. Preparing skills-based Turkish questions compared to traditional questions requires the ability to use word processors and visual preparation programs effectively at a basic level. Additionally, preparation of these questions requires more time and effort than traditional questions as they include various visuals, tables, and higher cognitive skills including logic, comparison, reasoning, ability to analyze and synthesize. This causes obstacles in the preparation of skills-based Turkish questions. Figure 1 is an example of a skills-based Turkish question prepared by the ÖDSGM.

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**Bu görselden,**

- I. Yenilenemeyen enerji kaynakları hava kirliliğine sebep olabilir.
- II. Yenilenebilir enerji kaynakları daha çok kullanılmaktadır.
- III. Yenilenemeyen enerji kaynakları toprağın altından çıkarılmaktadır.

**çıkarımlardan hangileri yapılabilir?**

- A) Yalnız I.                      B) I ve II.                      C) II ve III.                      D) I, II ve III.

**Figure 1.** Skills-Based Question Example (ÖDSGM, 2019)

Skills-based questions have several of the characteristics of a good question which include controlling all the information and concepts related to the topic addressed, comparing, and questioning, interpreting the finding, explaining, associating the causes, being able to critique, monitoring results, using imagination, and putting evaluation process into action (Özbay, 2002). Researchers identified the characteristics of exams and opportunities to be provided for students in the literature. These include characteristics such as not only finding the information but also critical thinking, being able to analyze and synthesize, evaluating, being able to sort accumulated knowledge, self-regulation, interpretation, and being able to use observations made (Yıldırım, 1983).

Multiple-choice tests used so far have dulled certain higher cognitive skills such as problem solving, interpreting, comparing, analyzing, and synthesizing, and assessments in students (Üstüner and Şengül, 2004). The reason for the study's focus on skills-based Turkish questions is the characteristic of Turkish education to improve language skills as well as cognitive skills (Güneş, 2007). Skills-based questions are thought to contribute to the development of cognitive skills of students.

### **Purpose of Research**

The purpose of the study was to evaluate skills-based Turkish questions in accordance with teacher's views, to reveal the levels of use and preparation of skills-based questions of Turkish teachers, and to determine teachers' views on the effects of skills-based Turkish questions on students' exam anxiety. Thus, the following research questions were raised:

1. Do you focus on skills-based questions when you conduct your Turkish lessons?
2. How do you think skills-based Turkish questions should be addressed in Turkish lessons?
3. Do you ask your students skills-based questions in the written exams of Turkish lessons?

4. Do you prepare original skills-based Turkish questions to use in your Turkish lessons and written exams?

5. Can you explain whether skills-based Turkish questions affect students' exam anxiety?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature and employs a case study approach. Case studies allow for an in-depth examination and description of a limited system on a single subject (Simons,2009; Merriam, 2013). One aspect of case studies is that they allow researchers to understand a situation through data collection tools including interviews, observations, documents, reports, etc. in-depth (Creswell, 2007). Results obtained in case studies are not generalized, but they provide guidance in understanding similar situations (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). In this study, Turkish teachers' views on skills-based Turkish questions were addressed.

### Sampling / Study group

As the researcher works as a Turkish teacher in the city of Antalya, a convenience sampling was used to identify the study group. For an in-depth examination in this method, opinions of different people are taken in detail (Patton, 2012). Convenience sampling method allowed the researcher to choose the easiest, closest, and the least expensive situation (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2013). 26 teachers working in the central districts of Antalya voluntarily participated in the study conducted between 01.09.2019-30.12.2019. 13 of the participants were women and 13 were men. Teachers who participated in the study were coded as T1, T2, T3... and their names and the institutions they work were kept anonymous in accordance with research and ethical principles. Demographical information of teacher participants is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographics of Teachers Participated in the Study

Codes	Gender	Seniority	Level of Education
T1	Woman	5 years	Master's
T2	Woman	4 years	Undergraduate
T3	Woman	6 years	Undergraduate
T4	Woman	6 years	Undergraduate
T5	Woman	11 years	Undergraduate
T6	Woman	14 years	Undergraduate
T7	Woman	9 years	Undergraduate
T8	Woman	8 years	Master's
T9	Woman	13 years	Undergraduate
T10	Woman	18 years	Undergraduate
T11	Woman	16 years	Undergraduate
T12	Woman	11 years	Undergraduate
T13	Woman	7 years	Undergraduate
T14	Man	19 years	Undergraduate
T15	Man	11 years	Undergraduate
T16	Man	5 years	Master's
T17	Man	19 years	Undergraduate
T18	Man	22 years	Undergraduate
T19	Man	13 years	Undergraduate
T20	Man	8 years	Undergraduate
T21	Man	6 years	Master's
T22	Man	15 years	Undergraduate
T23	Man	18 years	Undergraduate
T24	Man	9 years	Undergraduate
T25	Man	7 years	Master's
T26	Man	14 years	Undergraduate

