



TURKISH AS THE HERITAGE LANGUAGE AMONG IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN FRANCE

Fransa'daki Göçmen Topluluklar Arasında Miras Dili Olarak Türkçe

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Öz

Dil, bireyleri içinde buldukları toplumun temel kültürel unsurlarına bağlayan en güçlü bağıdır. Birinci dil veya anadil, bağlı olduğu toplumun tüm tarihi, kültürel ve etik unsurlarını ve değerlerini aktarır ve bu nedenle kişisel ve ulusal kimliklerin oluşumunda, kültür ediniminde ve bireylerin sosyalleşme sürecinde rol oynayan belki de en önemli etmendir. Göçmen topluluklar bağlamında, miras dili, kültürel mirasın korunmasında ve genç nesillere aktarılmasında önem arz eder. Bu nedenle miras dil özellikle önem verilmesi gereken bir olgudur. Bu çalışma, Fransa'daki Türk göçmenlerin Türkçe kullanımlarının mevcut durumunu belirlemek ve miras dillerini korumak ve yeni nesillere aktarmak konusundaki görüşlerini araştırmak için yapılmıştır. Bu amaçla Fransa'da yaşayan göçmen Türklerden (N=348) elde edilen veriler analiz edilerek Türkçe kullanım oranları, Türkçenin korunmasına ve yeni nesillere aktarılmasına verilen önem dereceleri tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulgularının ve bu doğrultuda sunulan önerilerin, Fransa'daki göçmen topluluklar arasında Türkçenin güncel dinamiklerine ışık tutması amaçlanırken, miras dillerin ve kültürel mirasların korunmasına odaklanan araştırmalara katkıda bulunacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göçmen topluluklar, Türk göçmenler, Kültürel miras, Miras dili, Miras dili olarak Türkçe.

Abstract

Language functions as the strongest bond connecting individuals to fundamental cultural elements of their society. The first language, or the mother tongue, conveys all the historical, cultural and ethical elements and values of the community to which it is connected, and therefore it is probably the most significant agent playing role in the formation of personal and national identities, cultural acquisition and socialization of individuals. In the context of immigrant communities, the heritage language is particularly important in protecting cultural heritage and transferring it to young generations; and thus, it should be attributed a special attention. The present study is conducted to explore the current state of Turkish language use among Turkish immigrants in France and their opinions regarding its protection and transfer to new generations. For this purpose, the data gathered from Turkish immigrants (N=348) living in France was analysed to identify the rates of Turkish language use and the degrees of importance attributed to protecting and transferring Turkish onto new generations. The findings and the implications are meant to shed light on the up-to-date dynamics in the state of Turkish among immigrant communities in France while contributing to the research focusing on heritage languages and the protection of cultural heritages.

Keywords: Immigrant communities, Turkish immigrants, Cultural heritage, Heritage language, Turkish as heritage language.

Introduction

The phenomenon of migration, which has existed all throughout the human history, is still considered among the most significant social events in our today's globalised world. Despite

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the ever-changing life conditions, the reasons for migrations have not changed much; today individuals migrate voluntarily or compulsorily for reasons such as natural disasters, wars, political and identity concerns, economic problems, health or educational factors. Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016: 13) explain the most influential social factors that accelerated international immigration in modern sense and state that disintegration of the middle age societies and accompanying changes such as renaissance, commercial revolution, colonisation, agricultural revolutions, industrial revolution, emergence of free market, modern education, and technological advancement are some prominent factors which have contributed to the growth of international migration. In addition to these factors, World War II is one of the turning points that has intensified the international migration movements in our era. As it caused a great destruction in many parts of Europe, these European countries needed an extraordinary amount of workforce in order to erase the traces of the destruction and also to accelerate their economic activities where the share of the industry sector had just boomed. In this respect, as a result of the immediate aftermath of the war, countries such as Germany, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium signed bilateral labour agreements to meet their workers' needs from other countries. In this context, a bilateral agreement was signed between Turkey and Germany in 1961, which was followed by the agreements with Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. Thus, the Anatolian people, who already come from the nomadic tradition, turned to Europe and the first labour migration of Turkish people began. In 1965, with the agreement signed between Turkey and France, the foundations of Turkish society were laid in France.

