

Educational Problems from the Point of View of Turkish and Foreign Students¹

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Abstract

This study aims to highlight the educational problems of Turkish and foreign students from their point of view Turkish and foreign students. The present study was conducted according to the pattern of phenomenology, which belongs to qualitative research methods. The study group of the study consists of 10 Turkish and 10 foreign students studying in public secondary schools in the central district of Bolu in the first semester of the academic year 2022-2023. Research findings show that both Turkish and foreign students mostly do not have problems with school administration and teachers. Although Turkish and foreign students generally report that they do not have problems with their friends or each other, they occasionally mention problems such as rude behavior, offensive language, and communication problems. Turkish students mostly see being in a class with foreign students as a disadvantage, while foreign students tend to see it as an advantage. In addition, both Turkish and foreign students made suggestions for the education of foreign students in Turkey, such as teaching "Turkish language and culture".

Keywords: Education problems, foreign student, Turkish student

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Introduction

From the moment they are born, people have many rights, such as the right to life, education, health, food, and shelter. These rights are supposed to be guaranteed by national (TR Constitution, 1982) and international documents (European Convention on Human Rights, 1950; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). However, various events in the world may limit or prevent some people's access to these rights in some cases. It can be said that wars occupy an important place among these events and millions of people had to migrate to different countries due to wars (Muğlu, 2022). It can be seen that migration, which is defined as the situation of people who move from their place of residence to another place for political, cultural, economic, and social reasons (Koçak & Terzi, 2011), causes various problems such as education in the lives of people and especially children (Yılmaz-Yıldız & Demir, 2021).

The concept of migration, which is believed to be as old as the history of mankind, turns out to be a concept that affects not only the physical displacement of people but also the dynamics of societies (Dinçer & Eşsiz, 2022; Takır & Özerem, 2019). It can be seen that migrations, which take place in different ways depending on the conditions of the time, have intensified in the 21st century, and due to the negative effects of wars, many people have left their places of residence and moved to different countries (Topaloğlu & Çam Aktaş, 2022). Due to its strategic, and geographical location, as well as its political and cultural characteristics, Turkey has had its share in these migration movements and has become a country to which many people have migrated throughout history (Özdemir, 2016). These migration movements to Turkey intensified with the "Arab Spring" after 2010 and migration to Turkey

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from countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran, especially Syria (Dinçer & Eşsiz, 2022). The cultural and ideological proximity between Turkey and Middle Eastern countries has also contributed to these migrations to Turkey (Kaya, 2017). As of July 2023, there were 1.268.392 people residing in Turkey with a residence permit, while 3.325.014 Syrians were living in Turkey under temporary protection. At the end of 2022, 33.246 people applied for international protection in Turkey (TR Ministry of Labor Affairs, Migration Management Directorate, 2023). Considering these numbers, many problems arise among asylum seekers and refugees, who are quite numerous in Turkey (Kılıç & Demir, 2017), and the education problem, which is one of these problems, can become even more complex (Yavuz & Mızrak, 2016). According to the data for 2021-2022, there are 1,365,884 foreign children of school age (5-17 years) in Turkey. In January 2022, 935,731 of this population were enrolled in school and the enrollment rate was 68.51%. Looking at the enrollment rate by education level, it is 38.79% in preschool, 78.04% in elementary school, 81.18% in secondary school, and 50.11% in high school (Ministry of Education, General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, Department of Migration and Emergency Education, 2022). From the data, the number of foreign students who are of educational age in Turkey is quite high. Turkey has agreed to provide education for these children within the framework of the international agreements it has concluded (Muğlu, 2022). It is a fact that the inability of these foreign students to access education will cause great problems for both humanity and Turkey (Seydi, 2014). It is also seen that uneducated young people cannot work in the jobs they want, their wages are low, and therefore young people fall into the clutches of various criminal organizations to earn a better income (Ateş & Yavuz, 2017). It can be said that the refugees who remain in this situation will not be able to receive effective education, so they will be excluded from society and become more vulnerable to crime. In this case, the importance of education for children who have been exposed to events such as conflict, war, and migration is once again evident (Ferris & Winthrop, 2010; Nicolai & Triplehorn, 2003). It is well known that safe and quality education prevents children from being exploited in different ways and allows them to develop their abilities (Ferris & Winthrop, 2010), while schools facilitate the adaptation of children and their families to the society from which they come (Olivos & Mendoza, 2010). It is well known that safe and quality education prevents children from being exploited in different ways and allows them to develop their abilities (Ferris & Winthrop, 2010), while schools facilitate the adaptation of children and their families to the society from which they come (Olivos & Mendoza, 2010). For this reason, Turkey needs to place a high value on education to avoid these problems. Since education is a process of adopting cultural values, it is generally a stage of acculturation (Sönmez, 2015). It is believed that during the time these children come to the country, until they return safely to their home country, Turkey needs to use education effectively to help them adjust to society.

