



## INVESTIGATING TEACHER VIEWS ON IMPROVING THE SPEAKING SKILLS OF SYRIAN STUDENTS

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### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to investigate teacher views on improving the speaking skills of Syrian students. It is a case study which was designed with a qualitative approach. In the scope of the study, semi-structured interview forms were used to obtain the views of teachers who teach Syrian students Turkish on improvement of the speaking skills of the students (reaching goals and targeted outcomes by teachers, including speaking activities, application of methods and techniques related to speaking, usage of instruction tools and materials for speaking). The sample of the study consisted of 43 teachers who agreed to take part in the study voluntarily. Convenience sampling was employed in the study. As a result of the study, it was determined that most teachers had problems in reaching goals and targeted outcomes related to speaking, they included speaking activities infrequently, and they could not use methods and techniques for speaking as they did not have sufficient knowledge of such methods and techniques.

**Keywords:** speaking, teaching Syrians Turkish, teacher views, qualitative study

### 1. Introduction

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are described in the literature as basic language skills. Individuals who use these skills effectively can definitely express themselves more comfortably and transmit their message to a receiver without difficulty and with high influence.

Basic language skills may be categorized as comprehension and expression skills. While comprehension skills include listening and reading, speaking and writing are in the expression category. *“Speaking is described as transfer of thoughts and feelings into words*

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*and uncovering mental constructs, processes and operations”* (Güneş, 2014, p. 3). Speaking has critical importance in teaching both native languages and target languages (as a foreign or second language). This is because *“in terms of improvement of especially communication skills, the success obtained by speaking and the effective power of speaking is considered to be directly proportional to the quality of life of individuals”* (Kurudayıoğlu, 2003, p. 289). Moreover, increases in the self-expression levels of individuals will also affect their communication skills positively (Melanlıoğlu and Demir, 2013). In fact, it may be easily argued that the main criterion of having learned a foreign language is being able to speak that language based on its rules.

Several studies have been conducted on how to effectively provide children with speaking skills in the process of teaching a target language via activities. Şeref (2013) provided alternative activities for teachers who teach Turkish to foreigners by preparing speaking activities that focus on a communicational approach for improving the speaking skills of students. In order to improve in-class speaking skills, Harmer (2007) proposed activities of acting from a script, communication games, discussion, prepared talks, questionnaires and simulation and role-play. According to Demir (2013), activities that may be used in speaking classes include *“students’ spoken summarization of the text they have read, providing students with topics in students’ interests such as “spare time activities, sports, arts, family, vacation and future plans’ that they can prepare for beforehand and expecting them to make verbal presentations or carrying out in-class activities like panels, debates and forums”* (p. 124).

It is undeniable that the methods and techniques to be used responsibly by the teacher will provide significant contribution in improving speaking skills. According to Göçer (2015), improvement of speaking skills requires usage of suitable methods and techniques by considering the topic of the class, levels of the students and the suitability of the classroom setting. In this context, while selecting the methods and techniques for improvement of speaking skills, one needs to know about the theoretical backgrounds of the methods and techniques and choose accordingly.

In the traditional approach, speaking exercises are prioritized, and it is emphasized that speaking will be improved by constant imitation and repetition. With the methods that are applied for this purpose, the priority is on issues such as speaking exercises, emphases, intonation and pronunciation. Cognitive approaches and models consider the speaking process in a broader perspective as mental and physical and focus on the mental processes of the speaker (Güneş, 2014, p. 3).

Usage of instruction tools and materials for improving speaking skills in the process of teaching a target language by diversifying these will affect the process positively. Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014) stated that technological tools and materials such as internet, podcasts, video conferencing, videos and speech recognition software may help students in improving speaking skills.

