Reflective Practices in Learning Turkish Pronunciation as a Foreign Language [*] [**]

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Abstract

In this study, the aim is to raise the awareness of learners of Turkish as a foreign/second language by using reflective thinking stages (recalling experiences, researching causes, trying to change and improve experiences) and to improve their experiences by presenting solutions to the phonetic errors they frequently made in their pronunciation. The research is a qualitative study, and it is based on Bartlett's reflective teaching stages (mapping, informing, contesting, appraising and acting). The implementation stage lasted 8 class hours (400 minutes), consisting of two hours per week, at A2 level at the TÖMER İzmir branch of Ankara University. Following each implementation, reflections on the teaching process were obtained thanks to the diaries kept by both the learners and the researcher who carried out the implementation and created course reports, course records were formed and peer evaluations were obtained and, when needed, rearrangements were made. At the end of the implementation phase, the data obtained through the interviews with teachers and learners about the process, the findings of the new teaching process on the usefulness of work and the level of awareness for pronunciation were shared with the instructors and learners. It was concluded that the implementation led to a positive development in learners and that they acquired communicative skills by finding the opportunity to do speaking practice, through the reflective practices performed.

Keywords: Turkish as a foreign language, reflective pronunciation teaching, speaking

Yabancı Dil Olarak Türkçe Sesletim Öğreniminde Yansıtıcı Uygulamalar

Öz

Bu çalışmada, yabancı/ikinci dil olarak Türkçe öğrenenlerin öğrenim süreçlerinde sıkça yaptıkları sesletim hataları ile ilgili, yansıtıcı düşünme aşamaları (deneyimleri hatırlama, nedenleri araştırma, deneyimleri değiştirmeye ve geliştirmeye çalışma) kullanılarak farkındalık oluşturmak ve sesletim problemlerine çözüm yolları sunarak deneyimlerini geliştirmek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, nitel bir çalışmadır ve Bartlett'in yansıtıcı öğretim aşamaları (inceleme, bilgilendirme, bilgileri karşılaştırma, değerlendirme ve eyleme geçirme) temelinde şekillenmiştir. Uygulama aşaması, Ankara Üniversitesi TÖMER İzmir Şubesinde, A2 düzeyinde öğrenim gören öğrencilere, haftada ikişer saat olmak üzere toplam 8 saattir. Her uygulama ardından hem öğrenciler hem de

uygulamayı yapan araştırmacı tarafından doldurulan günlükler, oluşturulan ders raporları ve ders kayıtları ile akran (meslektaş) değerlendirmeleri sayesinde öğretim sürecinin yansımaları neticesinde varsa yeniden düzenlemelere gidilmiştir. Uygulamanın bitiminde öğretmen ve öğrenicilerden sürece yönelik görüşme yoluyla veriler elde edilmiş, yeni öğretim sürecinin işe yararlığı ve sesletime yönelik farkındalık düzeyleri üzerine elde edilen bulgular –içerik çözümlemesi yoluyla- karşılaştırmalı olarak, öğretmen ve öğrenici düzleminde paylaşılmıştır. Gerçekleştirilen yansıtıcı uygulamalar sayesinde öğrenicilerin konuşma pratiği yapma fırsatı bularak olumlu bir gelişim gösterdiği ve iletişimsel beceriler edindikleri sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil olarak Türkçe, yansıtıcı sesletim öğretimi, konuşma

Introduction

The purpose of foreign/secondary language teaching in the context of communicative language teaching can be summarized as the acquisition of four basic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills with activities enabling language learners to use communicative and interactive language by manipulating the target language. Also according to the Common European Framework Text (2001), use of language involves actions of learners which are both individuals and social actors, including general and communicative language competences and in order to engage in language activities involving language processes for producing and/or perceiving texts in specific contexts from various language usage areas, individuals benefit from these competencies in various contexts, conditions and limitations. Experiences from students in communicative activities for the use of the target language enable the development and exchange of language competences. Students who are not involved in language use activities complain that they have problems with language use and are inadequate in speaking and pronounciation (Vitanova & Ann Miller, 2002).

For the reasons mentioned above, foreign/second language pronunciation teaching is quite important in providing accurate and fluent production in verbal and interactive speech, continuing speaking, developing self-confidence while speaking, and most important of all, being able to communicate properly in the target language.

In the field of phonetics, it is seen that until now, pronunciation-based, perceptive and process-supporting studies have been made. And especially in the last decade, in the explanations involving the formal analysis of phonetics and phonological facts, explanation attempts associated with funcionality have been witnessed (Gordon, 2007: 61). From the perceptual point of view, Polivanov (1931-1964) claims that the vowels and consonants in the second language are perceived as moving from the phonetic scheme of the first language. As such, Trubetzkoy (1939-1969) believes that the inadequate production in the second language is based upon a perceptual basis, the second language is perceived and categorized assuming that the system in first language behaves as a "phonological filter". Despite these perceptive-based considerations, in the second half of the 20th century, most research on pronunciation in the second language focused on the production of

sounds (as cited in Escudero, 2007: 109). However, phonology is still in its infancy for interactive speech that the functioning is prioritized (Couper-Kuhlen, 2007: 212). Similarly, Şenel (2006) also examined the most striking difficulties faced by the foreign language learners in pronunciation in six groups (1. Mother language, 2. Pronunciation ability, 3. Language environment, 4. Personality and attitude 5. Age ve 6. Motivation) and placed the influence of mother tongue on the top.

There are two important processes in teaching pronunciation: To be able to recognize and produce segmental phonemes (like c-h-a-i-r) and suprasegmental phonemes (like tone, focus, stress, intonation, pause, juncture) in the target language (Pennington, 1989). For language learners to be able to carry out these processes, it is important to realize phonetics teaching with listening and speaking activies in which context-based language activities involved, linguistic (words and the meanings), paralinguistic (prosodic elements) and nonlinguistic (body language) message ways presented as a whole. In teaching of listening to be taught for pronunciation teaching, bottom-up (to distinguish phonemes: listening simple pairs of words, to mark the same ones as (S) and the different ones as (D) etc.) and cognitive processes as top-down which is an inferential process (listening utterance strings and distinguishing emotional response etc.) are set out (Morley, 2001). At the same time, language teachers can support the pragmatic competence of language learners with speech teaching and pronunciation exercises with their language activities that reflect real-world situations by creating prioritized communication situations. Nowadays, the notion that having a good pronunciation, rather than having perfect grammar and vocabulary is important to avoid communicative problems is valid (Celce-Murcia, Bridgton & Goodwin, 1996). Also, Morley (1991: 512-513) states that pronunciation is an integral component of communicative competence and that language teachers need to develop functional communicative speech and pronunciation materials.