It is known that the children of families who came to other countries through immigration generally face difficulties such as language problems, discrimination, economic problems, and the inability to make friends in the schools of the countries they go to. These negative situations, if any, prevent an effective educational process for foreign students and may lead to the exclusion of these students (Sayın, Usanmaz & Aslangiri, 2016). Also, when students who come to Turkey from other countries do not know Turkish according to their age, the division into classes by equivalence causes problems for Turkish students and teachers as well as for foreign students (Güngör & Şenel, 2018). As the population in Turkey has increased due to the influx of foreigners (TR Ministry of Labor Affairs, Directorate of Migration Management, 2023), adaptation problems occur in schools due to language and cultural differences, problems arise between Turkish and foreign students, groupings and exclusion increase (Özdemir, 2016; Şimşir & Dilmaç, 2018). In addition, it is observed that foreign students coming to Turkey can sometimes cause various problems in schools, such as gang activities due to misbehavior, non-compliance, violent tendencies and an increase in their numbers (Sariahmetoğlu & Kamer, 2021; Sarıtaş, Şahin & Çatalbaş, 2016). It is a fact that these negative situations will make it difficult for Turkish education to achieve its goals. This is because it is known that in a school where there is no harmony and friendship among students, effective and productive teaching is not possible. Considering the age of students in secondary school, the importance of friendship in school is an undeniable fact. For this reason, it can be considered it would be more accurate to look at the educational problems in Turkey not only from the perspective of Turkish or foreign students; but from the perspective of both groups of students. Based on these explanations,

the aim of the present study is to shed light on the educational problems of Turkish and foreign students from their point of view. The aim is to contribute to the relevant literature and provide recommendations to the authorities by looking at the educational problems of Turkish and foreign students in Turkey from different perspectives.

Method

Research Model

The present research was conducted according to the pattern of phenomenology, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Phenomenology is a research design that focuses on cases that are known but do not have a detailed and in-depth understanding (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In the present study, this research design was chosen because it aimed to investigate the educational problems of both Turkish and foreign students in depth.

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 10 Turkish and 10 foreign students studying in public secondary schools in the central district of Bolu, where the number of foreign students is high, in the first semester of the school year 2022-2023. The criterion sampling method is one of the purposive sampling methods in which those who meet the previously established criteria are included in the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). As for the sampling criterion, Turkish students were selected based on the fact that they have foreign students in their classes, and foreign students were selected based on the fact that they have been educated in Turkish government schools for at least two years in order to obtain more reliable answers. The survey was conducted with voluntary and willing participants. In addition, care was taken in selecting the foreign students to ensure that they had sufficient knowledge of Turkish to be able to answer the interview questions. To define the students, codes such as S1, S2, and S3... for Turkish students and such as FS1, FS2, and FS3... for foreign students were used.

The personal characteristics of the students participating in the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Characteristics of the Participants

| Participant | Gender | Class | Age | Participant | Country of Origin | Gender | Class | Age |
|-------------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|-------------------|--------|-------|-----|
| S1 | Girl | 8 | 13 | FS1 | Syria | Girl | 8 | 13 |
| S2 | Girl | 7 | 13 | FS2 | Afghanistan | Boy | 8 | 14 |
| S3 | Boy | 7 | 13 | FS3 | Afghanistan | Girl | 6 | 13 |
| S4 | Girl | 7 | 12 | FS4 | Afghanistan | Girl | 8 | 13 |
| S5 | Girl | 8 | 13 | FS5 | Iraq | Girl | 8 | 13 |
| S6 | Boy | 8 | 13 | FS6 | Iraq | Girl | 8 | 14 |
| S7 | Boy | 8 | 13 | FS7 | Syria | Boy | 7 | 13 |
| S8 | Girl | 6 | 11 | FS8 | Syria | Boy | 6 | 11 |
| S9 | Boy | 8 | 13 | FS9 | Afghanistan | Girl | 8 | 13 |
| S10 | Boy | 8 | 13 | FS10 | Afghanistan | Boy | 7 | 12 |

Table 1 shows that 10 (50%) of the participants are Turkish students and 10 (50%) are foreign students. 5 (50%) of Turkish students are girls and 5 (50%) are boys; 1 (10%) is in 6th grade, 3 are (30%) in 7th grade, 6 are (60%) in 8th grade; 1 (10%) is 11 years old, 1 (10%) is 12, 8 (80%) are 13 years old. On the other hand, 2 (20%) of the foreign students came to Turkey from Iraq, 3 (30%) from Syria, 5 (50%) from Afghanistan; 6 (60%) are female and 4 (40%) are male; 2 (20%) are in 6th grade, 2 (20%) are in 7th grade.