The place of speaking in learning a foreign language is mentioned above. Thus, it is needed to additionally focus on providing Syrians with speaking skills while teaching the Turkish language. This is because the capability of a community of about 3.5 million people to live in a country where a different language is spoken is closely related to

their ability to speak the language. Foreigners in Turkey are taught the Turkish language at Turkish teaching centers (TÖMER, DİLMER) under universities, and school and educational centers that are run by the Ministry of National Education (MEB). However, the quality of the service provided varies among the institutions in question. The practices at the schools and educational centers run by MEB are carried out in the scope of the “Project for the Integration of Syrian Students into the Turkish Education System.” It may be stated that, in terms of both the technical infrastructure and qualified personnel, TÖMER and DİLMER institutions are in a better condition than MEB institutions. In TÖMER and DİLMER institutions, there is a requirement to at least partially speak the target language during the teaching process. That is, the student will continue the communication process outside the class at a setting where Turkish is spoken. However, especially students who are staying in camps do not have such an opportunity. *“Providing the education in the camp environment, deprivation of students from certain social opportunities and their inability to leave the camp has affected the success of the project negatively. The inadequate physical conditions in the classrooms in the first years of the project also influenced the learning and teaching processes”* (Büyükkız and Çangal, 2016, p. 1428). Considering that the second skill that foreigners who are learning find the most difficult is speaking (Açık, 2008), in addition to the adequacy of the classroom environment, the importance of settings and activities that will provide opportunities to speak the target language outside the classroom may be understood more clearly. The heaviest workload for the activities of teaching Turkish in the scope of the “Project for the Integration of Syrian Students into the Turkish Education System” is on the teachers. Therefore, the views of teachers regarding the process of teaching Turkish to Syrians are highly valuable. This is why the subject of the study was chosen as the views of teachers who teach Turkish to Syrians on the goals and targeted outcomes, activities, methods and techniques, and instruction tools and materials towards improving the speaking skills of students.

### **1.1. Objectives**

The objective of this study was determined as investigating teacher views towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students. The research questions are as the following:

1. How is the situation of the teachers about reaching goals and targeted outcomes regarding improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?
2. How is the situation of the teachers about their inclusion of activities towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?
3. How is the situation of the teachers about their implementations of methods and techniques towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?
4. How is the situation of the teachers about their use of instruction tools and materials towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Model

This study, which aims to investigate teachers' views on improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students, was designed in the form of a case study as a qualitative method. "A qualitative study may be described as a study in which qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process is employed towards presenting phenomena and situations in their natural environment in a realistic and comprehensive way" (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 39). A case study is a type of qualitative study which provides researchers with possibility of collecting detailed and in-depth information on a real situation or case (Craswell, 2015).

### 2.2. Sample

The study used the non-probability (purposive) sampling method of convenience sampling. In convenience sampling, the researchers choose a phenomenon that is close and easy to access (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008).

The study was carried out in April 2017. The participants were 43 teachers who were teaching Turkish to Syrians in the province of Kilis, Turkey. The distribution of some characteristics of the teachers in the sample is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Frequency Distribution of the Personal Characteristics of the Participants in the Sample

Personal Characteristics of the Teachers	f
<b>Class Level They Taught</b>	
Primary School	27
Secondary School	9
High School	7
Adults	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Program of Graduation</b>	
Turkish Language and Literature	27
Turkish Teaching	9
Form Teaching	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>

As seen in Table 1, 27 of the teachers taught classes for Syrian primary school students, nine and seven teachers taught those on the levels of secondary and high school respectively. Two teachers taught Turkish for Syrian adults. Additionally, among the teachers who taught Turkish for Syrians in Kilis, 27 graduated from Turkish Language and Literature, nine graduated from Turkish Teaching and five graduated from Form Teaching departments.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools and the Collection Process

As a data collection tool, the study used a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers in a way that is suitable for the objectives and research questions of the study with the purpose of learning about the views of the teachers on improvement of

the speaking skills of Syrian students. *“Interview is a method that is used to learn about behaviors and feelings that we cannot observe or how people express the world around them”* (Merriam, 2013, p. 86).

After the draft of the semi-structured interview form was submitted for the views of experts in the field, a pilot study was conducted with 10 teachers. The form was given its final form after the feedback that was received.