The great Turkish immigration to France started in the early 1970s and continued increasingly in the 1980s. While the Turkish population in France was 50,860, between 1968 and 1972, this number increased to 123,540 between 1972 and 1982 (Akıncı and Yağmur, 2003: 2). This increase was mostly due to the regulations implemented on grounds of family reunification, which was considered to be a turning point in the permanence of migrant workers (Toksöz, 2006: 31). As a result, the number of Turkish people increased from 202,000 in 1990 (Akıncı and Yağmur, 2003: 2). Today, this number is estimated to be approximately 800,000 (URL-2).

Since the onset of the 21st century, the unprecedented increase in the cross-border mobility has been urging nations to re-shape their structural and legislative regulations to accommodate for the augmenting cross-border activities and mobility (Şeker, 2018: 110). Today, in addition to the demographic and economic effects, these migrations also generate significant sociological impacts. In fact, international migrations, whether done individually or in masses, allow individuals or societies to take their own cultural values to the hosting societies. Immigrants who move away from their culture leave behind the tangible cultural heritage of the society they belong to carrying only intangible cultural elements with them. The heritage language, in this respect, functions as one of the most important tools in protecting a community's cultural heritage. Without such a tool, individuals and societies are likely to fail to pass their intangible cultural heritage on to future generations, causing a loss of identity in the individuals and communities. Therefore, it becomes vital for an immigrant community to protect its heritage language. In this respect, the present study focuses on the use of Turkish among the Turkish immigrant community in France as their heritage language, and attempts to contribute to the literature by shedding light on the current dynamics regarding the protection and the transfer of Turkish language.

Literature Review

The culture, values and traditions of a society which are inherited from previous generations and passed down from generation to generation are called cultural heritage and is classified into two categories as tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 (Bedjaoui, 2004: 151). While monuments, archaeological sites, historical cities, buildings, works of art, sculptures, paintings, clothing, machines, etc. constitute the tangible cultural heritage, elements such as traditions, folklore, songs, tales, rituals, etc. constitute the intangible cultural heritage (Oğuz, 2013: 5).

Cultural heritage, which reflects the history of any society and which offers a bridge between the past, the present and the future by connecting the members of the society, is the accumulated common wealth of societies. According to UNESCO (87-88), cultural heritage is the entire corpus of material signs either artistic or symbolic handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of humankind. As a constituent part of the affirmation and enrichment of cultural identities, as a legacy belonging to all humankind, cultural heritage gives each particular place its recognizable features and is the storehouse of human experience. As for The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2), cultural heritage is referred to as a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.

Although the global social, political and economic systems we have been witnessing in the last decades urge nations for creating cross-border cultures and identities through intercultural understanding and multilingualism, they also threaten the notion of 'national culture' (Bauman, 1998: 16). According to research, in the context of immigration, maintaining national culture faces more challenges since the cultural heritage, viewed not only as personal resource, but also as societal and national resource, gets more difficult to obtain (Brecht and Ingold, 1998; 3). Immigration, as one of the important phenomena regarding the concept of cultural heritage, is a significant determiner in the preservation and the shaping of cultures by having profound effects on the structure, production and application of cultural heritage.

While migration sometimes enriches intercultural communication and allows the fusion of different cultural traditions, it sometimes leads to cultural assimilation, resulting in the loss of cultural identity and heritage. It is not easy for individuals to protect their cultural heritage and transfer it to future generations in the countries they migrate to. Individuals sometimes face prejudice and discrimination in the countries they go to. In this case, they have to give up their own cultural traditions and experience the process of assimilation (Lee, 2002: 119). As this threatens the maintenance of cultural heritage for the immigrants, individuals generally aim to establish their own communities, associations and places of worship wherever they go. This allows them to keep their culture, traditions, customs, languages and religions alive, to protect, practice and promote their national, religious and traditional identities. In this way, individuals

establish strong ties with their communities and preserve their traditions and help different cultural traditions to be fused (Igoudin, 2012: 20).