Data Collection Instrument

The researchers created a semi-structured interview form to identify the educational problems from the perspective of Turkish and foreign students. Interviews provide an opportunity to find out people's thoughts, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors about various issues and their possible causes in the shortest possible way (Karasar, 2015). For this reason, a literature review was conducted to find out students' thoughts in a short time, and the interview questions were created as a result of the literature review. In the validity and reliability phase, internal validity was to be ensured by the opinion of three faculty members who are experts in the field. In the next phase, a pilot study was conducted with two Turkish and two foreign students who were not part of the research group to show that the interview questions were clear and understandable. When the responses obtained from the students were analyzed, it was determined that the interview format used in the present study was appropriate and following questions were asked to the students.

Questions asked of Turkish students;

1- In your school life,

What problems do you have with

- a) teachers,
- b) school administration,
- c) your friends?

2- Do you have problems with foreign students? If yes, what kind of problems do you have?

3- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being in a class with foreign students?

4- In your opinion, what do you think education should be like for Turkish students in Turkey?

Questions asked of foreign students;

1- In your school life in Turkey,

What kind of problems do you encounter with

- a) teachers,
- b) school administration,
- c) your friends?

2- Do you have problems with Turkish students? If yes, what kind of problems do you encounter?

3- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being in a class with Turkish students?

4- In your opinion, what do you think education should be like for foreign students in Turkey?

Data Collection

The research data were collected by Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal College Human Research Ethics Committee with the approval of the Ethics Committee granted in the meeting of 04/09/2022 and 2022/09. The research data were collected by the researchers themselves, with the knowledge and support of the school administrators, during the 3rd and 4th week of October by obtaining consent from the volunteer students. Before the interview, the students were informed about the research and that their full names would not be mentioned in any part of the research and that their identities would be kept confidential. In this way, students were allowed to express their views clearly and objectively. There was no limit to the length of time students could be interviewed; the interviews with Turkish students lasted about 15 minutes and those with foreign students lasted about 20 minutes.

Analysis of the Data

The study used both descriptive analysis and content analysis as methods of qualitative data analysis. Content analysis aimed to find concepts and relationships that would help explain the data obtained, while descriptive analysis summarized and interpreted the data (Neuman, 2012; cited Çevik Kılıç, 2016). In descriptive analysis, direct quotations were often used to fully disclose opinions in order to clearly present the data to the researchers (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). To increase credibility, the obtained results were compared by involving another researcher in the interpretation of the data. The scores were compared, and both researchers reached similar results in coding and categorization, which ensured the validity and reliability of the data. Finally, the data were coded by the researchers according to their purpose and, grouped into themes and interpreted when needed.

Findings and Interpretation

In this part of the investigation, the results of the investigation and comments related to the results are given.

In the first sub-question of the survey, Turkish and foreign students were asked, "What problems do you have in your school life with teachers, school administration, and friends?"

- a) Problems with teachers;

Table 2.

Problems Turkish and Foreign Students have with Teachers

| Turkish Students | f | Foreign Students | f |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| No/I do not have a problem | 7 | No/I do not have a problem | 7 |
| Sometimes I have problems | 3 | I have language problems in understanding teachers | 2 |
| Some teachers are harsh | 2 | Teachers do not contact me | 1 |
| I cannot get answers to my questions | 1 | Sometimes they do not answer me because I am a foreign national | 1 |
| They are making fun of me | 1 | I lived in the lower classes | 1 |
| I have difficulty explaining myself | 1 | | |

Table 2 shows the opinions of Turkish and foreign students about the problems they have with teachers. By examining the table, it can be seen that the most frequently expressed opinion of both Turkish (f=7) and foreign (f=7) students are "No, I do not have a problem". It was found that this opinion is followed by "Sometimes I have problems" (f=2) for the Turkish students and "I have problems understanding the teachers" (f=2) for the foreign students. From the table, it can be seen that Turkish and foreign students have different opinions in addition to the mentioned views. It is noteworthy that both Turkish and foreign students generally do not have problems with teachers. This is significant in that the absence of problems with teachers may have a positive effect on students' liking for the subject and consequently on their academic success. On the other hand, the fact that foreign students raise language and communication problems with teachers may be due to the fact that some foreign students have difficulties in learning Turkish despite their efforts because, for example, they cannot communicate with the people around them.

