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INSTRUCTORS' OPINION ON THE USE OF CONCEPT MAPS FOR IMPROVING VOCABULARY IN TEACHING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Research article

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Abstract

This study aims to determine instructors' opinions regarding use of concept maps during the process of improvement of vocabulary in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The research was designed according to the case study, one of the qualitative research approaches. The study group of the research consisted of 13 instructors who taught Turkish as a foreign language in the 2019-2020 academic year. The data of the study were collected using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. The data obtained in the research process were analyzed by content analysis. According to the results of the research, instructors use concept maps at the end of subject review, while teaching relevant words, at the introduction to subject and while studying with keywords during improvement process of vocabulary in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Concept maps contribute to the vocabulary teaching process in terms of achieving permanent, easy and meaningful learning. Concept maps are used in the module exams, quizzes and end-theme evaluations in the vocabulary teaching assessment and evaluation process. Mind maps, vocabulary notebooks and lists, and vocabulary cards are used as practices that support concept maps in the vocabulary teaching process.

Keywords: foreign language, Turkish, vocabulary teaching, concept map.

1. Instruction

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language becomes more and more important every day. African and Arab countries, Russia and China, especially European countries have an important potential in terms of teaching Turkish (Toprak, 2011). The Syrian immigration in recent years has further increased this potential, and it has emerged as an important need for refugees to learn Turkish in the context of social integration. The fact that many students from Asian and European countries, particularly from Africa, prefer Turkey for undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral education, and that the commercial activities with the world countries have developed depending on economic developments has increased the need for teaching Turkish as a foreign language day by day. It is of paramount importance for both international students coming to our country and asylum-seekers in our country to learn Turkish efficiently in terms of adaptation to life in Turkey and Turkish culture, as well as their educational and social life (Buyukikiz & Cangal, 2016).

In teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the interests and needs of the target audience for the purpose of language learning are the principles that should be taken into consideration first (Nurlu, 2019). In this regard, the target audience may have a desire to learn Turkish for reasons such as education, trade, tourism, and adaptation to social life. At this point, Turkish

should be taught as a foreign language in line with a certain plan and program regarding the needs of individuals. In this case, the teaching of words and concepts gains importance during the process. Indeed, the words learned in the lessons facilitate the communication processes of the students in their daily lives and make them feel confident in learning a foreign language. In this regard, while teaching new words to students in the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the processes of improving their vocabulary are followed (Bicer & Polatcan, 2015).

Language can be thought of as a structure that progresses from part to whole and from whole to part. This structure continues as sound, syllables, words, sentences, paragraphs and text. Each part has an important role in individuals' ability to express themselves in that language. Besides, if it is considered as a meaningful structure, the word is the smallest unit of a language that expresses meaning in a language and ensures communication between people (Demir, 2018). Word is a language unit which is composed of sound groups with one or several syllables and which corresponds to a certain concept, reflects a certain feeling and idea, establishes a relationship between concrete or abstract concepts in mind when used among people speaking the same language (Gulensoy, 2010, p. 515). Vocabulary is at the center of comprehension and expression skills, and the richness of vocabulary is considered important in foreign language teaching as well as in mother tongue (Barin, 2003; Karatay, 2007; Demirel, 2010). While teaching Turkish as a foreign language, most of the activities are carried out for vocabulary teaching; thus, it is aimed for students to comprehend different words in accordance with the subject and the level of the class (Bicer & Polatcan, 2015). In this regard, it is aimed to improve students' ability to understand and express in Turkish, which they learn as a foreign language.

The width of an individual's vocabulary in a language gives the individual the ability and courage to express himself / herself in that language. In this sense, people with broad vocabulary can express their feelings and thoughts more easily and clearly (Buyukikiz & Hasirci, 2013). In this direction, it is aimed to create and develop basic vocabulary in students with various sources such as books, brochures and videos in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Besides, without relying solely on these sources, teachers should determine the words and concepts they will teach according to the daily language or language learning objectives of the target audience (Barin, 1992). In addition, in mother tongue and foreign language teaching, the most frequently used words of the language to be taught and the most necessary words for the learner should be determined (Demirel, 2010). In this way, the foundations of the rapid and relevant language teaching of the target audience should be laid. In this regard, vocabulary should be improved systematically and consciously over time while teaching Turkish as a foreign language, in line with the needs of the target audience (Maden et al., 2016).