Among the fundamental intangible cultural elements that immigrants bring into the hosting nations, the language is one of the important elements that they aspire to protect. The first language, or the mother tongue, is a significant component of an individual's personal and national identity. The mother tongue reflects its society since it conveys all the historical, cultural and ethical elements and values of the community to which it is connected. Therefore, it constitutes one of the most important elements in the formation of national identities, cultural acquisition and socialization of individuals. Preserving the heritage language is particularly important for immigrants at both individual and also societal levels. On a personal level, it contributes not only to the formation and development of individuals' identities but to the development of their sense of unity and togetherness as well. Immigrants who do not speak their heritage language could be at risk of not having cultural pride and self-esteem and may experience low sense of belonging (Berry et al, 2006: 306). Likewise, the heritage language is also vital for a society to preserve its identity and culture effectively, while maintaining the channel for an efficient transmission of the cultural heritage that would come with the language of origin (Igoudin, 2012: 20).

1. Turkish as a Heritage Language among Turkish Immigrants in France

The Turkish immigrants in France have been reported to generally try to protect their own identity and cultural values (Akdoğan Öztürk and Yücelsin Taş, 2018: 59) as well as their heritage language. For example, in their research with the language use of the Turkish immigrants in France, Akıncı and Yağmur state that Turkish has a high value in daily life domains such as communication with family and friends in the society or raising children. It has been reported that, among the Turkish immigrants in France, 77% of the participating families speak only Turkish at home and 20 % speak both languages whereas 3 % speak only French (Akıncı, 2014: 40). In another study examining the educational status and social conditions of Turks in France, Akıncı (2018: 4) indicate that the majority of bilingual Turkish youth in France use only Turkish as the language of communication with their parents.

On the other hand, the results of research also point out that while first generation immigrants do not have difficulties in speaking Turkish, this is not always the case for young Turkish people, who are reported to be more comfortable using French on a daily basis (Akıncı and Yağmur, 2003: 4). One of the reasons postulated is that children are more frequently exposed to French in their interactions with their siblings and friends, both in educational and in social settings. Thus, the use of only Turkish in a peer group is negligibly low (Akıncı, 2018: 4). In fact, 68% of the young people were found to speak only French among themselves, 23% both languages and only 9% of the participants stated to be using Turkish.

As France has the second largest Turkish community among the European countries following Germany (Ortaköylü et al, 2020: 88), there have been a considerable number of studies conducted on the social, economic and cultural problems of immigrants of Turkish origin in France. The majority of these studies, however, generally focus on the structure of the Turkish society in France and the level of using Turkish. Yet, a scarcity of research has been observed in the studies focusing particularly on the recent levels of Turkish use among the

younger generations and the current state for the transfer of the heritage language. In this respect, this study attempts to fill this gap by investigating first the levels of Turkish language use of the participant Turkish immigrants in various contexts and exploring the importance attached to using their heritage language. Secondly, the study investigates the participants' opinions on the importance of using Turkish language among Turkish immigrants and of transferring Turkish language to new generations living in France. The collected data has also been analysed based on different variables in order to identify the significant dynamics playing role in the state of Turkish among the immigrants. The findings are meant to guide future studies, as well as the language and cultural policies directed towards the protection and the transfer of Turkish as a heritage language among the Turkish immigrant communities. With these aims, the study seeks to answer the following specific research questions:

1. What is the level of Turkish Language daily use among Turkish immigrants in France and the degree of importance they attach to it?
2. What are the opinions of Turkish immigrants on transferring Turkish Language onto new Turkish generations living in France?
3. Are there any significant differences in Turkish immigrants' levels of Turkish Language use on a daily basis based on demographic variables and variables related to residency in France?
4. Are there any significant differences in Turkish immigrants' opinions on transferring Turkish Language to new Turkish generations based on demographic variables and variables related to residency in France?

1.1. Method

The study was designed as a cross-sectional survey, which refers to collecting data at one point in time from a sample that represents a larger population to gather unbiased information on the population from scratch in order to gain more insights (Cohen et al, 2017: 96). The data was collected via a survey developed by the researchers through an extensive literature review based on the aim and the scope of the study. The survey has three sections directed to find information on: a) demographic information of the participants (n=10); b) the participants' level of Turkish language use in various contexts (n=7); c) the participants' opinions on the importance of using Turkish language among Turkish immigrants (n=5); and d) the participants' opinions on the importance of transferring Turkish language to new generations living in France (n=11). The first part of the survey included open-ended and multiple-choice questions on demographic information such as age, gender, or marital status. The second and the third parts, on the other hand, consisted of statements presented in 5-point in Likert-type scale (ranked from 1. Strongly Agree, 2. Agree, 3. Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4. Disagree, and 5. Strongly Disagree).