The final form was applied by the researchers with the teachers who were teaching Syrians Turkish. After the implementation, the responses of the teachers to the open-ended questions were examined separately by the researchers, and the reliability of coding was calculated as 91% by using the formula by Miles and Huberman (1994) [ $\text{Agreement} / (\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}) \times 100$ ]. Reliability rates of higher than 70% indicate a reliable study (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The semi-structured interview form was prepared for determining the views of the teachers on improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students from different perspectives (goals and targeted outcomes, activities, method and techniques, instruction tools and materials). The first part of the form includes questions about the class level taught by the teachers and the departments they graduated from. The rest of the form contains five open-ended questions. In addition to this, there are three follow-up questions. The data were collected by conducting interviews with the teachers during the certification program that was prepared for teachers who teach Turkish to Syrians organized at Kilis 7 Aralık University.

#### **2.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The data in the study were examined by the method of content analysis. *“The main objective in content analysis is reaching concepts and relationships that may explain the collected data. The main activity in content analysis is to gather similar data around certain concepts and themes and interpret them by organizing them in a way that can be understood by the reader”* (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008: 227).

In the study, the data collected from the interviewed teachers were coded in a general framework. The codes were divided into common themes based on the relationships among them. Tables were utilized in the presentation of the codes and the resulting themes.

In reporting the interview data, the sentences of the teachers were provided as direct quotes to reflect the points of view of the interviewed persons. While quoting from the views of the teachers, the numbers assigned to the teachers (e.g. T<sub>1</sub>) were added at the end of the quotes.

### **3. Findings**

This section provides the findings of the study in compliance with the research questions in the form of tables.

### 3.1. How is the situation of the teachers about reaching goals and targeted outcomes regarding improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?

**Table 2:** Situation of the teachers about reaching goals and targeted outcomes regarding improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students

I Can Reach	f	I Can Partly Reach	f	I Cannot Reach	f
Turkish Language and Literature	3	Turkish Language and Literature	4	Turkish Language and Literature	20
Turkish Teaching	2	Turkish Teaching	4	Turkish Teaching	3
Form Teaching	1	Form Teaching	2	Form Teaching	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

As seen in Table 2, among the teachers who taught Turkish for Syrians, six stated that they can reach goals and targeted outcomes towards speaking skills, 10 stated that they have partial reach, and 27 stated that they cannot reach such goals and targeted outcomes. Thus, most teachers who participated in the study cannot reach goals and targeted outcomes regarding speaking.

Table 3 shows the views of the teachers regarding whether or not they reach goals and targeted outcomes towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students.

**Table 3:** Views of the Teachers Regarding Their State of Reaching Goals and Targeted Outcomes towards Improvement of the Speaking Skills of Syrian Students

I Can Reach	f	I Can Partly Reach	f	I Cannot Reach	f
Preparedness (T <sub>15</sub> )	1	Depends on the student (T <sub>4</sub> , T <sub>14</sub> , T <sub>16</sub> , T <sub>33</sub> )	4	Crowded classrooms (T <sub>3</sub> , T <sub>5</sub> , T <sub>8</sub> , T <sub>10</sub> , T <sub>23</sub> , T <sub>26</sub> , T <sub>32</sub> , T <sub>34</sub> , T <sub>35</sub> )	9
The teacher speaks the target language (T <sub>40</sub> )	1	Crowded classrooms (T <sub>25</sub> )	1	Lack of communication between the teacher and the students (T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>2</sub> , T <sub>6</sub> , T <sub>7</sub> , T <sub>13</sub> )	5
A long process (T <sub>41</sub> )	1	Young students (T <sub>27</sub> )	1	Unwillingness of the students (T <sub>11</sub> , T <sub>20</sub> , T <sub>24</sub> , T <sub>36</sub> , T <sub>38</sub> )	5
Reaching on an elementary level (T <sub>12</sub> )	1	Lack of attendance (T <sub>9</sub> )	1	The students do not speak Turkish outside the classroom (T <sub>29</sub> , T <sub>30</sub> , T <sub>31</sub> , T <sub>39</sub> , T <sub>43</sub> )	5
		Targeted outcomes that are not cared about by the teacher (T <sub>18</sub> )	1	Young students (T <sub>21</sub> )	1
				<b>Pronunciation problems (T<sub>10</sub>)</b>	<b>1</b>