When we look at the studies of Turkish language teaching as a foreign language, the lack of studies on phonetics and pronunciation is noteworthy. There are, of course, studies (see: Aksan, 2003; Coşkun, 2016; Ergenç, 2002) on the phonological characteristics of the Turkish language, the spoken language and the pronunciation; but these phonetics studies did not go beyond the teaching of the alphabet in the method books and the emphasis and intonation teaching in the few minorities (see: İzmir, 2012; Yeni Hitit, 2012). However, the teaching of clear phonetics and pronunciation associated with phonetic-based lesson materials and other language skills will provide language learners to see their developments in use of language and their deficiencies, and help them develop their pronunciation and speaking skills. The activities must be based on three principles in order for the activities of pronunciation to be useful (Levis & Sonsaat, 2016: 111). These can be summarized as emphasizing intelligibility, clear linkage with other language skills, and providing effective and useful support to teachers. Taking all these processes and principles into account, an effective

pronunciation teaching will contribute to preventing language learners' communication problems based on pronunciation.

Reflective teaching is a form of teaching in foreign language teaching, which is used to follow both teacher's and learner's teaching/learning processes, to determine the difficulties and problems if they are present, by managing the process of resolving the problem, to correct the problems after they are seen during language learning. Dewey (1933) pioneered the formation and development of the concept of reflective thinking. He defines reflective thinking in his book "How We Think" as "The creation of a knowledge structure that supports any belief or knowledge and attainment of its intended results in an active, decisive and careful way." (as cited in Semerci, 2007: 1354).

And Ünver (2003) interprets reflective thinking as well as critical, creative and analytical thinking, as a process of thinking relating to reveal positive and negative situations related to the level of the individual's teaching or learning method and solving problems.

Le Corcu and Peters (2005: 55) say that instructors must attract learners to reflective processes so that they can incorporate reflective teaching. Therefore, teachers must use these four strategies for this:

- Developing reflective attitudes in the learners,

- Explicitly teaching metacognitive skills and processes,

- Providing time to reflect the thought in the class,

- Using interactive style to develop responses and encouraging learners.

At the same time, the teacher must be knowledgeable about research methods and data collection tools in reflective teaching. Thus, teachers can organize learning and teaching activities creatively (Pollard et al., 2008: 14-15). Bölükbaş (2004) stated that data collection tools such as teaching diary, course reports, research and questionnaires, audio and video recordings, peer observations and action researches are helpful in collective data for reflective teaching purposes. Reflective teaching is process-oriented; occurs in a cyclical process and requires teachers to constantly monitor, evaluate and correct their own practice (Pollard et al., 2008: 14-15). According to Bartlett (1990), reflective teaching process consists of five processes: *Mapping, Informing, Contesting, Appraising,* and *Acting* (as cited in Bölükbaş, 2004: 23). These processes are as follows:

- **Mapping:** What do I do as a teacher/learner? (Realizing what are done, collecting data about himself)

- **Informing:** What is the meaning of my teaching/learning?/What did I want to do with my actions in teaching environment? (Analysis of data.)

- **Contesting:** How did I access this teaching/learning method?/How did my present teaching/learning understanding come this way? (Discussing the thoughts regarding teaching and the structures -standards of judgment, attitudes, social structure, beliefs, etc.- consisting of them.)

- **Appraising:** How might I teach differently/How might I learn differently? (Logically discussing and interpreting data, making changes.)

- **Acting:** How shall I teach now?/ How shall I learn now? (Rearranging teaching practices by evaluating and applying alternative activity forms.)

The activities of pronunciation, listening and speaking in this study have been built on the basis of the above mentioned reflective teaching processes and theoretical framework.

One of the most frequently encountered problems in the process of teaching Turkish as a foreign language is pronunciation teaching and learning. It is clear at this stage that there are problems related to pronunciation with the interpretation of words and word groups, so to say sentences, in pronunciation of some sounds (e, i, ö, ü, ı, c, ş, ç) and the grapheme "ğ" in a correct and understandable way (Açık, 2008; Ak-Başoğul & Can, 2014; Bölükbaş, 2011; Candaş-Karababa, 2009; Er, Biçer & Bozkırlı, 2012; Kara, 2010; Okatan, 2012; Subaşı, 2010). At the same time, when we look at the method books prepared for teaching Turkish as a foreign language, it will be seen that there is no separate section for pronunciation/pronunciation teaching and the related activities and practices are in the minority and there is no orientation towards the teaching process to the teachers and learners. However, in the method books, the pronunciation section and activities should take place; these activities should be informative and helpful to the foreign language teacher (Levis & Sonsaat, 2016). The authors of the study also faced similar problems in the teaching process because they were directly related to the problem situation.

Other problems encountered in the teaching of pronunciation include the fact that language learners do not think enough about the problems of pronunciation and they can not recognize where they made mistakes and because they do not teach clear/descriptive pronunciation in the books, the language teachers do not know what criteria they make corrections according to. It is also aimed for the learners to make self-evaluation of pronunciation processes and to raise awareness about the strengths and weaknesses of the learner through the reflective teaching activities to be applied in this study.

In this study, it is aimed to raise awareness by using reflective thinking stages (recalling experiences, researching causes, trying to change and improve experiences) and improving their experiences by presenting solutions to their pronunciation problems related to the phonetic errors frequently encountered by learners of Turkish as a foreign/second language. The study is important for learners of Turkish in terms of focusing on their own language learning processes, offering offer self-evaluation opportunities and providing reflective thinking to the language teacher. At the same time, it intends to become a source of guidance for language teachers by increasing the applications for the teaching of pronunciation in the area.