There are many methods and tools that can be used for improvement of vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. One of them is concept maps. Concept maps are teaching tools that organize and present concepts and sub-concepts according to the relationships between them (Novak & Canas, 2007). Concept maps are tools prepared to develop skills such as analysis, synthesis, classification, evaluation, and questioning by establishing relationships between concepts for effective and meaningful learning (Kirkkilic, et al., 2011). Concept maps are hierarchical, two-dimensional visual teaching tools that show the relationships between concepts (Liu, 2004). With concept maps used in many areas from language education to science education, information is associated and classified, thus meaningful learning takes place (Kaya, 2003). Concept maps contribute to vocabulary teaching substantially. Revealing the relationship between the words of the language learned, enabling many words to be learned at the same time, and facilitating retention of the words

learned since they appeal to visual memory are only a few of these contributions (Maden et al., 2016). In this regard, use of concept maps for vocabulary improvement both in mother tongue and in teaching foreign languages is considered as a necessity for easy and meaningful learning (Acat, 2008; Maden et al., 2016).

The active use of an individual's comprehension and expression skills in a language depends on improving the vocabulary. This is because individuals' understanding of what they read and expressing what they see is accomplished through words (Carkit, 2019). Concept maps are one of the modern teaching tools that offer the opportunity to benefit from technology in vocabulary teaching. When the literature is examined, it is seen that many studies have been conducted on the use of concept maps in teaching Turkish as a mother tongue (Acat, 2003; Yaman, 2006; Senay, 2007; Sahin et al., 2013; Polatcan, 2014; Ozturk & Omeroglu, 2015; Aydogan & Ozdemir, 2020). Nevertheless, the number of studies on the use of concept maps in the teaching process of Turkish as a foreign language is quite low (Bulbul, 2015). Teaching vocabulary has an important place in the teaching process of Turkish as a foreign language. During this process, determining the usage status of concept maps and the contribution of concept maps to this process is considered as a necessity. In this context, this study aimed to determine the use of concept maps for improving vocabulary in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. For this purpose, the opinions of the instructors who taught Turkish as a foreign language were consulted in the research, and the research questions were determined as follows:

- What is the status of the use of concept maps in improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language?
- What is the effect of concept maps on improving the vocabulary in teaching Turkish as a foreign language according to instructors' opinions?
- What is the status of the use of concept maps during evaluation and assessment process regarding improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language?
- What are the practices that support concept maps in improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language?

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

This study is a case study designed in qualitative research approach. The case study is a research design initiated to seek answers to how and why questions and creates a conceptual framework based on these questions (Yin, 2012). Case studies are a research approach that offers an in-depth examination of a current topic that the researcher cannot control (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016). While case studies are called a teaching and research approach, it is a research design that is seen as a learning method in its own (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Case studies are a frequently used research model, mainly in language learning, mother tongue and second language acquisition, and teacher education (Paker, 2015). This study considered the use of concept maps as a case or a phenomenon in improving the vocabulary in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The desire to collect in-depth data in this regard was the basic reason why the research was designed as a case study. Case studies can be examined under three headings as explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive (Yin, 2012). This research was modeled according to the descriptive case study. Explanatory case studies are built on the thesis of providing in-depth information about the situation or phenomenon under consideration (Aytacli, 2012). One of the most critical characteristics of case studies is that the information

revealed due to the situation or phenomenon considered enables the interpretation and evaluation of similar conditions or facts. In this regard, case studies aim to discover a case or a phenomenon without making any comparison as in experimental studies, and in this framework, in case studies, the researcher categorizes and defines the cases and phenomena s/he discusses, instead of testing a hypothesis and proving the relations (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). Case studies require a gradual process to be followed. In this study, the process and stages of developing research questions, choosing the situation to be studied, determining the analysis unit, forming a study group, data collection, analysis, and interpretation determined by Yildirim and Simsek (2016) were followed.