As seen in Table 3, most teachers stated that they cannot reach goals and targeted outcomes. Some of their reasons were “crowded classrooms” (f: 9), “lack of communication between the teacher and the students” (f: 5), “unwillingness of the students” (f: 5), “students do not speak Turkish outside the classroom” (f: 5), “young age of the students” (f: 5) and

“pronunciation problems” (f: 5). The views of two teachers who stated that they could not reach their goals and targeted outcomes are given below:

“We cannot reach the goals and targeted outcomes regarding speaking skills to a desired extent. The biggest reason for this is the high numbers of students in the classroom, and that Syrian students find it difficult to pronounce Turkish words.” (T<sub>10</sub>)

“There are always mistakes while pronouncing words or sentences. While the syntax is disorganized, the sentence is interpreted based on the comprehension level of the listener. That is, what the students wants to express and what I understand can be different.” (T<sub>2</sub>)

“Very few teachers stated that they could reach goals and targeted outcomes. Some of their reasons were “preparedness” (f: 1), “the teacher speaks the target language” (f: 1), “a long process” (f: 1) and “reaching on an elementary level” (f: 1). The views of two teachers who stated that they could reach their goals and targeted outcomes are given below:

“I always expose them to Turkish. I think this is why the classes are more productive. I observe that they repeat and use several words I use in the classroom even though I do not use these intentionally.” (T<sub>40</sub>)

“I can reach goals and targeted outcomes regarding speaking skills in a long time. Considering the benefits of the dialogues and skills in the classroom, such outcomes can be reached in a long time.” (T<sub>41</sub>)

### 3.2. How is the Situation of the Teachers about Their Inclusion of Activities towards Improvement of the Speaking Skills of Syrian Students?

**Table 4:** States of the teachers on whether they included activities towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students

Frequency of Inclusion of Activities by the Teachers	f
Always	19
Usually	16
Sometimes	8
Never	-

As seen in Table 4, most teachers stated that they always or usually included speaking activities. No teachers stated that they never include speaking activities.

Table 5 shows the views of the teachers on how they included speaking activities.

**Table 5:** Views of the teachers on how they included activities towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students

Speaking Activities	f
Dialogue practice (T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>5</sub> , T <sub>8</sub> , T <sub>10</sub> , T <sub>14</sub> , T <sub>18</sub> , T <sub>19</sub> , T <sub>20</sub> , T <sub>26</sub> , T <sub>28</sub> , T <sub>29</sub> , T <sub>32</sub> , T <sub>33</sub> , T <sub>40</sub> , T <sub>41</sub> , T <sub>43</sub> )	16
Conversation (T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>6</sub> , T <sub>9</sub> , T <sub>12</sub> , T <sub>13</sub> , T <sub>14</sub> , T <sub>20</sub> , T <sub>21</sub> , T <sub>23</sub> , T <sub>27</sub> , T <sub>39</sub> , T <sub>42</sub> )	12
Pronunciation practice (T <sub>2</sub> , T <sub>4</sub> , T <sub>5</sub> , T <sub>20</sub> , T <sub>22</sub> , T <sub>25</sub> , T <sub>30</sub> , T <sub>42</sub> , T <sub>43</sub> )	9
Mini Dramas	6

(T <sub>3</sub> , T <sub>8</sub> , T <sub>10</sub> , T <sub>12</sub> , T <sub>17</sub> , T <sub>36</sub> )	
Speaking based on visuals (T <sub>9</sub> , T <sub>27</sub> , T <sub>29</sub> , T <sub>38</sub> )	4
<b>Games</b> (T <sub>10</sub> , T <sub>16</sub> , T <sub>24</sub> , T <sub>32</sub> )	<b>4</b>