Following the development of the scale, the necessary ethical approvals were obtained (Lyon Turkish Consulate General, 22032021, 2021/22). The scale was then converted to Google Forms to be completed by the participants, who were recruited following snowball sampling method through emails and other social media means. They were first given brief

information regarding the focus and the scope of the study before they completed the survey. Once the data was collected, statistical analyses were carried out using the SPSS 28.0 program.

1.2. The Context of the Study

As in many European countries, Turkish lessons are given for young Turkish generations living in France to assist them to protect their mother tongue. Following the family reunification policy launched in 1970s, the majority of the Turkish workers in France started to bring their spouses and children from Turkey, which in turn led the French government to take new decisions in order to ensure that these children, who do not speak French, could overcome the possible obstacles in terms of language during their education in French schools and that they can adapt to the French school system more easily. Another concern was that these immigrant children may face problems with their mother tongue when they return to Turkey in the future. As a result, on 23-24 October 1972, during the European Common Culture Commission Negotiations, the issue of teaching languages to foreigners started to be discussed between Turkey and France; and in 1978, the program called 'Enseignement des Langues et Cultures d'Origine' (ELCO) was integrated to the French national education policy.

ELCO courses were offered in different grades in elementary school, middle schools and some high schools in France. ELCO courses, conducted by teachers working under the Ministry of National Education in Turkey appointed by the Turkish Inter-Ministerial Common Culture Commission (BAOKK) (URL-1), aimed at promoting, spreading and preserving Turkish culture abroad, protecting and strengthening the cultural ties of our citizens and compatriots abroad, and enlightening them on religious issues. Turkish lessons, which were three hours a week during the course hours of the schools in the 1980s, gradually started to be held outside the course hours and were reduced to 1.5 hours in the following years due to the increase in the number of students and the insufficient number of teachers. Yet, the Turkish lessons are no longer to be offered only to students of Turkish nationality, but to students of all nationalities. In 2016, on the other hand, ELCO program was transformed to a new framework called the International Foreign Language Teaching (EILE). With the implementation of this new framework, Turkish courses are taught only in primary schools, but not in middle and high schools.

Today, Turkish lessons continue within the scope of EILE in France organised and assisted by the Paris Education Counsellor and the Education Attachés in Paris, Lyon, Strasbourg and Bordeaux. In these regions, teachers assigned by The Turkish Ministry of National Education provide Turkish lessons to all primary school students who apply for these courses. Course contents are organised within the framework of the objectives of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the principles of French national education. Attendance is mandatory, and in some regions school principals record course assessments on students' reports.

1.3. Participants

The sample for the study was formed via convenience sampling method, in which the inclusion criteria consisted of accessibility, availability at the time of data collection, and consent to participate (Patton, 2002: 95). As a result, a total of 348 Turkish immigrants living

in different cities in France formed the sample of the study. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Participants

	Gender		Age (Years)				Marital Status		Employment Status			
	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>0-15</i>	<i>16-30</i>	<i>31-50</i>	<i>51+</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Not Married</i>	<i>Working</i>	<i>Not working</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>f</i>	186	162	16	54	248	30	294	54	183	142	19	4
<i>%</i>	53.4	46.5	4.5	15.5	71.3	8.6	84.4	15.5	52.5	40,8	5,4	1.1

As displayed, more than half the sample consisted of a homogenous distribution in terms of gender (Female = 53.4 % and Male = 46.5 %). However, there was a significant variation based on age variable. While the majority of the participants were between 31 and 50 years old (71.3 %), participants below the age of 15 comprised only 4.5 % of the sample. Regarding marital status, the majority of the participants were married (84.4%). When the employment status is considered, it has been found that around half of the participants were employed (52.5 %), which was followed by a significant rate for the unemployed (40.8 %). The rate for the retired participants was only 5.4 % whereas a small rate was observed for the participants who had some other status for employment (1.1 %).