The following examples can be given for the direct views of the Turkish students who participated in the research. "No, I do not have any problem. We get along pretty well. Because teachers generally get along well with students who are interested in teaching and do not have problems with talking." (S1), "Sometimes I find it difficult to explain myself to my teachers. I think they hinder our questions to process the lesson quickly. It bothers me that some teachers are strict all the time to keep order. (S3)". Examples of direct opinions of foreign students are as follows, "I have. I have a language problem. Sometimes I can not understand what the teacher is saying..." (FS1), "...Some teachers sometimes do not give me the right to speak because I am a foreigner (FS8)."

- b) Problems with school administration;

Table 3.

Problems Turkish and Foreign Students have with School Administration

| Turkish Students | f | Foreign Students | f |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| No/I do not have a problem | 8 | No/I do not have a problem | 9 |
| Some rules of the school administration are strict and wrong | 1 | They do not listen to me | 1 |
| Sometimes they are harsh on discipline | 1 | | |

Table 3 shows the opinions of Turkish and foreign students about the problems they've with school administration. From the table, it can be seen that both Turkish (f=8) and foreign (f=9) students mostly expressed the opinion "No, I do not have a problem". In addition, it can be deduced that school administrators generally display a positive attitude toward students. This could be due to the fact that in recent years, more and more administrators have completed postgraduate education in education management, which has led to their Professional development through in-service training and seminars, especially in the field of education management. However, both Turkish and foreign students have some, albeit minor, problems with school administration. This could be due to the administrators' heavy workload and their lower foreign language skills (e.g., English, Arabic, and Persian), which could affect their ability to interact appropriately with students.

The following examples can be given for the direct views of the Turkish students who participated in the research: "I do not have a problem with the school administration..." (S4), "I think some rules of the administration are unnecessarily strict and wrong. I think that these rules for students who cause problems restrict the rights of well-behaved students" The following examples can be given about the direct opinions of the foreign students: "They know me. They treat me well. I haven't had any problems yet. When I ask a question, I get the answer. When I've problems with my friends, they treat us the same." (FS2), "I'd a problem. When my Iraqi friend was rude to me, I told the school principal. But he didn't take care of my problem. My Iraqi friend lied even though I told the truth. But the school administration didn't listen to me and believed his words. (FS7)".

c) Problems with friends;

Table 4.

Problems of Turkish and Foreign Students with Friends

| Turkish Students | f | Foreign Students | f |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| No/I do not have a problem | 4 | No/I do not have a problem | 6 |
| Rude behavior/using slang | 4 | Rude behavior/using slang | 4 |
| Communication problems | 2 | Exclusion | 1 |
| Behavioral problems | 1 | Disturbance in lessons | 1 |
| Non-compliance with school rules | 1 | | |

The opinions of Turkish and foreign students about the problems they have with their friends are shown in Table 4. The table shows that Turkish students most frequently expressed the opinion "No, I do not have a problem" (f=4) and "Rude behavior/use of slang words" (f=4), while foreign students most frequently expressed the opinion "No, I have no problem" (f=6) and then "Rude behavior/use of slang words" (f=4). It can be interpreted that it is crucial for both academic and emotional development of Turkish and foreign students that they do not have major problems with their friends. Good friendships can contribute to students' retention and potentially improve their academic performance. However, it is noted that both Turkish and foreign students sometimes have different problems with their friends. This could be due to, among other things, the different sociocultural backgrounds of the students and possibly insufficient rules for student discipline.

The following examples reflect the direct views of Turkish students who participated in the research, "I have problems with my friends. Sometimes my friend shows a physical behavior that I do not want. When I do that, the discussion starts..." (S6), "They use a lot of slang. They think swearing is funny. ...These efforts to get attention make me very uncomfortable." (S3), "No, I do not have any problems..."(S8). Regarding the direct opinions of the foreign students, the following examples can be given: "No problem. They accept me in their games. They help me in my classes. But my friend

named ... excludes me when I play bad games." (YU10), "I have problems with my table neighbor. He disturbs me in class ..." (YU5), "Sometimes I live. For example, some students throw my pencil case on the floor and run away ..."