The data in Table 1 show that the gender distribution of the 26 teachers who participated in the study is half and half. 21 teachers have undergraduate degrees, while 5 have master's degrees. 3 of the Turkish teachers have been in the profession for 1-5 years, 9 of them have been in the profession for 6-10 years, 8 of them for 11-15 years, 4 of them for 16-20 years, and 1 of them has been in the profession for over 21 years.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In this study, a semi-structured interview form was used to identify skills-based Turkish questions, and teacher views on the impact of these questions on students' exam anxiety. The interview form was developed by the researcher and consists of 5 questions. In addition to the prepared questions on the topic, purposeful questions can also be asked during an interview to identify participants' opinions, beliefs, and feelings about a topic, and thus, their subjective feelings and opinions can be understood (Türnüklü, 2000; Johnson, 2004). Depending on the interview course, follow-up or additional questions can be asked for participants to provide detail in their answers (Türnüklü, 2000).

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive and content analysis methods were used in analyzing the data. The audio records of interviews were transferred to the researcher's computer and transcribed in a word processor software. In content analysis, various codes are formed for the data and the data are sorted by themes for analysis. This results in concepts and relationships that can represent the data obtained. As a result, the data are presented in a way that is comprehensible by the reader (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2013). The participants were coded as T1, T2, T3...The questions of the interview form were analyzed in headings. In each question, direct participant quotes are provided and labeled with their unique code.

### **Validity and Reliability**

For validity purposes, two field experts were asked to review the data collected and they found the data and the coding consistent. Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula was used in this study. According to the result obtained from the formula, the compliance rate was 0.93. To support the reliability of the study, participants were quoted from the coded expressions and presented in the findings section. In addition, audio recordings obtained from the interview form were transcribed and shared with the participants for review.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings obtained from the interview form are presented in multiple headings in this section of the paper.

### **Findings on the 1<sup>st</sup> question**

The question of "Do you focus on skills-based questions when you conduct your Turkish class?" was asked to the teachers. Most participants said they try to focus on skills-based questions when conducting Turkish lessons. Some of the responses of participants are provided in direct quotation below:

*"Yes, I focus on it, and I find it very useful. I try to explain to students the logic of skills-based questions as I conduct my lesson." (T.1)*

*"Yes, I'm trying to focus on skills-based questions whenever I get a chance. But it's not as much as I want, unfortunately, I have time constraints. Not enough time to cover lesson*

*contents. Sometimes it takes me a whole lesson to explain a skills-based question. If there is enough time, we try to solve questions prepared by the ministry of education." (T.5)*

*"Yes, if there's enough time for the curriculum, I focus on skills-based questions. However, since the curriculum is prepared with the purpose of basic gains related to the subject, I have a problem with solving skills-based questions within the normal course time allocated to the subject." (T.11)*

*"When I teach Turkish, I focus on skills-based questions. Although it's difficult for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders to understand, it's more understandable for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. I don't know if it's in elementary school, but I think it's good for kids to get used to these questions from elementary school." (T.14)*

*"Yes, I try to focus." (T.18)*

*"Yes, at the end of each theme, I surely try to solve skills-based questions with my students." (T.22)*

*"There is no specific time I allocate for solving skills-based questions in class. However, when we encounter this question format, we discuss with our students and solve the question. But we can solve a question once a week." (T.25)*

*"Yes, but if the students let me know that they can't solve a question, I focus on it. Otherwise, we won't have time to cover the content." (T.26)*

### **Findings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> question**

The question of "How do you think skills-based Turkish questions should be addressed in Turkish lessons?" was addressed to the participants. Most of them said they didn't have enough time in Turkish lessons to address skills-based questions. They stated that there are no chapters in textbooks for skills-based questions. They emphasized that skills-based Turkish questions should be taught gradually starting in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and stated that students in other grade levels except for the 8<sup>th</sup> struggle in solving skills-based questions. They also stated that this problem could be solved by addressing these questions with activities in Turkish lessons. Teachers stating that skills-based questions are designed for comprehension believe that designing activities in Turkish textbooks within the logic of skills-based questions would be more beneficial. Necessary arrangements can be made on this matter in Turkish lessons. Some of the responses of participants are provided in direct quotation below:

*"Students actually know the answer to a skills-based question. But most of the time, they don't understand the question. When questions are solved together, students use phrases like, "Oh, was it that easy? Is that what it meant, or how easy it was, how I didn't see it." We should teach the logic of such questions to students in Turkish lessons. Understanding what is read is very important for solving skills-based questions. I think this feature that we will teach students in Turkish lessons would help solve skills-based questions in other courses more easily." (T.2)*

*"I think these questions should be addressed in chapters. Texts and activities in the books should be prepared accordingly." (T.6)*

*"To be honest, I barely cover the learning outcomes in the annual plan during the weekly class hours. I give my students writing assignments. I can't address skills-based questions in my class. We just address those in weekend courses. I think the weekly hours of Turkish lessons*

*should increase. I think there has to be a separate hour dedicated to address these questions. Only then can we easily cover skills-based questions in our lessons. "(T.12)*

*"Skills-based questions should be provided in textbooks within activities by associating with the theme and the subject of text." (T.16)*

*"Skills-based questions should overlap with the learning outcomes of the course, so these should be included in our annual plans. Skills-based questions should be in the activities in our Turkish textbooks. I want the Ministry to distribute test books, including such questions, in addition to the textbooks. Or these questions should be incorporated in textbooks. Then, that's how we would prepare the kids. "(T.19)*

*"It seems it is impossible to expect skills-based questions to be taught and understood by covering them like grammar in Turkish lessons. It can be addressed more through texts by using intuition, asking questions, and making inferences. For this purpose, activities in texts should be in Turkish textbooks." (T.22)*

*"Our students don't have trouble in understanding the basic rules related to the topics in the curriculum. But when they encounter questions that they can apply the rules they learned and that they can reason, they struggle in the first place. Skills-based questions have been given attention over the past few years. As current middle school students were not taught these questions in the foundation, their anxiety levels are high at first, but as we solve these questions, we feel that their anxiety decreases over time. Almost all skills-based questions are questions about the ability to understand what you're reading. In my opinion, there should be a course on understanding what you read or on these questions as a compulsory course independent of Turkish lessons. Since weekly Turkish lesson hours are not enough, it creates a problem in solving skills-based questions."(T.24)*

### **Findings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> question**

Participants were asked the question, "Do you ask skills-based questions to your students in the written exams of Turkish course?" Some of the participants stated that they ask skills-based questions in their written exams, and some stated they don't. Participants who asked skills-based questions said they ask one or two questions. They attributed this to the difficulty students have in solving skills-based questions. Some of the responses given by the participants are quoted below:

*"Yes, I ask. I include one skills-based question when I prepare the questions for the written exam. I don't ask more than one question because I've seen students don't use their time well when solving these kinds of questions. Otherwise, they won't be able to get through test." (T.1)*

*"I only ask to 8th graders who will take the LGS exam. At other grade levels, students have a hard time solving such questions. I don't ask them in written exams, but I do the necessary work to get them used to such questions."(T.4)*

*"I don't ask skills-based questions. Students who want those questions already encounter them in textbooks. Some students want me to bring in questions and solve them. In these cases, students and I solve skills-based questions together." (T.7)*

*"Yes, I ask."(D.13)*

*"I include skills-based Turkish questions partially in my written exams and learning outcome evaluation examinations. I'm not really asking because I know students have a hard time when they see these questions. Such questions have been in the agenda for two years. Students will*

*get used to solving skills-based questions over time. Maybe textbooks would be re-designed accordingly next year. Then we would prepare the written exams accordingly." (T.17)*

*"Students struggle more on these questions. I try to ask one question in every exam. Students say that it's not that hard when they're helped in skills-based questions they can't solve. 1-2 years is needed to accommodate to this system. Such questions should be introduced starting in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade in accordance with the grade level. I believe 5<sup>th</sup> grade is late." (T.21)*

*"Yes, I ask. I ask at least one skills-based question at each grade level. The number of questions is more in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I don't include these questions in my grade scale because not every student can answer. It's an advantage for the kids who can."(T.25)*