Methodology

Procedure and Measurement

The planned research is a qualitative study and is shaped on Bartlett's (1990, as cited in Bölükbaş, 2004: 23) reflective teaching steps. These processes are classified as mapping, informing, contesting, appraising, and acting. At the same time during the mapping stage, data via written and focus group discussions[1] concerning pronunciation have been gathered frequently from the researchers who were teaching/have taught to foreigners and the learners to be practiced, and identification of the pronunciation problems -on the basis of level of education- provided. The questions were formed jointly by two researchers in terms of understanding according to the level of the class to be performed and at this stage, the foresight, observations and experiences of the researcher who will carry out the application concerning his class have been taken to forefront. In addition, the questions were presented to the opinion of 2 peers (colleague) evaluations and they did not request any change on the questions. The questions directed to the learners are as follows:

1. Which sounds are difficult for you to pronounce/to say in Turkish? Why?

2. Which words are difficult for you to say in Turkish? Why?

3. Do you confuse the meanings of some words due to sounds? Which words? Why?

4. What do you do to solve your Turkish pronunciation problems?

5. Do Turkish textbooks (Yeni Hitit) help you to solve your Turkish pronunciation problems?

6. Does your Turkish teacher help you to solve your Turkish pronunciation problems? How?

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[1] The created interview form was given to the students in writing and they were told that they could speak English at the points where they couldn't tell in Turkish because of their low language level. At the same time, when filling out the interview form distributed in written form, if there were points which cannot be understood, these points were explained by the teacher, these interviews were recorded and therefore a focus group discussion was also held.

And in the informing process, what are done by the teacher and the learner about the existing problem or whether any solution is applied or not is analyzed and the obtained data has been analyzed. Then; the opinions, attitudes, standards of judgement, etc. of the teachers and learners about the problem(s) have been examined comparatively and the inferences have been made to determine the problem. As a result of the discussions made on the question on the problem identified through the three steps (mapping, informing, contesting), solution proposals based on the question "How might I teach differently/How might I learn differently?" have been developed. As a result of the bidirectional reflections related to the question, reorganizing the applications for teaching has been provided owing to the activities and reflective practices intended for pronunciation teaching and developed by researchers. The prepared activities were shown to 2 field experts. The application phase was carried out by one of the researchers, at the University of Ankara, Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Center[2] at İzmir branch, as 8 hours of learning at A2[3] level. The activities were prepared by two researchers prior to the applications which are performed two hours a week, thanks to the diaries filled by both the learners and the researcher and the completed lesson reports subsequent to each application, the reorganization was carried out on the basis of the reflections -by two researchers- of the teaching period. In order to increase the validity and reliability of the application, peer (colleague) evaluation was used and the fact that two colleagues teaching Turkish to foreigners both inside and outside the institution watched and shared their opinions has been provided again thanks to the required lesson observation reports. At the conclusion of the application, data were obtained through interviews with teachers and learners about the process, the findings of the new teaching process on the usefulness of work and the level of awareness for pronunciation -through content analysis- are shared on the level of teacher and learner by comparison. At this point, it is also aimed at the same time to help the foreign learners in acquiring speaking skills.

Participants

In the process of collecting the data, the learner was also asked to complete the personal information form. With reference to this form, information on participants' gender, age, occupation, mother tongue, and other languages that they know are reflected in the following table:

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[2] Permissions have been obtained from the institution for practice and peer (colleague) evaluations.
[3] In determining the level of application as A2, it is influenced by the teacher's encounter with the pronounciation problems at that level.

Table 1. *Participant information*

Variables				f	
Gender	Female			*5*	
	Male			*3*	
Profession	Student			*3*	
	Teacher			2	
	Accountant			1	
	Project Coordinator			1	
	Translator			1	
Age	20-29			4	
	30-39			3	
	40 and older			1	
Mother language	Ukrainian			2	
	Italian			1	
	Romanian			1	
	Czech			1	
	Serbian			1	
	Spanish			1	
	Portuguese			1	
Known foreign languages	*Second language*		*Third language*		*Fourth language*
	Turkish	1	Turkish	2	Turkish 5
	English	4	English	2	
	Russian	1	Spanish	2	
	Spanish	1	Russian	1	
	Italian	1	French	1	

According to Table 1; 5 of the participants are female, 3 were male. Looking at the profession, the student (3) and the teacher (2) are a majority. The other professions are accounting, project coordinatorship and translatorship with a frequency of 1. While 4 learners are in the age range of 20-29 years, 3 learners are in the range of 30-39 years. There is 1 learner over 40 years of age. While the mother language of 2 learners is Ukrainian, the mother languages of the other learners are Italian, Romanian, Czech, Serbian, Spanish, Portuguese with a frequency of 1. In terms of other known languages, it can be said that all learners know at least 3 languages and the majority (5) learn Turkish as a fourth language.

Findings

In this part of the research, the data obtained as a result of the semi-structured interview based on the application stages of the reflective teaching model (examination, information, information comparison, evaluation and operation), focus group discussions, diaries kept (both by the practitioner teacher and the foreign language learners), course observation reports, peer

(colleague) evaluations and reflective applications for the solution of the problem of pronunciation are given by utilizing the tables and expressions of frequency.

Findings from the Interview Form for Mapping, Informing and Contesting Stages

In this section, before the reflective applications are prepared, details of the findings obtained from the semi-structured interview form designed to identify the problems that the learners experience on pronunciation and the solution recommendations, and in some cases from focus group discussions are also included in the tables together with the frequency numbers. At the same time, comparison is made between the data.

Table 2. *Sounds difficult to pronounce*

Categories/Answers	f	Example Sentences
Vowel Sounds		
o	3	
u	3	"ö-ü. Because they do not exist in my language." (S7, Czech)
ö	3	
ü	3	"ö, ü are more of a problem for me, I speak Spanish but ü does
ı	3	not exist for us" (S5, Spanish)
ğ (grapheme)[4]	3	
Consonant Sounds		"While Turkish people are talking, it's hard to listen. When ğ is
ç	2	there, I do not hear." (S3, Italian)
c	1	
s	1	"ı, ç, ü, ö, ğ are hard, because they do not exist in Portuguese,
ş	1	hard to listen." (S1, Brazilian)
m	1	
n	1	

In Table 2, there are vocabulary with vowel and consonant sounds which the participants have difficulty in phonetics. According to this, the vowel sounds that are difficult to pronounce in the pronunciation are o, u, ö, ü and ı with a frequency of 2. It seems that these sounds have an equal distribution. At the same time, it can be said that there are intense problems with the rounded vowel sounds (o, ö, u, ü). The other vowel sounds that are difficult to pronounce are the closed and unrounded vowels.