In the second sub-problem of the survey, Turkish students were asked the following questions, "Do you have problems with foreign students? If yes, what kind of problems do you have?" The foreign students were asked the following questions, "Do you have problems with Turkish students? If yes, what kind of problems do you have?"

Table 5.

Problems that Turkish and Foreign Students have with Each Other

| Problems Turkish Students Experience with Foreign Students | f | Problems of Foreign Students with Turkish Students | f |
|---|----------|---|----------|
| No/I do not have a problem | 5 | No/I do not have a problem | 7 |
| Communication problems | 4 | Rude behavior/using slang | 3 |
| Rude behavior/using slang | 3 | Exclusion | 2 |
| Excessive noise | 2 | Communication problems | 1 |
| Disruption of the lesson | 1 | | |
| Trust issue | 1 | | |
| Cultural differences | 1 | | |

Table 5 shows the opinions of Turkish and foreign students about the problems they have with each other. In the table, it was found that both Turkish (f=5) and foreign (f=7) students most frequently expressed the opinion "No/I do not have a problem ". The reason for the frequent statement of Turkish and foreign students that they have no problems with each other could be that the foreign students have been in Turkey for at least two years and therefore they have gotten to know each other. On the other hand, some Turkish and foreign students express their opinions about each other, especially regarding rude behavior, the use of slang, and communication problems. These problems may arise due to the cultural and linguistic differences between students. Consequently, some foreign students feel excluded and marginalized because Turkish students do not include them due to these negative attitudes. On the other hand, Turkish students may have difficulty feeling safe or comfortable because foreign students speak loudly and act casually. These issues are seen as significant problems for the Turkish education system that, if not addressed, could negatively impact educational effectiveness and efficiency.

The following examples can reflect the direct views of the Turkish students who participated in the research: "I usually do not have any problems. They have fun and spend time together. But they yell a lot." (S10), "I do not feel safe. I am afraid when a refugee passes by me... It is very bad that they shout, speak freely and are not ashamed..." (S3), "No, I do not have any problems. The way we get along with the Turkish students, they treat us well and we treat them well and respectfully." (S8). Regarding the direct opinions of the foreign students, the following examples can be given: "I do not have any problems. I do not communicate with strangers. I do not have any problem with my acquaintances either." (FS2), "Yes, I have problems. They come and hit me and run away... Some also swear..." (FS7), "...They do not play games with me, especially in gym class..." (FS3).

In the third sub-problem of the study, the Turkish students were asked the following question: "What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being in a class with foreign students?" The question to the foreign students was, "What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of being in a class with Turkish students?"

Table 6.

Opinions of Turkish and Foreign Students about Being in the Same Class

| Opinions of Turkish Students on Being in the Same Class as Foreign Students | | | | Opinions of Foreign Students on Being in the same Class as Turkish Students | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | Theme | | f | Theme | | f | |
| A d v a n t a g e s | Communication | Communicating with different nationalities | 2 | Language and Culture | Learning Turkish | 7 | |
| | | Getting to know different cultures | 1 | | Learning a different culture | 7 | |
| | Language and Culture | Teaching/learning our language to different people | 1 | Academic Achievement | Learn lessons better | 6 | |
| | | | | | Behavior | No rude behavior | 1 |
| | | | | | Developing empathy | 1 | |
| | | | | | Friendship development | 1 | |
| D i s a d v a n t a g e s | Communication | Having communication problems | 5 | | Having rude behavior problems | 3 | |
| | Behavior | Experiencing fights/rude behavior issues | 3 | Behavior | Disruption of the lesson | 2 | |
| | | Unwanted behaviors | 2 | | Exclusion | 2 | |
| | Academic achievement | Slowing down of the lesson | 3 | Communication | Having communication problems | 1 | |
| | | A decline in academic achievement | 1 | | Language and Culture | Inability to learn their own culture | 1 |
| | Physical space | Crowding in classrooms | 2 | Other | | I wish we could go back to our country | 1 |

The views of Turkish and foreign students on the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a class are shown in Table 6. Examining the table, it can be seen that the most frequently expressed opinion of Turkish students on the advantages is "Communicating with other nationalities" (f=2), and the most frequently expressed opinion of foreign students is "Learning Turkish" (f=7) under the theme of language and culture. As for the disadvantages, it can be seen that the Turkish students' most frequently expressed opinion is "Experiencing communication problems" (f=5) under the topic of communication, while the foreign students' most frequently expressed opinion is "Experiencing problems with rude behavior" (f=3) under the topic of behavior. Looking at the table, it is clear that Turkish and foreign students have different views about being in a class together. In general, Turkish students seem to see the disadvantages rather than the advantages. It can be inferred that Turkish students do not like being in a class with foreign students, possibly because they have cultural problems with them. Conversely, foreign students predominantly comment on the advantages of being in the same class with Turkish students. This is probably due to the fact that the foreign students believe that they can learn the Turkish language and culture faster and improve their academic performance in a class with Turkish students.