### **Findings on the 4<sup>th</sup> question**

Turkish teachers who participated in the study were asked the question, "Do you prepare original skills-based Turkish questions for your Turkish lessons and written exams?" Most of the participants said they do not prepare original skills-based Turkish questions. Participants using readily available skills-based questions instead of preparing their own believe that the ability to use some of the graphic or visual drawing software, albeit at a basic level, is necessary to prepare skills-based questions. Some participants have said it may be useful to get in-service training seminars, such as measurement assessments or question preparation, to prepare skills-based questions. Some of the responses given by the participants are quoted directly and presented below:

*"No, for now, I haven't had a chance, but I'm thinking of preparing. I prefer to use prepared questions."(T.1)*

*"No, I do not. Because it takes a lot of time and I think it's necessary to know how to use a drawing program." (T.3)*

*"I was trying to write skills-based questions for LGS because of the resource problem the year skills-based questions were first introduced (in 2018). But I was having a hard time. Because to prepare visuals and shapes, you need to know simple programs like the drawing program. I was copying and pasting the pictures I found. But because of that I couldn't prepare as good questions as I wanted. But I don't prepare questions myself anymore because there are a lot of resources on skills-based questions now. I'm mostly doing a review of resources and trying to get the kid to analyze the questions by asking questions like, what would it be if they asked it like this or that." (T.9)*

*"No, I don't prepare, I use questions that are ready from a variety of sources." (T.13)*

*"I rarely try to find questions using different sources to avoid wasting time during class." (T.17)*

*"No, I don't. I use other resources. In fact, the Measurement and Evaluation Centers established in the Provincial Directorates of National Education could professionally prepare skills-based Turkish questions and create a question pool " (T.19)*

*"I don't prepare original questions, but I take advantage of the questions of my peers who prepare from various social media accounts." (T.20)*

*"I don't prepare myself. I've never tried it. But it takes a little bit of information to prepare the visuals. That's why I don't think I can do that." (T.23)*



*"No. I don't prepare because I can't. You need to know some drawing programs. It's hard for me. I'm thinking about taking classes on that. I think it's worth learning a basic visual preparation program." (T.26)*

### **Findings on the 5<sup>th</sup> question**

Turkish teachers were asked the question "Can you explain whether skills-based Turkish questions affect students' exam anxiety?" Most participants stated that skills-based Turkish questions negatively affect students' exam anxiety. According to the participants, students are biased because they find skills-based questions long and think they cannot solve them. Participants stated that students have problems with how to approach and solve skills-based Turkish questions. Some of the responses given by the participants are quoted directly and presented below:

*"Yes, I think it does. Because these questions are new to students, they say 'the questions are long, how will we get through all of them?' when they see the questions. They ask if they will have enough time. But when they start figuring it out, they say that it isn't too hard. This may be due to such questions not being common." (T.1)*

*"Some students are afraid that such questions are too long which creates anxiety." (T.6)*

*"Students who study can do it. Particularly the students who read a lot of books don't have any trouble. They only have prejudices. They say it took a long time and thus, they're worried about it."(T.9)*

*"Yes, the questions are frightening for students who don't like to read. And for those who don't understand what they read; the exam increases anxiety. Students already have exam anxiety. After seeing skills-based questions, it became more difficult. Exam anxiety have increased." (T.11)*

*"I think skills-based Turkish questions increase students' exam anxiety. They are nervous if they know there's going to be a question like that. I think moderate anxiety positively affects the level of success. It can be used as an extra question for students with high capacity to understand what they are reading. However, if the question is worth more points and the student cannot do, then the anxiety of taking a low grade will negatively affect success."(T.14)*

*"It affects some students negatively. As these are questions designed for logic, reasoning and critical thinking, students with good skills can do it without difficulty. Because some of the students are weak in these areas, their stress increases while solving skills-based questions. They're worried." (T.18)*

*"I think it doesn't affect negatively, it's better for students to encounter questions that measure their higher skills instead of asking questions at their level of knowledge. After all, there are questions in skills-based questions that directly measure student's knowledge. Besides, there are questions that I like or am inspired by. When students are at 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they get used to such questions because now with exams like LGS, questions that are determinant, and that require making inferences are now asked to be selective." (T.20)*

*"In skills-based questions, students have difficulty using information. They are having a hard time understanding what they read. This creates exam anxiety for them. Students can be taught how to solve these questions." (T.21)*

*"It's negatively affecting. I think it's hard for kids." (T.23)*

"Skills-based questions negatively affect some students in a way that creates exam anxiety, because they find it difficult since they don't understand the questions. But I think this can be gradually overcome. I think it is necessary to design Turkish textbooks and activities accordingly." (T.25)