The consonants with a frequency of 2 are ç, and c, s, ş, m, n with a frequency of 1. It can be said that there is an intense difficulty in the consonant sounds known as the opposite. And ğ is noted as a challenging grapheme by 3 learners. For this grapheme, the learners complained that they did not hear it as a sound. At the same time, this grapheme is not included in their mother language.

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[4] Ergenç (2002: 43) says that "<ğ>", which is a grapheme in the alphabet of Turkish, does not occur as a sound, but it was revealed that it has many functions in language by sound spectography studies. And according to Fidan (2011: 101-104), the letter "<ğ>" provides a prolonged pronunciation of vowels when it comes to the end of a sound or word and between two vowels with the same acoustic qualities (ağrı, doğru, dağ, sağ, yağ, ağaç, eğer vb.); but when found between two differend vowels (ağır, sağır, bağır- vb.), it causes vowel shift (diphthong). These functions are the reason why it cannot be pronounced but continues to exist.

Similarly, the obvious reason why there is a problem in pronouncing other vowel and consonant sounds is that the sounds do not appear in the native language of the learners. This situation can also be seen in the learner's quoted sentences as examples in the table.

Table 3. *Sounds difficult to pronounce*

Categories/Answers	f	Learner's Reasons	f
Words with "ı, i" and "ö, ü "	1	Absence of these sounds in his/her mother language	4
Long words	1	Sound/letter similarity	2
"beni, bana, seni, sana"	1	Lengthiness of words/multiplicity of affixes	2
"çünkü, övgü"	1	*Example Sentences*	
Words with "ğ"	1	"Long words because vowel letters are different and have many affixes." (S1, Brazilian)	
"Rahatlatmak, zevkli, tehlikeli"	1	"The word 'rahatlatmak'. Because it is more difficult for me if "t" and "l" are close to each other." (S3, Italian)	

In Table 3, the answers concerning the words that are difficult for the learners to say, but as you can see in the table, the learners preferred to answer this question by making justification instead of giving word sample directly. And this question was not answered by 2 learners. Other answers include the words with "ı, i" and "ö, ü", long words, "beni, bana, seni, sana", and the words with "ğ", "Rahatlatmak, zevkli, tehlikeli" with a frequency of 1. Therefore, there were differences at this stage. Based on the reasoned answers in question and examples of the given words, it can be deduced that the difficulty of pronunciation is mostly sound sourced, and as a matter of fact, it can be seen that it is intensely sound sourced when the reasons stated by the learners are examined. 4 learners claimed that these sounds were not included in their mother language, and 2 learners claimed that some sounds/letters were similar to each other. The other reason given is the length of the words or the multiplicity of the affixes with a frequency of 2. These reasons can also be seen clearly in the example sentences. The finding that the reasoning has been done intensely on the basis of sound corresponds to the findings reflected in Table 2. It is clear that the vowel sounds and graphemes that are difficult to pronounce given in Table 1 cause the difficulty in saying the words.

Table 4. *Sound-based confused words*

Categories/Answers	f	Categories/Answers	f
Ağla-/Ağrı-	2	Temel /Tembel	2
Bakar/Bekâr	2	Düş-/Düşün-	2
Börek/ Böcek	2	Koy/Köy	2
Dinle- /Dinlen-	2	Çiçek/Çilek	2
Duy-/Doy-	2	Gül/Gül-	1
İşim/Eşim	2	On/Ön	1
Öğren-/Öğret-	2	Unlu/Ünlü	1
Düşün- /Üşü-	2	İnek/İnecek	1

In Table 4, the words that are confused to each other by the learners due to sound are given. These words are "ağla-/ağrı-, bakar/bekâr, börek/böcek, dinle-/dinlen-, duy-/doy-, işim/eşim, öğren-/öğret-, düşün-/üşü-, temel/tembel, düş-/düşün-, koy/köy, çiçek/çilek" with a frequency of 2; and "gül/gül-, on/ön, unlu/ünlü ve inek/inecek" with a frequency of 1. Considering these words listed, it is likely that it is intensively the effect of the vowel sounds (o, ö, u, ü, e, i) causing the learners to confuse to each other. When compared with Table 2, it can be said that these findings are parallel to each other. Similar to the findings in Table 2, in the words reflected in Table 4, phonetic mistakes resulting from consonant sounds such as c, ç, ş, m, n can be seen. The grapheme "ğ" can be seen as an important factor in confusing words to each other. At the same time, it is possible for language learners to see some sounds close to each other and thus confuse them.

Table 5. *Suggested solutions of learners for overcoming pronunciation problems*

Categories/Answers	f	Example Sentences
Watching series/movies/news	3	
Practicing conversation with Turkish people	3	"I practice with my Turkish friend, I watch series." (S6, Romanian)
Reading aloud	1	
Listening to the radio	1	"I'm trying to talk with Turks, watching Turkish TV series." (S3, Italian)
Writing	1	
Listening to Turkish people	1	"I say difficult words slowly, 100 times." (S4, Ukrainian)
Repeating difficult words many times	1	

Up to Table 5, problems related to pronunciation and their sources have been tried to be detected. And Table 5 contains the solutions found and the things done by the participants regarding these problems. The most frequently used way is to watch the series/movies/news and practice speaking with Turkish people with a frequency of 3. And with a frequency of 1, the other methods are reading aloud, listening to radio, writing, listening to Turkish people and repeating the difficult

words many times. It can be stated that the learners aim to develop their communicative language skills by this means.

Table 6. *Sufficiency of Turkish textbooks in solving the problems of pronunciation*

Categories/Answers	f	Example Sentences
Sufficient	*1*	"The textbook does not help with pronounciation." (S1, Brazilian)
Insufficient	*7*	
		"No, Yeni Hitit is a bad book because the word is very difficult and another word in the street or shop is more important. For example, *düdüğü* is very difficult." (S3, Italian)
There are no exercises related to pronounciation.	*2*	
There is an intensive vocabulary teaching, but no review.	*1*	
Words taught are not available in everyday life.	*1*	
Listening parts in the book are difficult.	*1*	
I need to talk to Turkish people.	*1*	

The answers taken from the learners regarding the proficiency status of the Turkish teaching books[5] in the solution of the pronunciation problems are reflected in Table 6. 1 of the participants said that the book (Yeni Hitit) was sufficient while 7 said it was insufficient. The reasons for this inadequacy are: the absence of exercises related to pronunciation, the absence of revision/repeat in spite of intense vocabulary teaching, the absence of availability of the taught words in everyday life, the difficulty of listening records in the and the necessity to talk to Turkish people. In general, it can be said that the learners criticize the book and found it insufficient in the sense that the book is not practice-oriented and does not offer opportunities to meet real-life situations.