As seen in Table 5, the teachers usually included activities of “*dialog practice*” (f: 16), “*conversation*” (f: 12), “*pronunciation practice*” (f: 9) and “*mini dramas*”. The views of two teachers who included speaking activities in their classes are given below:

*“I create the dialogues they can use in daily life myself. Then I show them how to use them and have them talk.”*(T<sub>5</sub>)

*“I involve speaking activities while teaching Syrians Turkish. With the help of speaking activities, the students put what they have learned into practice. I organize face-to-face dialogues and roleplaying in speaking activities.”* (T<sub>10</sub>)

Table 6 shows the views of the teachers on the reasons for why they sometimes included activities in the speaking process or did not include them.

**Table 6:** Reasons for why the teachers sometimes included activities towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students or did not include them

Reasons of the Teachers	<i>f</i>
Classroom noise (T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>15</sub> )	2
Students do not speak Turkish (T <sub>7</sub> , T <sub>35</sub> )	2
Crowded classroom (T <sub>31</sub> , T <sub>34</sub> )	2
Unwillingness of the students (T <sub>11</sub> )	1
<b>Inadequacy of the teacher</b> (T <sub>37</sub> )	<b>1</b>

As seen in Table 6, the reasons stated by the teachers included “*classroom noise*” (f: 2), “*students do not speak Turkish*” (f: 2), “*crowded classrooms*” (f: 2), “*unwillingness of the students*” (f: 2) and “*inadequacy of the teacher*” (f: 2). The views of two teachers who sometimes included speaking activities are given below:

*“I cannot do much except the dialogues. I cannot reach the entire class because of noise. This is why it is like chatting with a part of the students.”* (T<sub>1</sub>)

*“We do not have time to make everyone talk one by one as our classrooms are crowded. This is why we have to prioritize our students who are ambitious. While those we pay attention advance, those we cannot pay attention or those that have negative attitudes towards Turkish fall behind.”* (T<sub>34</sub>)



### 3.3. How is the situation of the teachers about their implementations of methods and techniques towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?

**Table 7:** The views of the teachers on the methods and techniques they implemented towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students

Teachers Who Implemented Methods and Techniques	<i>f</i>	Teachers Who Did Not Implement Methods and Techniques	<i>f</i>
Free Speaking (T <sub>17</sub> , T <sub>18</sub> , T <sub>19</sub> , T <sub>21</sub> , T <sub>37</sub> )	5	The teacher does not know the methods and techniques (T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>2</sub> , T <sub>4</sub> , T <sub>5</sub> , T <sub>7</sub> , T <sub>8</sub> , T <sub>10</sub> , T <sub>11</sub> , T <sub>12</sub> , T <sub>16</sub> , T <sub>22</sub> , T <sub>24</sub> , T <sub>25</sub> , T <sub>28</sub> , T <sub>29</sub> , T <sub>32</sub> , T <sub>33</sub> , T <sub>34</sub> , T <sub>35</sub> , T <sub>38</sub> , T <sub>40</sub> , T <sub>43</sub> )	22
Group Speaking (T <sub>6</sub> , T <sub>9</sub> , T <sub>23</sub> , T <sub>37</sub> )	4	Crowded classrooms (T <sub>3</sub> )	1
Targeted Speaking (T <sub>9</sub> , T <sub>19</sub> , T <sub>21</sub> )	3	Indifference of the teacher (T <sub>26</sub> )	1
Speaking Unprepared (T <sub>17</sub> , T <sub>18</sub> , T <sub>19</sub> )	3	Students do not speak Turkish (T <sub>30</sub> )	1
Question & Answer (T <sub>6</sub> , T <sub>31</sub> )	2		
Drama (T <sub>13</sub> , T <sub>20</sub> )	2		
Speaking Prepared (T <sub>18</sub> , T <sub>19</sub> )	2		
Speaking by Choosing from a Pool of Words and Concepts (T <sub>21</sub> , T <sub>37</sub> )	2		
Participatory Speaking (T <sub>9</sub> , T <sub>15</sub> )	2		
Word Chorus (T <sub>9</sub> )	1		
Socratic Debate (T <sub>14</sub> )	1		
Brainstorming (T <sub>14</sub> )	1		
Empathic Speaking (T <sub>21</sub> )	1		
<b>Debate</b> (T <sub>39</sub> )	<b>1</b>		

