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## MAPPING PROGRESS: EVALUATING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

This study, titled "Mapping Progress: Evaluating the Professional Development Needs of Turkish as a Foreign Language Teachers," engages in a comprehensive assessment of the perceived professional development requirements within the realm of Turkish language instruction for non-native speakers. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather insights from Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL) teachers. The findings shed light on the specific areas of professional growth desired by educators, informing future strategies for tailored development programs within the TFL teaching community.

### KEYWORDS

Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL), Professional Development, Language Instruction, Teacher Training, Educational Assessment, Foreign Language Teachers, Mixed-Methods Approach, Qualitative Interviews, Quantitative Surveys, Language Education.

### INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of language education, the professional development of teachers is a cornerstone for ensuring effective and culturally sensitive

instruction. This study, titled "Mapping Progress: Evaluating the Professional Development Needs of Turkish as a Foreign Language Teachers," embarks on

a journey to assess the specific requirements and aspirations of educators within the realm of Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL) instruction. As the demand for learning Turkish as a foreign language continues to grow, understanding and addressing the professional development needs of TFL teachers become imperative for fostering high-quality language education.

Turkish, with its rich cultural heritage and strategic geopolitical importance, is gaining prominence as a sought-after foreign language for learners worldwide. The effectiveness of TFL instruction hinges on the continuous growth and adaptation of educators to evolving pedagogical methodologies, linguistic nuances, and cultural contexts. This research aims to fill a crucial gap by evaluating the professional development needs perceived by TFL teachers, laying the groundwork for tailored programs that enhance their teaching capacities and enrich the learning experiences of students.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, this study combines the strengths of qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to gather comprehensive insights from Turkish language educators. The integration of both methods allows for a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted professional development landscape within the TFL teaching community. By mapping the progress of TFL teachers in terms of their perceived needs and aspirations, this research not only

contributes to the empirical knowledge base but also serves as a guide for educational institutions, policymakers, and professional development providers in shaping targeted strategies.

As we embark on this exploration into the professional development needs of TFL teachers, the findings promise to offer valuable insights that can inform the design and implementation of programs tailored to the specific requirements of educators in the field. Through a collaborative effort to address these needs, we envision a more enriched and effective Turkish as a Foreign Language education landscape, fostering linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding among learners globally.

### METHOD

The research process for "Mapping Progress: Evaluating the Professional Development Needs of Turkish as a Foreign Language Teachers" unfolded through a carefully structured and iterative approach, aiming to capture the nuanced landscape of professional development needs within the Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL) teaching community.

The initial step involved the purposive selection of participants, drawing TFL educators from various educational settings to ensure a representative sample. The voluntary nature of participation was emphasized, and informed consent was obtained from educators willing to contribute to the study.

Qualitative insights were then gleaned through semi-structured interviews, allowing for an in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences and perceptions of their professional development needs. The interview process, characterized by open-ended questions, facilitated a rich understanding of individual perspectives and provided a foundation for identifying recurrent themes.

Complementing the qualitative phase, a quantitative survey instrument was developed and distributed electronically to a broader sample of TFL teachers. This survey incorporated structured questions using Likert scales and multiple-choice formats, enabling the quantification of responses and the identification of overarching trends in perceived professional development needs.

The data collection process, involving both interviews and surveys, aimed at triangulating findings to enhance the comprehensiveness and reliability of the study. The flexibility in scheduling interviews and the electronic distribution of surveys sought to accommodate the diverse contexts and schedules of TFL educators.

Qualitative data from interviews underwent thematic analysis, revealing key areas of professional development needs and aspirations. Concurrently, quantitative survey data underwent statistical analysis, providing numerical insights into prevalent trends among the TFL teaching community.

Triangulating these findings enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the professional development landscape for TFL teachers. The iterative nature of the research process allowed for adjustments and refinements, ensuring the depth and breadth necessary for a robust evaluation of the professional development needs within the Turkish as a Foreign Language teaching community. The ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and adherence to ethical guidelines, underscored the commitment to conducting rigorous and respectful research within the TFL education domain.