Table 2: Residency/Immigration Information of the Participants

	Place of Birth			Duration in France (years)			Generation (in order)				Citizenship		
	<i>TR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>1-10</i>	<i>11-20</i>	<i>21+</i>	<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th+</i>	<i>TR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>Both</i>
<i>f</i>	228	116	4	30	115	203	67	171	98	12	175	24	149
<i>%</i>	65.5	33.3	1.1	8.6	33	58.3	19.2	49.1	28.1	3.4	50.2	6.8	42.8

According to the results presented in Table 2, the majority of the participants had been born in Turkey (65.5 %) while most of the rest had been born in France (33.3 %). When asked for their duration for living in France, it was found that more than half of the participants had been living in France for more than 21 years (58.3 %). This rate was followed by a significant number of people having lived for 11-20 years (33 %) while a small percentage stated that they had been in France for less than 10 years (8.6 %). The participants were also asked to indicate the rank of their generation living in France. Accordingly, almost half of the participants stated that they were the second generation living in France (49.1 %). While the participants reporting to belong to the first and the third generations also constituted significant rates (19.2 % and 28.1 %, respectively), the smallest group belonged to the participants from the fourth (4+) generation (3.4 %). The final question regarding the participants' demographics was about their citizenship. The results indicate that half of them had only Turkish citizenship (50.2 %) while 42.8 % reported to have both Turkish and French citizenship. The rate for the participants who had only French citizenship was only 6.8 %.

1.4. Data Collection and Analysis

In line with the purpose of the study, the data was analysed descriptively to explore the level of Turkish Language use of the participants and their opinions regarding the use and the transfer of Turkish language to next generations among the Turkish immigrants living in France. In order to explore the daily Turkish language use levels and the participants' opinions on the necessity of using Turkish, descriptive statistics were conducted. The study also investigated possible significant relationships between the demographic characteristics of the participants and their levels of use as well as their opinions on Turkish language use and transfer among Turks in France. As the data did not show a normal distribution, the chi-square test, a non-parametric test, was conducted to find out whether the tested variables are independent of one another.

Within the aim to explore the reliability in terms of internal consistency for the survey, Cronbach Alpha value was calculated. The analysis showed that the survey (for part 2 and 3) had high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.88$).

1.5. Findings

The first round of analyses was conducted to find out the levels of Turkish language use and the use in various contexts as well as the importance levels attached to using Turkish among Turkish immigrants in France. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3: Results for Turkish Language Use and Opinions on its Protection and Transfer

	Mean	Median	Std Dev
Turkish Language Use in Daily Life	4.3	4.2	.611
The Importance of Turkish Language Use among Turkish Community in France	4.3	4.4	.512
The Importance of Turkish Language Transfer to New Generations	4.4	4.6	.534

According to the results, the participants reported high levels of proficiency in Turkish language ($M=4.1$). In the same vein, it was found that the participants used Turkish frequently in their daily lives in different contexts such as at home, at work, or in social gatherings ($M=4.3$). Regarding their opinions on the use and the transfer of Turkish, the findings also show high levels of importance attached to the use of Turkish language among Turks living in France ($M=4.3$). Similarly, they were found to attribute high importance for the Turkish people to transfer Turkish language onto the new generations ($M=4.4$). These findings indicate that Turkish immigrants living in France believe that Turkish should be used frequently among Turks in various domains of life and that the new generations living in France should be taught Turkish.

Another focus of the study was to find out if there are significant correlations between the participants' demographic variables and their responses to the statements regarding Turkish language. Table 5, therefore, presents the findings for the relationship between the participants' demographic characteristics and their levels of Turkish language use.

Table 4: Relationship between Demographic Variables and the Reported Turkish Language Levels

	Groups	Mean	χ^2	df	Sig.	Cramer's V (Value/p)
<i>Gender</i>	Female	4.22	21.373	16	.165	
	Male	4,16				
<i>Age Group</i>	0-15	4.0	48.011	48	.472	
	16-30	4.17				
	31-50	4.19				
	51+	4.37				
<i>Marital Status</i>	Single	3.66	17.374	16	.036*	.706/.036
	Married	4.34				
<i>Employment Status</i>	Working	4.15	20.919	32	.933	
	Retired	4.54				
	Unemployed	4.20				
	Other	4.33				

According to the results, the participants' daily use of Turkish did not differ significantly based on gender, age, and the employment status of the participants. On the other hand, there is a statistically significant difference in terms of marital status ($p=0.036 < 0.05$). To further find out the strength of the association between these two variables, Cramer's V test was calculated, and the value was found to be .706/.036 (Value/p). This indicates a high degree of association between marital status of the participants and their use of Turkish on a daily basis. According to Cross-tabulation (Contingency Table) analysis results, it has been revealed that the married participants report using Turkish at higher levels compared to the single participants with the agreement rates of 82.3 % and 54.3 %, respectively.