Table 7. *Sufficiency of the teacher in solving the problem of pronounciation and anticipations*

Sufficiency Status	f	Suggestions and Expectations	f
Sufficient	6	More speaking and listening practice needed	1
No answer	2	Constant repeat and check needed	1
Example Sentences			
"The teacher answers the questions and explains." (S2, Serbian).		"We want more listening for the exam and we want a conversation course. Because the listening in this book is very difficult, not normal words, and I forget everything after an hour because these words do not exist in the street. For example, *düdük*." (S3, Italian)	

In Table 7, the opinions of foreign language learners about the sufficiency of the teacher's solution to the pronunciation problems and the teacher's expectations have been reflected. There are 2 participants who did not answer this question. The other 6 participants found the teacher in

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[5] At this stage, the answers given by the learners -since they study at Ankara University TÖMER- are only about the book "Yeni Hitit".

terms of answering their questions and making sufficient explanations. 2 learners have expressed their expectations from the reacher as more repetition and control with more practice of speaking and listening. Similar to the responses reflected in Table 5, at this stage, the learners also stated that they were in the expectation to develop their communicative language skills. Critics of the book "Yeni Hitit" have also focused on the deficiencies in the development of communicative language skills, as can be seen in Table 6.

As it can be seen, the interpretive teaching model up to this point has been interpreted through the interviews with the learner and the focus group interviews in the stages of mapping, informing and contesting. In this process, it was desired to detect what are done on pronunciation learning, the positive and negative aspects bidirectionally for the mapping phase, that is to say, it is aimed to collect data. At the same time, the data on the adequacy of the method book, which is one of the other articles of the learning process, have been obtained. The analysis of the collected data is a requirement of the informing phase. This analysis has sometimes been carried out only among researchers and occasionally with learners. It is aimed to reach the structure and problems of the pronunciation teaching/learning process being applied. Following the analysis of the data, the solutions to the opinions, thoughts, judgments, beliefs and problems in accordance with the contesting stage have been reached. As a result of the comparisons made, it has been detected that there are many problems in the phonetic teaching/learning process and the level of awareness about solving these problems is low. The problems/findings reached after these three phases can be listed as follows:

- Foreign language learners have an intense difficulty in pronunciating the vowel sounds o, ö, u, ü, ı, the grapheme ğ and the consonant sounds c, ç, s, ş, m, n.

- The most obvious factor in experiencing problems with Turkish pronunciation is that these sounds do not appear in their native languages.

- Foreign language learners confuse words with each other due to the sounds listed above. At the same time, due to perceiving some sounds similar/close to each other, they may confuse words.

- To get rid of the pronunciation problems, foreign language learners often resort to watching the series/movies/news and practicing conversation with Turkish people. Therefore, it can be said that they aim to develop communicative language skills.

- Method books (Yeni Hitit) do not help foreign language learners about pronunciation. In the book, there is not enough activity on pronunciation, the learners do not participate in the

communication process, they are not compared with real life situations and no revisions done.

While foreign language learners find the teacher proficient in teaching pronunciation, they have an expectation of repeating/revising and practicing speaking. It is clear that communicativeness is put at forefront also in this phase.

Findings for the Appraising Phase

Based on the findings listed above, two researchers looked for logically discussing and commenting on how to teach/learn differently and produced suggestions on what changes could be made. Accordingly, the application process decided to be carried out during the contesting phase has been planned as follows:

- The application period was 8 lesson hours, 2 lesson hours per week for 4 weeks.

- The application has been planned to be carried out independent of the teaching process practiced in TÖMER.

- In the application, voluntariness and full participation were prioritized and the lesson hours were set up to suit the language learners.

- The lesson materials related to listening, pronunciation and speaking in the framework of Ergenç's (2002) phonetic explanations have been prepared by two researchers for use within the application process, based on the opinions of two field specialists.

- The lesson materials and speaking subjects created for the application process prioritize improving the communicative skills of language learners and at the same time, aim to contribute to the development of other language skills.

- The vocabulary and grammatical forms contained in the lesson material created for the application process are formed according to level A2 and from discourses that reflect real-life situations.

- Care was taken to ensure that the words in the course materials created for the application process are minimal pairs[6], theoretical knowledge was given according to the place of production and importance was given to repeating the words containing the sounds by activities and tongue-twisters.

- It was planned that each application will be watched and evaluated by a colleague in writing.

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[6] Minimal pairs are a pair of words that differ in meaning only by a change of sound. These pairs of words offer the possibility to decide if the sounds are different phonemes. For example, the opposition between "sat" and "fat" makes it possible to have a difference of phoneme between /s/ and /f/ (Crystal, 1992: 251).

- After each application, language learners and teachers planned to take audio recordings of that day's lesson and aimed to keep diary for the lesson.

- After each application, colleague and learner assessments will be reviewed and reevaluated if necessary.

At the end of the application, learners will be asked to form a conversation form for the change.

Findings for the Acting/Practicing Phase

The planned acting/practicing phase of how to accomplish in the appraising phase has been accomplished as follows:

1st week (04.07.2017 – 100 mins.)

In the first week, the practices started with the lesson materials and activities prepared on the pronunciation of the vowel letters *"o, ö, u, ü"*. First, these famous sounds were handled separately and displayed using the visuals of the places of origin and explained; listening and repeating studies were made through the voices recorded by the researchers, minimal pairs and utterances; the tongue-twisters were listened and the learners were asked to pronounce. Thus, the pronunciation difference between the vowel sounds were also understood. Effective participation of language learners to the process was ensured in the lesson, and activities were carried out practically for reflection on the use of theoretical learning.

In the first week, all 8 learners participated in the lessons and all their positive opinions were reflected in the diaries they wrote in order to evaluate the process. Two of these views can be exampled as follows:

"This course is very interesting because understand what is difficult for me. We learned o, ö, u, ü phonetics. This situation is very sufficient. There are not ö and ü in Italy. It is a little difficult for me then." (S3, Italian)

"This course is very useful but I think phonetic needs to be learnt before. Thank you for this lesson." (S4, Ukrainian)

It can be said from the quoted examples and other opinions that the language learners are aware of the problems they are experiencing with pronunciation and that they think that they need teaching.