The following examples can be given for the direct views of Turkish students who participated in the research: "Because our friends are of different nationalities, we can communicate with different nationalities." (S4), "We can learn their language by asking them questions. We also teach them our

language. So our language will be widely used." (S9), "I think they have no advantages, only disadvantages. If we do something wrong, there will be arguments and they will get our teachers in trouble." (S2) said, "There is no big advantage. They just sit there quietly. They can take some of our friends' stuff without permission and they do not speak Turkish." (S10). The following examples can be given for the direct opinions of foreign students, "I understand the lessons better. My Turkish is getting better." (FS4), "...I get to know Turkish culture and traditions better..." (FS5), "...My friendship bonds are developing... They understand better why I came from Iraq. In fact, Turks understand us better than Iraqis." (FS6), "Sometimes they are rude to me. Sometimes they say things like why did you come to our country?" (FS9), "They make a lot of noise, sometimes they exclude me." (FS1).

In the fourth sub-problem of the study, Turkish students were asked the following question: "What do you think education should be like for Turkish students in Turkey?" The question asked of the foreign students was, "What do you think education should be like for foreign students in Turkey?"

Table 7.

Recommendations of Turkish and Foreign Students Regarding Education for Foreign Students in Turkey

| Turkish Students | | Foreign Students | |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Theme | f | Theme | f |
| Language and Culture | Turkish should be taught | Language and Culture | Turkish should be taught |
| | Turkish culture should be taught | | Turkish culture should be taught |
| | Families should be given cultural education | | Turkish education should be given to our families as |
| Physical space | Separate schools should be opened | Academic achievement | Schools should have interpreters |
| | Separate classes should be opened | | There should be books in different languages |
| | Additional books should be given (Arabic, Persian, etc.) | | The same education given to Turkish students should be provided |
| Academic achievement | Turkish students should be given the same education | Other | Books should have reading texts that describe our problems |
| | Vocational training should be given to those with low academic success | | History lessons should be expanded |
| | Foreign teachers should teach | | Announcements on boards must also be in different languages |
| Other | Information in foreign languages should be included on the boards. | | The environment should be introduced |
| | Behavior training should be given | | School rules should be taught |

Table 7 shows the views of Turkish and foreign students on the education of foreign students. When looking at the table, it is noticeable that the suggestions of the Turkish and foreign students are grouped under different themes. The most frequently expressed suggestion of both Turkish (f=7) and foreign students (f=10) is "Turkish should be taught" under the topic of language and culture. From the table, it can be seen that despite the provision of Turkish language courses for foreign students, the efforts have not reached the desired level. Turkish and foreign students have different recommendations on different topics. The repeated recommendation that Turkish culture should be taught may indicate that foreign students have difficulty adapting to Turkish culture. Also, the recommendation to provide books in different languages might be due to the fact that foreign

students encounter difficulties in learning Turkish. The desire of Turkish students to support foreign students, especially in the areas of language and culture, could indicate that Turkish students have significant problems with foreign students in these areas. In this context, it can be stated that the responsible institutions, especially the Ministry of National Education (MEB) and non-governmental organizations, should pay more attention to the education of foreigners in learning Turkish language and culture.

The following examples can reflect the direct views of the Turkish students who participated in the research: *"Foreign students should be taught the words that we use frequently, if not all Turkish words. Students who want to learn can be put in mixed classes, the other students should go to a separate class."* (S1), *"...If it were me, I would teach Turkish first..."* (S8), *"They should go to another school. They should only be in the schools they are in. Because first of all, they should get Turkish education..."* (S2), *"Foreign students can be given a course to learn our language. You can bring teachers to them who know their language, you can give them special books... New schools can be opened for foreign students."* Regarding the direct opinions of the foreign students, the following examples can be given: *"Before coming to school, you should learn Turkish, the environment we live in, rules, culture and traditions..."* (FS2), *"...families should also get language courses. Because my family has problems when they go out. Without me or my brother, my family has problems with those outside... We can understand each other better if there are reading texts describing the problems of foreign students... History classes should be expanded. The meanings of important words in Turkish, Arabic and Persian can be written on the school blackboards. School rules can also be written in different languages and posted on the school boards."* (FS6), *"... There should be translation books (like Arabic, and Persian) in addition to Turkish books. If we do not understand Turkish, we look at these books. There can be interpreters in the schools... Our parents can also be taught in the schools."* (FS10).