Table 5: Relationship between Variables related to Residency in France and the Reported Turkish Language Levels

	Groups	Mean	χ^2	df	Sig.	Cramer's V (Value/p)
<i>Place of Birth</i>	Turkey	4.30	194.894	32	.000*	.552/.000
	France	4.01				
	Other	4.33				
<i>Duration in France</i>	1-10 years	4.39	26.686	32	.733	
	11-20 years	4.27				
	21+ years	4.11				

<i>Generation (in order)</i>	1 st	4.32	24.534	32	.824
	2 nd	4.14			
	3 rd	4.20			
<i>Citizenship</i>	Turkish	4.31	59.278	48	.127
	French	4.20			
	Both	4.07			

When the data on Turkish language use was analysed based on the variables related to the participants' residency status, the results show statistically significant difference based only on the participants' place of birth ($p=0.000 < 0.05$) with a moderate strength of association (Cramer's $V=0.552$). It has been found that the highest daily use rates belong to the participants who were born in Turkey (over 90 %) while the rates were drastically lower for the participants born in France or in other countries (around 60 % and 30 %, respectively). As a result, it could be claimed that the immigrants who were born in Turkey tend to use Turkish more frequently in their daily lives in various domains.

Table 6: Relationship between Demographic Variables and the Opinions on the Protection and the Transfer of Turkish

Groups		Mean	χ^2	df	Sig.	Cramer's V (Value/p)
<i>Gender</i>	Female	4.47	6.073	8	.639	
	Male	4.46				
<i>Age Group</i>	0-15	4.02	64.734	24	.000*	.252/.000
	16-30	4.35				
	31-50	4.51				
	51+	4.58				
<i>Marital Status</i>	Single	4.07	23.288	8	.003*	.383/.003
	Married	4.52				
	Other	4.33				
<i>Employment Status</i>	Working	4.46	19.258	16	.256	
	Retired	4.60				
	Not Working	4.46				
	Other	4.16				

Regarding the participants' opinions on protecting and transferring Turkish to new generations, the results showed no significant differences among the participants based on gender and employment status. However, statistically significant differences were found depending on the participants' age ($p=0.000 < 0.05$) and marital status ($p=0.003 < 0.05$). Although the strength of associations between these two variables and the opinions do not

display high rates (Cramer's $V=0.706$ and 0.383 , respectively), the contingency tables indicate that over % 90 of the age groups for 51+ and 31-50 years old have reported higher importance rates to protection and transfer of Turkish to new generations compared to the participants in 16-30 and 0-15 age groups (around 70 % and 60 %, respectively). These findings clearly point out that older Turkish immigrants in France think more strongly regarding the protection and the transfer of their heritage language.

Table 7: Relationship between the Variables related to Residency in France and the Opinions on the Protection and the Transfer of Turkish

Groups		Mean	χ^2	df	Sig.	Cramer's V (Value/p)
<i>Place of Birth</i>	Turkey	4.55	32.949	16	.008*	.220/.008
	France	4.32				
	Other	3.99				
<i>Duration in France</i>	1-10 years	4.51	14.713	16	.546	
	11-20 years	4.45				
	21+ years	4.46				
<i>Generation (in order)</i>	1 st	4.60	20.127	14	.031*	.311/.031
	2 nd	4.19				
	3 rd	3.56				
	4 th	3.38				
<i>Citizenship</i>	Turkish	4.52	15.671	24	.900	
	French	4.47				
	Both	4.39				

Based on residency variables, the results display that the opinions of the participants on the protection and transfer of their heritage language to new generations differed significantly in terms of the place of birth ($p=0.008 < 0.05$) and the rank of the generation that the participants belong to ($p=0.031 < 0.05$). The statistically significant differences for these two variables show moderate association rates (Cramer's $V=0.220$ and 0.311 , respectively). Further contingency analyses reveal that the participants who were born in Turkey report higher degrees of agreement on transfer of Turkish to new generations when compared to the participants being born in other countries (over 90 % and around 70 %, respectively). When considering the generation rank based on order, it has been revealed that the participants who belong to the first and to the second generations living in France support more strongly the idea of maintaining and transferring Turkish to young generations (over 90 % and 80 %, respectively). The participants who are in the third or fourth generations in France, on the other hand, have indicated relatively lower agreement rates (around 70 % and 50 %, respectively). These findings imply that the immigrants who were born in Turkey and who belong to the first generations

among the immigrant Turkish community in France agree more strongly that Turkish should be protected and transferred to the new generations of Turks in France.