2.2. Study Group

In this study, a study group was formed in accordance with the spirit of the qualitative research approach. Purposeful sampling, one of the qualitative sampling methods, was used to determine the relevant study group. "The purposeful sampling is a sampling method that has emerged within the qualitative research tradition and allows for in-depth study of cases that are considered to have rich information" (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016, p. 118). The study group of the research consisted of 13 instructors who taught Turkish as a foreign language in the 2019-2020 academic year. 8 of these instructors provided Turkish education service to foreigners within the body of PIKTES (Project to Support Integration of Syrian Children to Turkish Education System) as affiliated to Ministry of National Education and 5 of them were employed within the body of TOMER. 8 of the instructors in the study group were female and 5 of them were male, and they had varying years of professional experience. These instructors participated in the research voluntarily and signed the voluntary participation in research form.

2.3. Data Collection

The data of this study were collected through interviews. "In the field of social sciences, interviewing is an effective method to obtain information about individuals' experience, attitudes, opinions, complaints, feelings, and beliefs" (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016, p. 129). In this sense, a semi-structured interview form consisting of eight questions was developed to analyze the research questions and the situation to be studied in depth. During the preparation of the form, the literature studies were reviewed, and the opinions of 3 Turkish instructors were taken. Experts evaluated the questions as "inappropriate", "should be corrected" and "appropriate". Accordingly, Miles and Huberman's (1994) reliability formula was applied to ensure the reliability of the questions. As a result of the evaluation, five items with compliance coefficient of 70% and above were included in the interview form, and 3 items were removed from the form. The compliance coefficient of all the questions included in the form was found to be 93.33%. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in our country, some of the interviews were held online. During the interview, the interviewees answered the questions sincerely and the data were noted down.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data collected by the researchers were first transferred to computer environment, and then these data were analyzed. Content analysis, one of the qualitative analysis forms, was used in the analysis of the data. Content analysis is a data analysis technique used to draw repeatable and valid results for these data's content from the data obtained (Krippendorff, 1980; Kocak & Arun, 2006). "The main purpose of content analysis is to reach the concepts and relationships that can interpret the data collected" (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016). As a result of the research, the data transferred to computer environment were coded so that the theme and sub-themes of the study were formed. At this point, research questions were considered.

According to Patton (2014), the raw data obtained in qualitative studies are analyzed with content analysis and divided into categories and subcategories, and then the obtained data are interpreted to describe the pattern, understanding and insights of the study. Based on this understanding, it was aimed to reveal the general pattern of the study in the research.

3. Findings

The research focused on when and how concept maps are used in the course of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. For this purpose, the interviewees were asked the following question: "Do you use concept maps in improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language? How?" In this context, the theme sub-theme pattern obtained as a result of the analysis of the data obtained is given in Table 1.

Table 1. *Theme sub-theme pattern regarding the use of concept maps in the course of teaching Turkish as a foreign language*

Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes	Frequency
Use During the Course of Teaching a Lesson	End of subject reviews	End of subject, vocabulary review, general review, general reminder, end of theme review, end of lesson review	10
	Teaching related words	Creating conceptual framing, related words, words related to the subject, synonyms, close words, homonyms, teaching words related to the same concept	7
	Drawing attention while introducing a subject	Subject introduction, the beginning of the lesson, drawing attention, holistic seeing,	4
	Studying with keywords	Keywords, determinant words, summary, concretization	3

According to Table 1, most of the instructors participating in the study ($f = 10$) stated that they used the concept maps to repeat the words learned at the end of the subject. Besides, in this study, it was determined that concept maps were used for purposes of teaching the relevant vocabulary ($f=8$), drawing attention at the introduction to subject or beginning of lessons ($f=4$), studying with keywords and concretizing these words ($f=3$). Some of the opinions given by the instructors within this framework are given below.

"I use concept maps because I think they positively affect teaching vocabulary especially at the end of a subject." Interviewer 9.

"I usually use concept maps to evoke the subject by writing *a keyword* on the board and drawing a picture of it if it is a concrete word." Interviewer 6.