As seen in Table 7, most teachers did not use methods and techniques towards speaking. They mostly explained this by their statements that they did not know such methods and techniques (f: 22). The views of two teachers who did not implement speaking methods and techniques are given below:

*"I am not informed much. I act based on my own means and ideas as I am not completely knowledgeable in this issue."* (T<sub>8</sub>)

*"I am not informed. I may be considered inexperienced in this matter."* (T<sub>43</sub>)

It was found that those who implemented speaking methods and techniques usually employed methods and techniques of “free speaking” (f: 5), “group speaking” (f: 4), “targeted speaking” (f: 3) and “speaking unprepared” (f: 3). The views of two teachers who implemented speaking methods and techniques are given below:

*“There are types of free, targeted, prepared and unprepared speaking. It is usually unprepared speaking, but we take part in the others based on our topics.” (T17)*

*“I mostly use targeted speaking, empathic speaking, speaking by choosing from a pool of words and concepts and free speaking techniques. They sometimes talk about or try to talk about a memory of their, and sometimes, they try to talk about a picture or a word they randomly selected from a bag. I frequently provide clues for them to not get stuck in such occasions.” (T21)*

### 3.4. How is the situation of the teachers about their use of instruction tools and materials towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students?

**Table 8:** States of the teachers on whether they used instruction tools and materials towards improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students

Teachers Who Used Such Tools and Materials	<i>f</i>	Teachers Who Did Not Use Such Tools and Materials	<i>f</i>
Video (T5, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T14, T24, T31, T32, T33, T34, T35, T36, T40, T42)	16	Limited opportunities (T6, T43)	2
Computed (T7, T8, T12, T15, T19, T20, T21, T23, T27, T32, T33, T40)	12	Inadequacy of the teacher (T3)	1
Various visuals (T2, T9, T10, T16, T18, T22, T27, T28, T29, T37, T38, T41)	12	Not allocating time for speaking activities (T1)	1
Television (T4, T7, T11, T12, T20, T23, T31, T32)	8	Crowded classrooms (T13)	1
Projection (T9, T15, T17, T36, T40)	5		
Tangible objects (T10, T20, T32, T34, T41)	5		
MP 3 (T19, T26, T35, T40, T42)	5		
Audio recordings (T5, T24, T26, T31)	4		
Telephone (T19, T20, T26, T42)	4		
<b>Speaker</b> (T4, T8, T15)	<b>3</b>		

As seen in Table 8, as materials for speaking, the teachers usually used “video” (f: 27), “computer” (f: 18), “various visuals” (f: 13) and “television” (f: 11). The views of two teachers who used materials for speaking are given below:

*“I use especially television and computer. By various videos, cartoons and songs, activities are carried out for their listening and speaking skills. I asked them to interpret what they have watched or listened to.” (T7)*

*"I have them listen to music, watch videos and cartoons. I use computers and projection for this, but in general, I try to make them speak. It is rather me who communicates, and I always speak Turkish with them."* (T<sub>40</sub>)

The teachers who stated that they did not use materials towards speaking included reasons such as *"limited opportunities"* (f: 2), *"inadequacy of the teacher"* (f: 1), *"not allocating time for speaking activities"* (f: 1) and *"crowded classroom"* (f: 1). The views of two teachers who did not use materials for speaking are given below:

*"I do not use materials. The opportunities for technological tools are limited in the camp I work at."* (T<sub>6</sub>)

*"I could not improve (myself) about tools and materials."* (T<sub>3</sub>)

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study used a semi-structured interview form with the purpose of investigating the teacher views on improvement of the speaking skills of Syrian students. Within the general objective of the study, four research questions were determined, and the results obtained in the scope of the questions are presented below.