Discussion

The present study has been conducted to explore the levels of Turkish language use among Turkish immigrants living in France and their opinions regarding the importance of protecting and transferring Turkish language to new generations. For this purpose, the data collected from the participants were analysed statistically to answer the research questions of the study. Accordingly, the findings reveal high rates of Turkish language use among the Turkish community in France not only in family contexts but also in professional and academic domains. This finding concurs with previous research that states Turkish communities living in other countries tend to protect their own traditions, customs, and language (Akdoğan Öztürk and Yücelin Taş, 2018: 59). In line with this finding, the results of the analyses also show that the majority of Turkish immigrants attribute high degrees of importance to protecting and transferring Turkish as their heritage language onto new Turkish generations living in France.

Research focusing on the Turkish community living in France report similar results. It is indicated that Turkish immigrants attribute great value and try to be actively engaged in protecting and transferring their traditions, customs, and Turkish language; thus, they tend to use Turkish particularly in family contexts (Akdoğan Öztürk and Yücelin Taş, 2018: 59; Akıncı and Yağmur, 2003: 9).

When the participants' levels of Turkish Language use on a daily basis were analysed based on demographic and residency variables, the findings reveal significant differences based on marital status of the participants and their place of birth. Accordingly, married participants report higher levels of Turkish use in their daily lives when compared to non-married participants. Also, the participants who were born in Turkey have been found to be using Turkish at higher rates than the participants born in other countries. Demographic variables regarding age, gender, and employment status were not found to be significant variables in the participants' daily Turkish use. However, the study conducted in 2003 by Akıncı and Yağmur reports that the levels of daily Turkish use differed depending on age variable. While the older participants belonging to the first generation of immigrants in France was found to use Turkish at high frequencies, the younger participants were found to be using it less frequently. However, both old and young participants indicated positive attitudes toward using and protecting Turkish language. One of the reasons for the significantly lower rates of Turkish use reported by younger generations could be attributed to using Turkish in a more limited number of social domains, but not necessarily in lower frequencies. In fact, the results of the study by Aksu and Özdemir (2020) reveal that the young generation living in France use Turkish more in family contexts. It is stated that young people mostly use Turkish when communicating with their parents and older relatives while they tend to use both Turkish and French with their siblings and mostly French with their peers. The results of the present study, however, does not display age as a significant factor in the use of Turkish among the participants.

As for the final research question, the results indicate significant differences among the participants' opinions in terms of both some demographic variables and the variables related to their residency status. It has been found that older participants display higher agreement rates

for transferring Turkish onto new generations compared to younger participants. While age variable shows no significant impact regarding the use of Turkish as a heritage language, it has been found to be a statistically significant factor in the importance attached to protecting and transferring Turkish onto next generations. Another significant demographic factor has been the marital status of the participant immigrants. The results indicate that the participants who are married attach stronger importance to Turkish protection and transfer than the participants who are non-married do. Regarding residency status variables, on the other hand, it has been found that the place of birth and the generation rank have statistically significant impacts in the opinions of the participants. The participants who were born in Turkey have reported higher support to protect and to transfer their heritage language compared with the participants born in other countries. Furthermore, the higher order in the rank is, the less importance is attached to the transfer of Turkish. That is, the participants belonging to the first and the second generations living in France have reported stronger agreement degrees for the protection and the transfer of their heritage language while the participants from the third and the fourth generations displayed relatively lower degrees of the agreement. Based on these findings, it might be claimed that married participants who are older than 30 years and who were born in Turkey belonging to the first or the second generations among the immigrant Turkish community in France attach more importance to the protection and the transfer of Turkish compared with the non-married participants younger than 30 years who were not born in Turkey and who belong to the third or the fourth generations in France.