"I give it with other related words especially in order for students to fully comprehend what that word is, why that word is used and to retain in their mind rather than memorizing *a word*. For example, in order to teach the profession of "pharmacist" to the student, I write associated words such as "pharmacy, medicine, prescription", thus I ensure that the student comprehends the word pharmacist and learns other relevant words." Interviewer 7.

"I use concept maps at the introduction to a subject in order for students to see the subject as a whole and to learn basic words related to the subject." Interviewer 2.

In the study, the effect of concept maps during the process of improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language was also discussed, and the interviewees were

asked the following question "How is the effect of concept maps on improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language?" The theme and sub-theme pattern obtained as a result of the analysis of the data obtained in this direction are given in Table 2.

Table 2. *Theme sub-theme pattern regarding the effect of concept maps on vocabulary teaching in terms of improving Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language*

Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes	Frequency
Effect on Vocabulary Teaching	Connotation	Connection between words, reminding related words, establishing relationships, semantic connotation, recalling	11
	Permanent learning	Retention of words, sense-making, structuring words, use of words, transmission, holistic learning	7
	Easy learning	Simplification, easy learning, ease of understanding, realization, convenience, comfortable use	5
	Meaningful learning	Meaningful learning, providing semantic integrity, usage process, creating integrity	3

According to Table 2, most of the instructors stated that concept maps enabled connotation between words ($f=11$), therefore, they frequently used concept maps for improving vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Besides, regarding the use of concept maps in teaching vocabulary, the participants stated their opinions indicating that concept maps enabled permanent learning ($f=7$), facilitated learning process and provided meaningful learning. Some of the opinions expressed in this sense are given below.

"A meaningful structuring process takes place while teaching vocabulary with concept maps, therefore I obtain better results for *permanent learning*." Interviewer 13.

"I frequently use concept maps in vocabulary teaching. Because it enables students to make *connotations* regarding the subject and learn more words. Besides, recalling learned words *gets easier*." Interviewer 6.

"I think concept maps have a positive effect on vocabulary learning. Because I am of the opinion that concept maps establish association and relationship between the words related to the subject and enable the words to be learned more *easily* and more *permanently*." Interviewer 1.

"I am of the opinion that use of concept maps for teaching Turkish as a foreign language is very useful. Students establish *connection between words* by means of concept maps; therefore, *semantic integrity* is provided and *meaningful learning* takes place." Interviewer 2.

This study aimed to determine use of concept maps during evaluation and assessment process of teaching vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In this sense, the interviewees were asked the following question: "Do you use concept maps during assessment and evaluation process while teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language? How?" In this sense, the theme sub-theme pattern reached as a result of the content analysis of the data obtained is given in Table 3.

Table 3. *Theme sub-theme pattern regarding the use of concept maps in the course of evaluation and assessment while teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language*

Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes	Frequency
Use During Evaluation and Assessment Process	Determining in-class performance	Lesson performance, in-class learning, vocabulary learned during the lesson	5
	Evaluation and assessment at the end of the theme	End-of-theme vocabulary learning, theme vocabulary, end-of-theme assessment	3
	Module exams and quiz	Quizzes, module exams, exams, vocabulary exams	2

Based on Table 3, it can be stated that more than half of the instructors participating in the study did not use concept maps during evaluation and assessment process. Some of the instructors interviewed stated that they used concept maps during evaluation and assessment process while teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language in order to determine in-class performance ($f=5$). Besides, end of theme evaluation and assessment ($f=3$), module exams and quizzes ($f=2$) were determined as areas where concept maps were used during vocabulary teaching evaluation and assessment process. Some of the opinions obtained in this direction are given below.

"I *do not benefit* from concept maps during evaluation and assessment." I use the concept maps mostly in the teaching process." Interviewer 5.

"I use this technique to assess *in-class* performance of students. After teaching the word, I assess the permanence of the word by drawing a new concept map and creating new connotations." Interviewer 9.

"I benefit from concept maps during evaluation and assessment. Students can find answers by means of connotations, since I think that the purpose is not to assess but to find out what student has learned, I use this technique for questions focused on vocabulary teaching especially *at the end of themes*." Interviewer 13.