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

In this part of the study, the results, discussions, and suggestions related to the findings are presented.

In the first sub-problem of the study, the opinions of Turkish and foreign students about the problems they have with their teachers, administrators and friends are included.

The results show that both Turkish and foreign students generally do not have problems with their teachers, although they may have problems with language, communication, and behavior (see Table 2). In their article study, Çerçi and Canalıcı (2019) concluded that Syrian students generally communicate positively with their teachers, and they agreed with the results of the study. Considering the significant effect of students' attitudes toward their teachers on the learning process (Miller, Thompson & Frankiewicz, 1975), this can be considered a positive result. This is because it is known that teachers' attitudes and behaviors in the classroom have many effects on the learning climate, student's motivation, and student's academic, and social development (Sezer, 2017). It is known that when a teacher cares and acts sincerely, a student feels safe and this will increase his emotional development and learning success (Akbaşlı, Kösece & Balta Uçan, 2018). In this case, it can be said that Turkish and foreign students studying in Turkey generally do not have problems with their teachers, which will have a positive impact on their education. On the other hand, it was found in the study that some Turkish students expressed that the teachers are strict with them. This situation shows that the teacher has difficulties managing a class with students from different cultures and countries and resorts to undemocratic means. It is known that students cannot express themselves freely in the classroom if there is no democratic learning environment (Erden, 2007). For this reason, it can be said that the harsh treatment of students by some teachers hurts the effectiveness of teaching.

The research shows that both Turkish and foreign students generally do not have significant problems with school administration, despite occasional behavior and communication problems (see Table 3). School administrators who aim at students' academic and holistic development should help both students and teachers achieve these goals, encourage them to succeed, and provide them with the necessary opportunities (Akbaşlı et al., 2018). The fact that both Turkish, and foreign students have

mostly positive opinions about the school administration can be interpreted to mean that the school administration in the surveyed schools supports the students in all aspects and creates a positive school climate. It can be said that this situation is important in terms of education. This is because it is known that a healthy school climate has a positive impact not only on administrators, and teachers; but also on students' academic performance (Dağlı, 2018).

To the first sub-problem, although Turkish, and foreign students indicated that they generally did not have problems with their friends, it was noted that some of their friends were particularly guilty of rude behavior and the use of slang words. Demirtaş and Pehlivan (2020), in their study of secondary and high schools, found that secondary school students had problems with slang words and rude behavior in their schools; Baysal and Çimşir (2020), on the other hand, in their study of foreign students studying in elementary schools in Turkey, concluded that they experienced problems such as violence and hitting, rude behavior, cursing, and exclusion, and their results are similar to the results of this study. At this point, it can be stated that there are different problems among students in schools from time to time. This is because it can be found that positive relationships between students have a positive impact on school climate and student achievement. On the other hand, there are studies in the literature (Doğan & Özdemir, 2019; Kiroğlu, Kesten & Elma, 2010) that found that foreign students do not harm school climate and there are no problems.

The second sub-problem of the study is about the problems that Turkish and foreign students have with each other. Although both Turkish and foreign students often consider that they do not have problems with each other, it was found that some students stated that they have problems with each other, such as rude behavior, swearing, and communication problems. In his dissertation study, Özdemir (2016) found that although Turkish and foreign students generally use positive expressions for each other, Turkish students insult and exclude foreign students. This is consistent with the findings of the study. Çerçi and Canalıcı (2019), in their study on Syrian students, found that Syrian students have some communication problems with Turkish students; Biçer and Özaltun (2020), on the other hand, supported the research findings by concluding that Turkish students felt disturbed by Syrian students' behaviors such as fighting, verbal teasing, and noise in the classroom. It can be considered positive that Turkish and foreign students say that they generally do not have problems with each other. In this case, it can be said that students accept and adapt to each other, especially culturally. On the other hand, communication problems can be seen as the reason why Turkish and foreign students have different problems with each other from time to time. It can be assumed that students' inability to fully understand each other or express themselves when necessary causes various problems such as slang words, rude behavior, and exclusion.