It was found in the study that the teachers were mostly not able to reach goals and targeted outcomes aimed towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students. As reasons for this, the teachers stated crowded classrooms, lack of communication between the teacher and the students, unwillingness of the students, and that the students do not speak Turkish outside the classroom. It is not possible to teach a language either as a second language or a foreign language in classrooms of 50-60 people. Şanlı (2015) reported that crowded classrooms in teaching English as a foreign language prevent the active participation of all students especially in speaking classes. Additionally, it is noteworthy that students do not have opportunities to speak Turkish outside the classroom although they are living in Turkey. Büyükikiz and Çangal (2016) stated that lack of exposure to the Turkish language by especially Syrian students who are living in a camp environment will affect their language improvement negatively. Al Hosni (2014) stated that the exposure of students who learn English in Oman to this language only in the classroom affects their English-speaking skills negatively. However, the students in question are learning English as a foreign language, and it is natural that they are not exposed to it outside the classroom. However, the situation is not like this for Syrian students. Even if they are living in a camp environment, settings where they will be provided with opportunities to speak Turkish outside the classroom and use the language they have learned should be created, and social activities should be organized in provinces and districts by the civilian authorities, municipalities, universities and civil society organizations in cooperation (Büyükikiz and Çangal, 2016).

It was determined that most teachers always or usually included activities towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students. As for the activities, they stated that they involved dialogue practices, conversations, pronunciation practices, mini dramas, speaking based on visuals and games. However, it was found that they

did not diversify the activities they used, that is, they usually utilized one style of activity (only dialogue, only conversations...). As Syrian students are learning Turkish as a second language, teachers should involve different speaking activities that will exemplify situations that they may encounter in their daily lives. Smith (2016) emphasized the importance of considering peoples functional needs especially in processes of teaching a language for refugees. This way, their attention for the class may increase. Moreover, making the activities realistic and reflecting real communication environment will be in agreement with the communicational language teaching approach (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Those in the study who stated that they employed methods and techniques for speaking reported that they utilized free speaking the most. Gudu (2015), on the other hand, reported that teachers utilized debates and dramatization in foreign language teaching. Furthermore, most teachers in this study reported that they were not informed about the methods and techniques towards improving the speaking skills of Syrian students, and therefore, they did not use them. This shows that, although the teachers attended the certification program for teaching Turkish to foreigners, they had shortcomings in terms of methods and techniques. Therefore, they may be directed towards in-service training programs to overcome these shortcomings in this issue. This way, teachers may be informed about methods and techniques such as *"persuasion, critical speaking, participatory speaking, empathically speaking, targeted speaking, speaking by choosing from a pool of words and concepts, free speaking, creative speaking, creative drama, question and answer, classroom debates, small group debates, brainstorming, roleplaying, improvisation and dramatization"* (Çetin, 2017, p. 375-378) and utilize these.

The vast majority of the teachers in the study stated that they used instruction tools and materials to improve the speaking skills of Syrian students. The instruction tools and materials used by the teachers were videos, computers, various visuals, television, projection, tangible objects, mp3 players, audio recordings, telephones and speakers. However, no teacher reported that they used music as a material in speaking classes. Yet, using music as a material and utilizing music in activities will make teaching of Turkish effective. Likewise, Arslan and Adem (2010) stated that activities that will be carried out by utilizing music tracks will affect the pronunciation of students positively and make it easier to learn words.

Although most of the teachers in the study included speaking activities and used instruction tools and materials towards speaking during teaching Turkish as a second language, it was seen that they had problems in reaching goals and targeted outcomes. Based on this result, it may be stated that mere usage of instruction tools and materials and inclusion of monotonous activities would not be sufficient for improvement of speaking skills. Inclusion of instruction tools, instruction materials and activities in teaching Turkish as a second language by using the right methods and technique in a responsible way will affect the speaking skills of Syrian students positively.

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