"I prefer this technique for *quizzes* or *exams* during both lessons and evaluation and assessment processes for especially levels A1 and A2 in teaching Turkish as a foreign language." Interviewer 10.

"I think that concept maps as an assessment tool give practical results on how students make sense of knowledge; therefore, I resort to concept maps to see progress of students in terms of vocabulary teaching." Interviewer 8.

This study addressed whether practices supporting concept maps during improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language were carried out or not, and the instructors were asked the following question "Do you carry out practices supporting concept maps during improving the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language? How?" The theme sub-theme pattern obtained in this framework is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Theme sub-theme pattern related to practices supporting concept maps during improving vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language

Theme	Sub-Theme	Codes	Frequency
Supporting Practices	Mind maps	Mind maps, conceptual integrity, synonymous words, concept maps, mental structuring, meaningful learning	9
	Vocabulary notebook	Text vocabulary, vocabulary cards, vocabulary notebook, recalling, permanent learning	7
	Flashcards	Flashcard, visualization, visual memory, theme vocabulary, Levels A1 and A2, permanent learning	6
	Puzzles	Abstract vocabulary, advanced Turkish, fun environment, word puzzle, idiom teaching, phrase puzzles	5
	Vocabulary list	Words, idioms, phrases, listing, word usage, sentence building	4

According to Table 4, a significant portion of the instructors interviewed ($f = 9$) stated that they used mind maps as a practice supporting concept maps in teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language. Instructors stated that mind maps together with concept maps ensured meaningful learning in vocabulary teaching. Besides, more than half ($f=7$) of the instructors participating in the study stated that they had students keep a vocabulary notebook and half ($f=6$) of them stated that they used flashcards. 4 of the instructors said that they used and considered puzzles ($f=4$) as practices supporting concept maps while teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language, whereas 3 of them gave the same statement for vocabulary lists ($f=3$). Accordingly, mind maps, vocabulary notebooks and flashcards can be expressed as techniques that are effective in teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language used together with concept maps. Puzzles and vocabulary lists were determined as practices used with concept maps during the process. Some of the opinions obtained in line with this theme are given below.

"*Mind maps* can be considered as a method supporting concept maps. Besides, I am of the opinion that vocabulary teaching becomes permanent by means of *visual cards*." Interviewer 7.

"I think that vocabulary teaching is very important in teaching Turkish to foreigners. It is a fact that the more words about a language are known, the more expressive power increases. That is why, I use many practices, especially concept maps, while teaching vocabulary. I can say that *mind maps* and *vocabulary notebooks* are methods and tools I use for teaching vocabulary." Interviewer 8.

"I have students do *puzzle* activities in advanced level modules and while teaching abstract words or idioms. Students both have fun and learn the words permanently." Interviewer 3.

"In addition to concept maps, I use *mind maps* for teaching vocabulary as well. I am of the opinion that mind maps not only teach vocabulary but also give students thinking skills." Interviewer 2.

"Apart from concept maps, I benefit from *flashcards* or computer applications while teaching vocabulary. Because the attraction in teaching makes the student more attentive and active." Interviewer 6.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the usage of concept maps in the process of improving vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language was investigated. In this direction, according to the results of the study, concept maps are used at the end of the subject or theme in order to repeat the learned vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Besides, concept maps can be used during lesson within the framework of teaching related words or at the beginning of lessons or at the introduction to subjects to draw attention. Studying with keywords and the desire to concretize these words with concept maps is another determined usage of concept maps while teaching Turkish vocabulary as a foreign language. It was determined that similar results were obtained in different studies carried out in the literature. In this sense, it is stated that concept maps contribute to the realization of meaningful learning such as drawing students' attention, facilitating recall and increasing interest in the lesson (Heinze-Fry & Novak, 1990; Kaptan, 1998; Yaman, 2006; Yilmaz, 2008). Concept maps are used as a schematic summary of the subject at the end of the learning process, and accordingly, they form the archives of students in a sense (Gurbuz, 2006). Based on the research results, concept maps can be considered as a method used at every stage of the lessons in the vocabulary improving studies while teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