The advantages and disadvantages of having Turkish and foreign students in the same class formed the third sub-problem of the study. Regarding the Turkish students being in the same class as foreign students, it was concluded that they express disadvantages such as communication problems, quarrels and undesirable behavior, slowing down of teaching and overcrowding of classes. On the other hand, it was found that the foreign students generally mentioned advantages such as learning Turkish language, learning about other cultures, and better understanding of the classes (see Table 6). While the result is positive for the foreign students, it makes the Turkish students think. This is because it shows that Turkish students are generally not satisfied with being in a class with foreign students. The reason for this could be that Turkish students face academic, disciplinary and communication problems and that classrooms are overcrowded due to the presence of foreign students. It can be inferred that the academic performance of Turkish students is negatively affected. Biçer and Özaltun (2020) concluded in their study that Turkish students encounter various problems (speaking Arabic, not understanding Turkish, etc.) when communicating with Syrian students. Avcı (2019) found that students' language problems lead to communication problems with peers, which in turn leads to behavioral problems; Börü and Boyacı (2016), on the other hand, concluded that refugees have language and communication problems. At this point, it can be said that some foreign students cannot express themselves from time to time due to language problems and therefore cause behavioral problems. It can be assumed that this causes Turkish students to consider it a disadvantage to be in a class with foreign students. It can be said that, in general, it is beneficial for foreign students to learn Turkish language and culture thanks to Turkish students, to increase their academic success and to be in a class with Turkish students. On the other hand, they may have found it a disadvantage that some

foreign students have problems and are excluded from the same class where Turkish students are, especially because of language problems. In his dissertation, Muđlu (2022) concluded that students with immigrant backgrounds have problems with communication and interaction with peers, exclusion, and cultural differences, and this is consistent with current research findings.

In the fourth sub-problem of the study, the views of Turkish and foreign students about the education of foreign students were discussed. About the research results, it was found that the opinions of Turkish and foreign students were collected under different topics and it was concluded that the most frequently repeated opinions were the views that Turkish and Turkish culture should be taught under the topic of language and culture for both Turkish and foreign students. In addition, it was stated that there should be separate schools and classrooms for Turkish students in terms of physical space, that there should be books in different languages in terms of academic success for foreign students, and that families should receive Turkish education in terms of language and culture. Yıldız-Yılmaz and Demir (2021), in their study on classroom teachers, came to conclusions such as establishing separate classes for the education of foreign students, providing Turkish preschool education and literacy, and providing adult education for parents. Takır and Özerem (2019), in turn, concluded in their study on foreign students' problems that deputy principals and guidance counselors should provide compulsory Turkish classes for foreign students. It can be inferred that administrators and teachers also have similar suggestions for the education of foreign students. Muđlu (2022), on the other hand, in his dissertation study dealing with the educational problems of foreign students, shows similarities with the research findings by concluding that language courses should be offered to immigrants and parent education should be strengthened to solve the educational problems of foreign students. It can be seen that it is important for the families of foreign students to communicate with the school to solve their educational problems. The fact that some students express that their families should also be educated in Turkey can be seen as a clear indication of this. It can be seen that this situation is highlighted in the proposals of teachers and administrators for the education of foreign students in various studies. For example, in the study of Yıldız-Yılmaz and Demir (2021), it is stated that classroom teachers have language and communication problems with the parents of foreign students and that their parents should receive adult education; Güngör and Şenel (2018) stated that families' participation in Turkish language courses aims to solve the problems encountered in educating foreign students; whereas Kandemir and Aydın (2020) concluded in their proposed solutions for educating foreign students that administrators and teachers should provide family and language education. Topsakal, Merey and Keçe (2013) also recommend that foreign students and families should be subjected to special integration programs to adapt to the country in which they live. When reviewing the research findings and relevant literature, it is clear that the overall findings are similar and emphasize the importance of language and culture-oriented programs for foreign students. While this perspective is considered important, it is also a cause for concern. Despite well-intentioned efforts to teach Turkish to foreign students, the frequency of language-related problems suggests that the desired level of language proficiency has not been achieved. This situation could lead to cultural conflicts between foreign and Turkish students during their stay in Turkey, which could have several negative consequences, including possible impacts on the quality and efficiency of education.

In the context of the current study's findings, recommendations can be made such as giving importance to Turkish culture and Turkish language teaching for foreign students, providing various courses, especially language courses, for the families of foreign students, including activities that ensure the integration of Turkish and foreign students in schools, and in-service courses, especially communication courses for teachers and administrators.

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