This course has been followed and evaluated also by a colleague with 18 years of experience working in the same institution. His views on the process are as follows:

"Making listening is very useful, good with regards to hearing sounds. Sounds can be repeated first. O-u sounds can be given one by one before, then comparison can be done, learners may be asked to write the sounds themselves to learn how to write or, it can be checked whether they are learning to write or not. They can be written incorrectly, or sounds can be written incorrectly in the way the words are spelled, so that it can be seen what is wrong in general..."

The colleague whose evaluation quoted above suggested that the applications made should be associated with the writing skills and that the words formed through reflection should be also utilized.

The researcher who carried out the application reflected his observations regarding process to the course report as follows:

"Education by being aware of the articulation places of the sounds motivated the learners. Some students said that they made mistakes in the words they uttered/pronounce one by one correctly. While pronouncing, a student really uttered o, u instead of ö, ü; only after a few attempts he was able to pronounce correctly. They have no difficulty in identifying sounds. Most of the students in the exercise required to find the correct one did the pronunciation correctly. So I think that listening and speaking activities should interact with each other. When asked to them, the book is often lacking in phonetics, still they do not find the teacher defective, but I think we are obliged to provide this education. I will try to teach the lesson taking into account the suggestions of the observer and learners in the second lesson..."

As can be seen, reflections relating to the process made bidirectionally by both the learner and the teacher in the first lesson. The most important finding reached at this stage is the necessity of teaching pronunciation and realizing this teaching by aiming to help the learners in acquiring communicative skills. Therefore, besides the method books, the teachers are also obliged to teach pronunciation.

The observer, language learners and teacher's opinions have been evaluated and the second week applications have been planned accordingly.

2nd week (12.07.2017 – 100 mins.)

The practices continued in the second week by the lesson materials and acticities prepared complexly on pronunciation of the vowel sounds *"o, ö, u, ü"* emphasized in the previous week and repeats done. Therefore, it was aimed to transform the preliminary learning into a skill. Then, the vowel sounds *"e, i, ı"* were handled separately and the places of articulation were shown and explained using the visuals as it was the first week; pronunciation practices made such as listening and finding correct words, listening and repeating, listening and repeating the tongue-twisters by the

voices recorded by the researchers, minimal pairs and utterances. In order for the learners to be in production, dual conversation activities were held to solve problems reflecting real-world problems.[7] Feedback was given by saying the correct answers to the learners after the pronunciation exercises, the mistakes made during the repetition were indicated at the end of the process and the students were given time to correct themselves; after dual conversation exercises, the learners were provided with feedbacks on topics such as pronunciation, grammar, stress, and focus, so that they could see their mistakes. In the course, language learners have been actively involved in the process, and production based dialogues have been conducted to reflect the use of theoretical learning.

In the second week, 4 learners participated in the lesson and made positive evaluations about the process. The opinions quoted from the diaries of 2 learners are as follows:

"The grammar is very important, but I practice very well. Phonetic I am learning for now is easy. The words are important and I am listening. Dialogue is thus very well for me, I can speak Turkish. For me m-n is very difficult." (S5, Spanish)

"We did ö, ü, o, u again. All of them are with sounds – this is the best because they are confused if they are all together. We practices using o with ı,i/c-ç and other sounds. I pay more attention to ö/o." (S7, Czech).

When the learners' self-assessments of the second lesson are examined, it is possible to say that they list what is learnt and reflect the positive change they observed. These changes can be listed as more attention to pronunciation and fluency that is reflected in their speech. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the effect of the pronunciation in acquisition of speech is recognized and reflected to use.

This course has been followed and evaluated as it was the first week by the same colleague with 18 years of experience working in the same institution. His views on the process are about *long reading of the vowel sounds in Arabic-to-Turkish words*. He also argued that *applications should include relevant explanations* but it was not deemed necessary by the researchers to do such a study at the target level (A2), since such an opinion/problem was not mentioned in the interview form filled in by the learners in order to determine the problems and solutions related to the pronunciation; it has been decided to carry out applications on the problems that the learners have put forward.

The teacher's opinions and observations on the given course are as follows:

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[7] Selection of topics, problems, grammatical forms and words consisting of the problems for the given pronunciation and speaking activities was made according to Level A2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The lesson materials and speaking subjects developed were not included here due to space limitations. If needed, it can be requested from the researchers.

"We made a study on all Turkish sounds at the recommendation of the expert/observer who listened to my lesson before. After that, we studied on the phonetics of the sounds that the students said they were confusing before (e, ı, i) and the sounds (o, ö, u, ü) to repeat the previous lesson. This time students realized better the rounded sounds. After that I told them to prepare speeches by giving the students a topic to correct/evaluate the pronunciation and after they completed the dialogues, I let them know their mistakes in phonetics and grammar/syntax. They were very pleased with it. A Syrian student realized that he mispronounced the word "kefil", and the other student realized that he mispronounced the the word "düşünüyorum". The adverse situation for me was that the attendance of the class decreased up to 4 people."

The language teacher summarized the lessons learned in the second week in the course observation report and reflected the changes in the learners. According to this; the dialogue and repetition studies for the reflection of the sounds had a significant influence on the learners. At the same time, the notes taken during the dialogue by the teacher are important in terms of giving feedback to the language learners and therefore, providing opportunities for reflection.

The observer, language learners and instuctor's opinions were evaluated and third week applications were planned in this direction and one-to-one communication was established with the learners about increasing the attendance.

3rd week (19.07.2017 – 100 mins.)

In the first two weeks after the reflective applications carried out regarding the vowel sounds, the third week focused on the grapheme of the letter "ğ"; but the subjects of the second week were repeated because of the lack of learner participation in the previous course. Through the course materials and activities prepared, examples of usage of the letter "ğ" at the end of the word, in the middle of the same and different sounds and in the middle of a vowel and a consonant were given and explained; repetition practices by listening, finding the different one through the voices recorded by the researchers, minimal pairs and utterances; tongue-twisters have been voiced. In the course, language learners have been actively involved in the process, and production based dialogues have been conducted to reflect theoretical learning to use.