#### Participants:

The study engaged Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL) teachers from diverse educational settings, including language institutes, universities, and cultural centers. A purposive sampling method was employed to ensure representation across different levels of proficiency, teaching experience, and geographic locations. Participation was voluntary, with educators providing informed consent to be part of the study.

#### Qualitative Interviews:

Qualitative insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with TFL teachers. The interview protocol was designed to explore teachers' experiences, perceived professional development needs, and aspirations within the context of Turkish

language instruction. The open-ended nature of the interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives and nuanced responses.

### Quantitative Surveys:

A quantitative survey instrument was developed to complement the qualitative data. The survey included structured questions designed to assess a broader sample of TFL teachers regarding their perceived professional development needs. Likert scales and multiple-choice questions were utilized to quantify responses, providing statistical data for a comprehensive analysis.

### Data Collection Process:

The data collection process involved scheduling and conducting interviews with willing participants, allowing for flexibility to accommodate diverse schedules. Simultaneously, the survey was distributed electronically, ensuring accessibility and convenience for a broader range of TFL educators. The combination of interviews and surveys aimed to triangulate findings, enhancing the reliability and validity of the study.

### Analysis:

Qualitative data from interviews underwent thematic analysis to identify recurrent themes and patterns. The analysis involved coding responses to categorize key areas of professional development needs and

aspirations. Quantitative survey data were subjected to statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and inferential analyses, to identify prevalent trends and correlations.

### Triangulation of Findings:

The qualitative and quantitative findings were triangulated to provide a comprehensive understanding of TFL teachers' professional development needs. By comparing and contrasting insights from both data sources, the study aimed to generate a holistic perspective, enriching the depth and breadth of the research outcomes.

### Ethical Considerations:

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their willingness to contribute to the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and the research design adhered to ethical guidelines governing research involving human subjects.

By employing a mixed-methods approach that combines the depth of qualitative interviews with the breadth of quantitative surveys, this study sought to comprehensively evaluate the professional development needs of Turkish as a Foreign Language teachers. The triangulation of findings ensures a robust

understanding of the diverse perspectives within the TFL teaching community.

### RESULTS

The evaluation of professional development needs among Turkish as a Foreign Language (TFL) teachers yielded insightful findings, combining qualitative and quantitative data sources. Through interviews and surveys, key themes emerged, revealing the multifaceted landscape of professional growth requirements within the TFL teaching community. Qualitatively, educators expressed a strong desire for enhanced training in innovative pedagogical approaches, cultural competency, and technology integration. Quantitative analysis corroborated these qualitative insights, emphasizing the consensus among TFL teachers on the importance of targeted professional development in these areas.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion delves into the implications of the identified professional development needs for Turkish as a Foreign Language teachers. Educators' expressed desire for innovative pedagogical approaches underscores the importance of adapting teaching strategies to engage diverse learners effectively. The emphasis on cultural competency aligns with the global nature of language instruction, emphasizing the role of TFL teachers as cultural ambassadors. Additionally, the call for technology integration in

language education reflects the evolving landscape of instructional tools and the need to equip educators for effective digital teaching and learning environments.

The study's findings are situated within the broader context of language education, recognizing the evolving demands placed on TFL teachers in a globalized world. The discussion also explores potential strategies and interventions to address the identified needs, emphasizing the role of educational institutions, policymakers, and professional development providers in fostering a supportive environment for TFL educators.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "Mapping Progress: Evaluating the Professional Development Needs of Turkish as a Foreign Language Teachers" contributes valuable insights to the ongoing dialogue on language education. The study provides a nuanced understanding of the diverse professional development needs within the TFL teaching community, ranging from pedagogical approaches to cultural competency and technology integration. The comprehensive approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data, enhances the reliability and validity of the findings.

The identified needs underscore the importance of tailored professional development programs that address the specific challenges and aspirations of TFL

educators. By acknowledging and addressing these needs, educational institutions and stakeholders can empower TFL teachers to navigate the evolving landscape of language education successfully. The study invites further collaboration and research to ensure ongoing support and growth within the Turkish as a Foreign Language teaching community, ultimately benefiting both educators and their students.

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