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

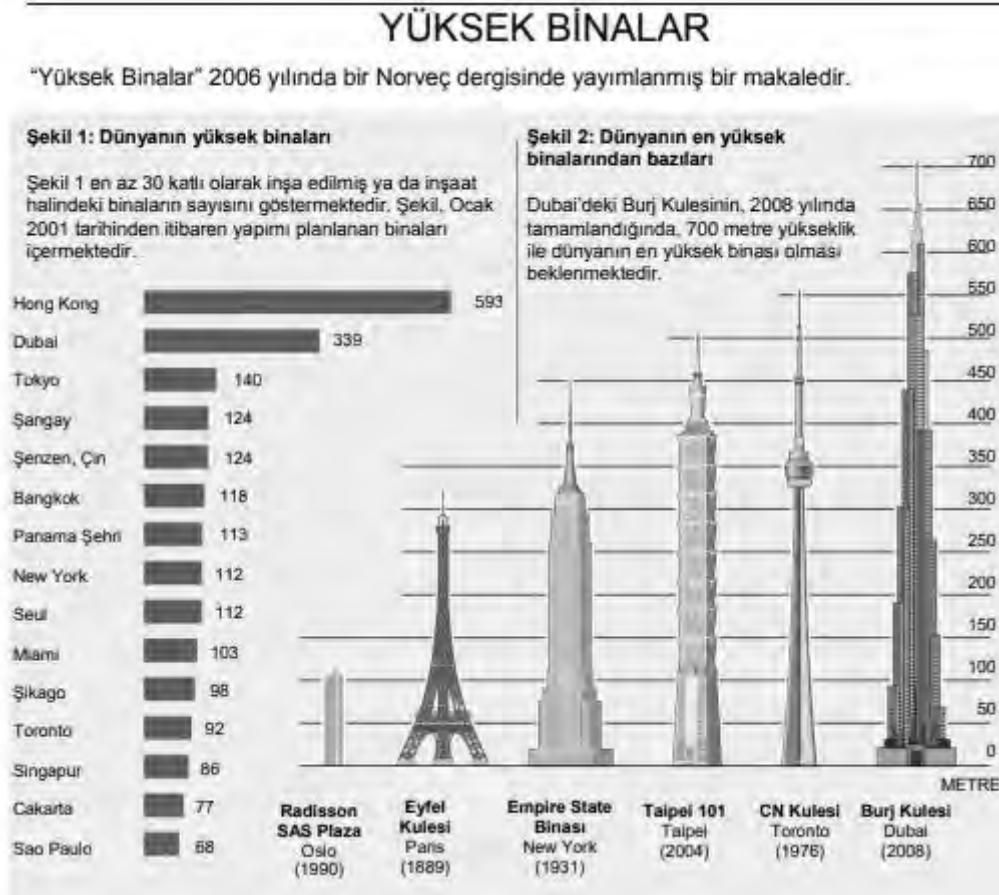


Figure 2. PISA Question Example (PISA, 2015, p. 16-18)

Ministry of Education introduced changes in measurement and evaluation methods and approaches to equip students with the expectations and skills of this age and to bring students to a level that can be competitive with students in other countries around the world. Switching from traditional multiple-choice questions to skills-based questions reflects these changes. The current study aimed to determine teacher's views on skills-based Turkish questions. In this context, using a semi-structured interview form, five questions were asked to Turkish teachers who voluntarily participated in the study. According to the results of the findings obtained from the participants' opinions, it was concluded that teachers try to focus on skills-based questions when conducting Turkish lessons. Participants stated that skills-based questions take time and that weekly course hours are not sufficient in this regard. Teachers say they try to address all the learning outcomes, and that there should be a separate lesson to address skills-based Turkish questions in Turkish lessons. For this reason, they stated that they can allocate time for skills-based questions in support and training courses besides Turkish courses. Considering that not all students take these courses, it is seen that some students are unable to benefit when skills-based Turkish questions are taught. Given that international exams such as PISA compare our education level to other countries, it is thought that it would be useful to allocate a separate lesson hour for teaching and solving skills-based questions.