In the third week, 7 learners participated in the lesson and reflected their positive opinions in the diaries they wrote in order to evaluate the process. Two of these opinions can be exampled as follows:

"ğ, ı, i, e... phonetic is well. We made a practice, very useful. Now I am careful for ğ, ö and ü. We have done a very useful exercise for speaking, it is relevant and pleasant. By pronouncing better about sounds." (S2, Serbian)

"We made ğ, i, ı, e, o, ö, u, ü phonetic. We had a little dialogue. No criticism. We heard and talked phonetically. We want to do with ç, k." (S6, Romanian)

It can be seen from the examples and other opinions that the language learners list the points that are emphasized in the course of the third week. At the same time they reflected the positive change they observed. According to this, the learners showed positive development and awareness regarding pronunciation. Other learners have expressed their satisfaction that the lessons are based on speaking skills.

This course has been followed and evaluated also by a colleague with 5 years of experience working in a different institution. His views on the process are as follows:

"It has been observed that the students are very involved and willing to participate in the lesson regarding pronunciation of sounds. Behind this, it is possible to show factors such as preparing the activities based on the words the students meet in their daily life (daily/life oriented), the presence of a group of students who prioritize speaking skills and providing a good in-class interaction.

(…)

Some students were observed to be able to utter the sounds that they could not utter as a result of the teacher directing and repeating them with different words. At the same time, students were encouraged to develop their vocabulary while pronunciation study was being carried out. Especially it was observed that the words they did not know were noted by the students. It has been observed that the students performed the listening activities prepared after the practice on the subjects of pronunciation of sounds completely correctly. In this case, it can be said that the prepared activities have helped the students to overcome the difficulties they have experienced in pronunciation of Turkish. It has been observed that students have a little difficulty with the pronunciation of rounded vowels (o-ö-u-ü). It may be useful to increase the number of activities for the pronunciation of these sounds. The presence of these sounds, especially in the words they meet for the first time, prevents their pronunciation from becoming correct…"

It is possible to say that the the colleague whose assessment has been quoted above has a positive aspect of the observations carried out. At the end of his report, he learner stated that the learners made a visible development. Also similar to the other observer, he suggested that it needs to be studied with the words confused to each other such as "hala/hâlâ".

The researcher who carried out the application reflected his observations regarding the process to the course report as follows:

"It was observed that the students who previously had problems with the pronunciation of the rounded vowels realized their mistakes and tried to solve their problems. Students are pleased to see the words containing "ğ" at the A1-A2 level (in all situations) and do exercise in this respect and they are interested in the lesson. At the end of the conversation activities, giving feedback (knowing that I will give feedback) about the grammar and pronunciation problems of the students motivated them. The students became happy to have activities done related to problematic sounds and words in the interview form at the beginning of the practices. It was observed that the student, who had a problem with u, ü and said that he confused these sounds, uttered these sounds more carefully. A student wanted activities related to the sounds "s, ş", and the other wanted with the sound "â".

The language teacher reflected the impact and the resulting changes on the learners of the third week in the course observation report. According to this, the notes taken during the speaking activities were helpful in terms of giving feedback to the language learners and providing opportunities for reflection. Especially working on the sounds they are experiencing problems has increased the awareness of the learners and their desire to learn, so they have shown a positive development.

The observer, language learners and teacher's opinions were evaluated and the fourth week applications were planned accordingly.

4th week (24.07.2017 – 100 mins.)

This week, the practices on the consonant sounds "c, ç, s, ş, m, and n" have been continued through the course material and activities prepared on the pronunciation of the sounds. The course materials are grouped on the basis of the consonant sounds "c-ç, s-ş" and "m-n" and are handled separately and the places of articulation are shown and explained as they were in previous weeks; pronunciation studies have been carried out such as listening, finding the correct answers, listening and repeating, listening and repeating tongue-twisters through the voices recorded by the researchers, minimal pairs and utterances. In the lesson, language learners have been actively involved in the process, and production based dialogues have been conducted for them to reflect the use of theoretical learning.

In the fourth week, 7 learners participed in the lesson. This course has been watched and evaluated by the same colleague who has 5 years experience working in different institutions as it was in previous weeks.

This week, because it is the last week of the practice, students were asked not to keep a diary but to fill out only the general assessment form of the process. In the same way, the observer who followed the lesson and the researcher who carried out the practice shared their experiences and

observations regarding the whole process. All these evaluations have been reported in the conclusion of the research.

Conclusion and Discussion

At the end of the 4 weeks of practice, which was carried out in accordance with the steps of the reflective language teaching model, language learners are asked to reflect their views concerning the process. Language learners in this evaluation form aimed at this goal, reflected what they learned during their pronunciation lessons, their positive and negative thoughts on practices, if any, and their suggestions for themselves and teachers.

Responses given under the heading of "What did I learn?" on the reflective practices carried out are on the vowel and consonant sounds with the grapheme (ğ) that have been studied on during the practices. At this stage, the vowel sounds listed by the learners are e, i, ı, o, ö, u and ü, while consonant sounds are c, ç, s and ş. Only 1 learner made a mention of the consonants m and n. Therefore, it can be said that the learners are aware of which thing/things they learn at the end of the applications. 3 learners mentioned that phonetics was studied on, 2 learners mentioned that the alphabet was repeated within the context of pronunciation, and the other 2 learners mentioned that practice of speaking was made. As it can be seen, the problematic sounds and the graphem "ğ" mentioned by the learners and the problematic sounds (e, i, ö, ü, ı, c, ş, ç and the graphem "ğ") which are listed in case of problems stated by Açık, 2008; Ak-Başoğul & Can, 2014; Bölükbaş, 2011; Candaş-Karababa, 2009; Er, Biçer & Bozkırlı, 2012; Kara, 2010; Okatan, 2012; Subaşı, 2010 in their researches are parallel.

Language learners have not expressed any negative opinions under the heading of "My Negative Thoughts" over reflective practices performed. 4 learners have presented their views and suggestions in general under this heading. The duration of pronunciation applications performed according to 1 learner should be longer, and these practices should be performed at a lower level according to the other 1 learner. Another learner is still struggling to use the letter "ğ" and 1 learner emphasizes that more speech practice should be done.

Language learners have followed positive changes they have observed under the heading of "My Positive Thinkings" on reflective practices performed. Accordingly, all learners have agreed on speaking practice to be made and pronunciation associated with the sounds and the words that these sounds are included; and stated that made a progress at the point of pronunciation and speaking. Similarly, under the heading of "What's the difference?/What's changed?", they stated that they could speak better and faster, they paid attention to the positions of the organs on ensuring the clearness while speaking. Therefore, it can be said that a positive development of helping foreign

students in acquiring communicative language skills which is one of the aims of the research has been achieved.