During the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, improving the vocabulary requires students to learn and use words, the meaning of which they do not know. At this point, the vocabulary teaching process cannot be thought of only as the teaching of the sounds and lexical meanings of words. It is very important to provide semantic relationships between words and to ensure that these words are used actively. Within this framework, according to the results of the research, it was concluded that the concept maps contribute to improving the vocabulary significantly while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Accordingly, creating connotations between words, supporting permanent learning in the vocabulary teaching process, providing meaningful learning and facilitating the learning process can be expressed as the contribution of concept maps to vocabulary teaching while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The conclusions of some studies in the literature support these conclusions. Novak (1990) stated in his research that concept maps had a high effect in terms of facilitating the learning process and providing meaningful learning. Similarly, Polatcan (2014) found that concept maps increased interest in the lesson, provided permanent learning, facilitated the learning process and made the lesson fun. In this direction, it can be stated that concept maps make significant contributions to context-based vocabulary teaching in the process of enriching the vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

Concept maps can be used as a part of the evaluation and assessment process during the education process. In this sense, concept maps provide teachers with the opportunity to observe the knowledge students have about a subject, in other words, to follow the progress process of students (Anderson-Inman & Ditson, 1999). One of the most important contributions of concept maps to the education process is that they can be used as a valid and reliable assessment tools (Novak & Govin, 1998). In the study, it was determined that the instructors did not use the concept maps sufficiently for the purpose of evaluation and assessment during the process of improving the improving vocabulary while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. A small portion of the instructors interviewed stated that they used concept maps in determining in-class performance, end-of-theme evaluation and assessment, module exams and quizzes during the vocabulary teaching process. In this regard, the research supports the fact that instructors lack knowledge about alternative evaluation and assessment tools including concept maps and

do not use such tools sufficiently as determined in the literature (Nazario, 2004; Raboijane, 2005; Kanatli, 2008; Duban & Kucukyilmaz, 2008; Anil & Acar, 2008; Ozdemir, 2010; Okur & Azar, 2011; Karamustafaogullari et al., 2012; Dokumaci-Sutcu & Bulut, 2015)

Concept maps can be used with many teaching tools during the education process. Thus, the areas of application of students' skills expand and more effective learning is provided. In the study, it was determined that mind maps were mostly used as a teaching tool to support concept maps during the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Teachers who taught Turkish as a foreign language considered the mind maps used together with the concept maps to be important in terms of meaningful learning in vocabulary teaching. Besides, flashcards, vocabulary notebooks, puzzles and vocabulary lists were determined as other teaching tools used together with concept maps while teaching Turkish as a foreign language. During the foreign language teaching process, teaching vocabulary only in the form of teaching the sounds of a word and its dictionary meaning cannot be considered as a meaningful learning (Demirel, 2010). The problems encountered in reading, writing, speaking and listening activities during the foreign language teaching process mostly stem from insufficient vocabulary (Maden et al., 2016). In order to solve such problems, it is necessary to establish meaning connections between words and to give students the ability to use these words. In this sense, interactive learning environments and different teaching tools should be enriched. In this regard, tools such as mind maps, puzzles, flash cards, which are used together with concept maps during the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, are considered important in terms of enabling lessons to be taught in a rich content and interactive environment. Based on the results obtained from the study, the following suggestions can be offered to the practitioners and other researchers:

- Experimental studies can be conducted on the use of concept maps during foreign language teaching process.
- Studies can be conducted on the use of concept maps as an evaluation and assessment tool during mother tongue teaching process.
- In-service training seminars on the use of concept maps during mother tongue and foreign language teaching process can be organized for instructors.
- Concept maps can be developed for themes to be used during the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language.
- Students' opinions can be taken on the effectiveness of using concept maps while teaching Turkish as a foreign language.
- E-concept maps related to themes during foreign language teaching process can be developed.

5. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

6. Ethics Committee Approval

This study was conducted in accordance with the permission of Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee numbered E-39083294-050.06-185 and dated 23.12.2020. All ethical principles and rules were followed by the researchers

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