The following conclusions were drawn from the opinions of Turkish teachers on how to address skills-based Turkish questions in Turkish lessons: Most Turkish teachers who participated in the study stated that they did not have enough time in Turkish lessons to explain and solve these questions. It is concluded from teachers' opinions that there are no activities and chapters in Turkish textbooks that teach the logic of skills-based questions. Students only see these kinds of questions in test books which forces them to buy reference books. As skills-based questions are geared towards comprehension, the texts and activities in Turkish textbooks can be designed according to the skills-based question format. At the end of each theme, skills-based question samples can be given, and the questions can be solved in Turkish lessons. According to the findings of the study, students encounter skills-based questions generally in the 8th grade. Students who face such questions for only one year are likely to struggle, panic, and worry about these questions. Instead, it is useful to include such questions in Turkish textbooks and activities at all grade levels.

According to the results, some of the Turkish teachers ask skills-based Turkish questions in their written examinations, and some do not. Turkish teachers who ask skills-based questions in their written exams were found to be trying not to ask multiple skills-based questions because students have difficulty responding to them. It is understood that teachers who do not ask skills-based questions avoid asking these questions in their written exams for the same reason.

The results showed that most Turkish teachers who participated in the study did not prepare original skills-based Turkish questions. They stated that they use skills-based questions from other resources in their courses and written exams. According to the findings from the interview form, Turkish teachers think they need the ability to use some of the visual drawing and graphics programs, albeit at a simple level, to prepare skills-based questions. Very few teachers use educational software, drawing or graphic programs to prepare such questions (Gulbahar and Güven, 2008). In addition, teachers think it may be useful to receive in-service training seminars such as measurement, assessment, or question preparation. This conclusion was drawn in similar studies. The fact that some teachers need to refer to different sources to prepare questions raises the question of whether teachers can prepare such questions themselves (Guler, Arslan, Çelik, 2018). Skills-based questions are questions that require time and effort. They require knowledge to use a drawing program, albeit at a basic level, to prepare several visual graphics and shapes. In this context, teachers can be provided in-service training seminars.

Research showed that the training provided to teachers in this topic are mostly in the software category, and that in-service training courses in the computer-aided teaching group for preparing visual graphics and shapes are not at the desired level (KeleşandÇelik, 2013). In-service training activities to be offered to Turkish teachers in this context will be very useful in preparing skills-based Turkish questions. Additionally, skills-based Turkish questions are similar to the questions asked in international examinations such as PISA and TIMSS. Similar research in the literature have produced similar results. Some teachers stated that they try to include questions about reasoning in the classroom environment, and in doing so they solve examples of exam questions such as ALES, PISA, KPSS, TIMSS (Guler, Arslan, Celik, 2018). Such examinations allow participating countries to see the levels of education systems compared to other countries. Results in exams guide education policies (PISA 2018). In this context, it is important to make skills-based Turkish questions common. Texts and activities in Turkish textbooks can be redesigned with skills-based questions. The Ministry of Education can include chapters in Turkish textbooks consisting of skills-based questions. The Ministry periodically opens access for skills-based question samples to teachers and students in a virtual environment which is a good practice. However, it is not enough on its own. Turkish textbooks can be reshaped in this context. The findings of the study showed that most of the participants obtain skills-based Turkish questions from available sources. Another way to make skills-based questions more common may be the creation of comprehensive questions pools by experts at the Measurement Evaluation Centers established by the Ministry of National Education. Then, the question pool could be opened to students and teachers.

According to the study findings, skills-based Turkish questions negatively affect students' exam anxiety. Many participants think that students approach skills-based questions with prejudice as the questions are long which leads students to think that they can't solve the questions, or they won't have enough time. The results indicate that students experience problems with solving skills-based Turkish questions. The logic and solution strategies of these questions can be taught gradually starting from 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Considering that 8<sup>th</sup> grade students already experience exam anxiety due to LGS, skills-based questions should not be an additional stress factor for students. If skills-based questions are taught gradually starting in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students would be familiar with the questions and would not experience stress. Turkey's PISA 2018 scores in reading skills increased compared to previous years. Our average score in reading skills increased by 38 points to 466 compared to 2015 (PISA 2018). These developments indicate that the work carried out in this field will reveal the results over time. The introduction of skills-based questions in LGS exam in 2018 has placed students in the preparatory process. Preparing for skills-based questions is also a result of achievement in exams including PISA and TIMSS which is confirmed by the 2018 PISA Turkey Preliminary Report. The curriculum has been updated to teach students the role of knowledge in everyday life and associate knowledge with everyday life. The LGS exam is structured according to this approach (PISA 2018). Perhaps the next step will be to redesign Turkish textbooks according to this approach and revise the activities with this logic.

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