The *"Suggestions"* section of the evaluation form has been arranged separately for teachers and language learners. According to this, 7 learners suggested the foreign language teachers of making intense speaking practices, giving place to practices of pronunciation at every level, playing games by concentrating on listening skills instead of reflecting real-life situations into the classroom environment (giving examples from daily lives by radio, television, etc., listening to songs, watching movies, etc.) and concentrating on grammar teaching. 1 learner has suggested that reflective applications carried out within the scope of the research should be included in the language teaching program applied at TÖMER of Ankara University.

The learners have made the following suggestions for themselves: 3 learners think that they need to practice more conversation, 2 learners aim to go to diction course and 3 learners emphasize that they need to listen to music, watch movies and read books a lot.

The apprising of 1 learner with respect to the complete process is quoted below:

"In my opinion the class was very good specially because we could review the entire alphabet again which the focus on pronunciation. For me theses classes are very important and should be part of normal program of Turkish Language at TÖMER. It's helping a lot and after I started to pay more attention at details and how important is the position of the tongue and lips in order to speak more clearly (the letters i and ı for example)." (S1, Brazilian).

According to the evaluation form, all the language learners think that the lessons are useful to them and they express their opinions clearly.

The general assessment of the observer working in a different institution is as follows:

"Generally; foreign students fail at voicing the sounds of Turkish which are not in their own language and they are not very much on this topic because they do not have confidence in themselves but there is a visible difference between the first and last courses of the students in the lessons I have observed... Now they are more willing and they force themselves... The activities are very successful and solution oriented because they are prepared by predicting the most common pronunciation problems experienced by the students... In addition, since life reality is predicated, it is made up of structures and words that are often used in everyday communication, and this situation is also well thought out... In short, there is a visible improvement between the first and last lessons. I consider it a viable program at least in lessons for speaking skills for all foreigners in Turkish teaching centers."

The observer first spoke about the problems that foreign language learners have in general. According to this, language learners are experiencing problems based on the mother language when they are learning pronunciation, meaning that they have difficulty in meaning and pronounciating the sounds that do not exist in their mother language, and it is seen that mother language is the most important factor when it comes to the discourses of language learners and the related literature. Therefore, this finding and conclusion are in agreement with the findings and/or results of the studies in literature (Escudero, 2007: 109; Şenel, 2006) who imparted from Polivanov (1931-1964), Trubetzkoy (1939-1969) as indicated in the theoretical part of the research.

However, according to the observer, the learners can not lean on the solution of the pronunciation problems that exist due to lack of self-confidence but thanks to the reflective practices carried out within the scope of the research, the learners are more willing and able to reflect on themselves. Consequently, there has been a remarkable improvement in communicative skills through the activities carried out through the production of sounds, the provision of motivation for learners and lesson materials reflecting real-life situations. The language learner whose assessment quoted above and similarly the observer think that the practices carried out can be applied in lessons involving speaking skills.

Assessment of the researcher who conducts the process-oriented application is as follows:

"The students had a problem with s, ş; but they said it was better after the activities. The problem with c, s was less. They were motivated by the speech/animation activity within this course. They are more motivated in the activities where real-life problems are tried to be solved and want to see their mistakes. Students complain about listening grammar lecturing predominantly, not being able to use the relevant grammar rules/make production. They say that they learn Turkish to talk (S3, Italian and S4, Ukrainian). S5 (Spanish) paid more attention while performing m, n tongue twisters and S8 (Ukrainian) told that his pronunciation was better. Performing pronunciation and speaking activities fulfilled their self-confidence. They started talking and joking more also during the normal lesson time. Their speaking is very different in my opinion, too (the students with problems with ö, ü and m, n started to pay attention). S1 (Brazilian) has reduced his mistakes associated with vowel sounds. In other practices, I succeeded at raising awareness of m's and n's with S5 (Spanish). S6 (Romanian) and S7 (Czech) have developed an awareness of ö and ü. The students wrote the conversation dialogue first. S3 (Italian) said he paid attention to h's and ö, ü. I made corrections after the students talked. My general observation is that the lessons were fun, instructive, productive. The negative situation was that this education should be given at level A1 and it was difficult for the students to keep up. And as a teacher, I learned how to give pronunciation and speaking lesson and that reading, listening, speaking and pronouncing are indispensable skills and the practices must be together."

The teacher reflected the changes in the learners and herself/himself in his evaluation. Changes in learners, not in general, are conveyed directly by giving information about each learner. At the same time, information was given about the process. Generally speaking, it can be said that all of the learners have developed awareness of pronunciation and reflected their learning to their speech. The teacher has also developed awareness of how to associate pronunciation teaching with other skills and how to do it. Therefore, it is possible to say that the application process has been fruitful for both the learners and the teacher. Like some learners, the teacher also thinks that the practice of pronunciation should be performed at A1 level and should be a part of Turkish teaching process. When it is considered the goal of teaching pronunciation, of course it would be appropriate to start at level A1, but when the researcher teacher has encountered this problem, the learners have finished level A1; since they started at A2 level, the mentioned practices could be done during A2 level teaching.

The teacher, who stated that she/he was trying to provide student participation, considering the weekly attendance, seems to have succeeded.

Based on the evaluations of learner, colleague and teacher listed above, it has been achieved to the conclusion that the learners had a positive development and acquired communicative skills by finding the opportunity to make speaking practice, through the reflective practices performed. Similarly, Vitanova and Miller (2002) have come to the conclusion that language learners are both developed their communicative skills and started to use metacognitive strategies by recognizing that they are social actors, and are able to conduct and balance language consciously through the reflective practice of teaching English pronunciation they carried out.

From all these data, it is possible to help learners to reduce their pronunciation problems by using pronunciation materials which will be developed by predicting problematic sounds in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. At the same time, the fact that pronunciation teaching is included in textbook programs in addition to the teaching of the four basic language skills, and that pronunciation teaching is taught in stages starting from level A1 and supported for language learners, can help learners to develop their communication skills. Also can be incorporated into language learning programs, and by this means, the awareness of learning-teaching processes can be improved by raising the tendency of reflective thinking.

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