In line with the findings obtained in the study, it is clear that the use of Turkish is still common among Turkish immigrants in France and is attached high levels of importance. However, new generations of Turkish origin living in France need continuous support for their use of Turkish. To this end, that the increase and dissemination of Turkish lessons in France could contribute to the use of Turkish by new generations and to promotion, dissemination and protection of Turkish cultural heritage abroad. Furthermore, social projects designed for younger generations living in France could be developed to encourage and support their relationships with their peers living in Turkey and to create various venues for cultural interaction. Such projects could be initiated and/or supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of National Affairs of the Republic of Turkey as well as different non-governmental organizations and institutions. And finally, student exchange programs could be increased between Turkey and France in order to increase the number of younger students visiting both countries and building new bridges for the transfer of Turkish cultural heritage.

Conclusion

Language is one of the most important elements of cultural heritage and one of the strongest bonds that connects individuals to their nation (Aksan, 1998: 13). With the language, the fundamental elements that construe a nation such as its history, traditions, customs, or lifestyles could be transferred to next generations (Ünalán, 2005: 35). A society with all its domains co-exists with its language, and thus, cannot be considered independent of its language (Uygur, 2019: 96). In the context of an immigrant community, the heritage language plays a

crucial role in protecting cultural heritage and transferring it to young generations (Göçer, 2012: 54). Therefore, the mother tongue of an immigrant community, as their heritage language, should be attributed a special attention in immigration contexts as it is the strongest mean for the protection of all the elements of their cultural heritage (Akıncı, 2018: 5). In the context of immigrant Turkish communities, Turkish as the heritage language functions as such a vital tool in transfer of cultural heritage. Therefore, there is always a need for research geared to explore the up-to-date dynamics in the state of Turkish language among immigrant communities. Studies that explore language use based on different generations' Turkish language proficiency levels could give more detailed information on the current use of the heritage language. Also, further studies with larger samples integrating qualitative data through mixed method research designs could contribute to shed more light on the factors playing role in Turkish language use from a wider scope.

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Elektronik Kaynaklar:

- URL-1: https://yyegm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2021_01/11160705_2003-5753-sayYIY-BakanYklararasY-Ortak-Kultur-Komisyonu-BKK_1.pdf (E.T.: 01.06.2023)
- URL-2: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-fransa-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa> (E.T.: 05.05.2023)

<i>Çalışmanın yazarı/yazarları "COPE-Dergi Editörleri İçin Davranış Kuralları ve En İyi Uygulama İlkeleri" çerçevesinde aşağıdaki hususları beyan etmiş(ler)dir:</i>
Etik Kurul Belgesi: Bu çalışma için T.C. Dış İşleri Bakanlığı, Lyon Başkonsolosluğu'ndan, 22.03.2021 tarihli ve 2021/22 sayılı izin alınmıştır.
Finansman: Bu çalışma için herhangi bir kurum ve kuruluştan finansal destek alınmamıştır.
Destek ve Teşekkür: Çalışmanın araştırılması ve yazımı esnasında destek veren Le Laboratoire Dynamique Du Langage (DDL) de Lyon kurumuna teşekkür ederiz.
Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı: Bu makalenin araştırması, yazarlığı veya yayınlanmasıyla ilgili olarak yazarların potansiyel bir çıkar çatışması yoktur.
Katkı Oranı Beyanı: Bu makalenin tüm bölümleri her iki yazar tarafından birlikte hazırlanmış ve eşit derecede katkı sunulmuştur.
<i>The author / authors of the study declared the following points within the framework of the "COPE-Code of Conduct and Best Practices Guidelines for Journal Editors":</i>
Ethics Committee Approval: The approval for this study has been received from Turkish Consulate General in Lyon (Ref: 22032021 – 2021/10).
Funding: No financial support was received from any institution or organization for this study.
Support and Acknowledgments: We would like to thank the team of Le Laboratoire Dynamique Du Langage (DDL) de Lyon for their support during the writing process of this paper.
Declaration of Conflicting Interests: The authors have no potential conflict of interest regarding research, authorship or publication of this article.
Author's Note: This study was not produced from any previous thesis or scientific work.
Author Contributions: Both of the Authors worked on all sections of this article collaboratively and contributed equally.