



Title:

Lead paragraphs of French and Turkish news items: Insights for French language learners

Author(s):

Mustafa Mavaşođlu 

To cite this article:

Mavaşođlu, M. (2024). Lead paragraphs of French and Turkish news items: Insights for French language learners. *Educational Research & Implementation*, 1(1), 41-50.

<https://doi.org/10.14527/edure.2024.02>

[Article Reuse Information](#)

© 2024 Pegem Akademi A.Ş. All rights reserved. This article published by EduRE is released under the CC BY-NC-ND license.



Lead paragraphs of French and Turkish news items: Insights for French language learners

Mustafa Mavaşođlu ^{*a} 



Article Information	Abstract
<p>DOI: 10.14527/edure.2024.03</p> <p>Article History: Received 15 December 2023 Revised 21 January 2024 Accepted 25 January 2024 Online 26 January 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Lead paragraphs; News items; French language teaching.</p> <p>Article Type: Review</p>	<p>This study compared French and Turkish news items related to road accidents, specifically focusing on lead paragraphs. It aimed to provide insights for Turkish speakers learning French about reading comprehension and written expression at A2 and B1 levels. Data were collected from five newspapers in each country. French news items and Turkish news items showed similarities in word count but differed significantly in sentence and clause structures. French paragraphs tended to have longer single sentences with fewer clauses, while Turkish paragraphs had shorter sentences with more clauses. The study also explored the inclusion of informational components in lead paragraphs, such as accident scenes, types of vehicles, information about victims, circumstances of the accident, and casualty data. Results revealed variations between the two languages, emphasizing the importance of including information about casualties in lead paragraphs for effective communication in both languages.</p>



Introduction

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages requires language learners to work with news items (faits divers) within the scope of speech acts of talking about past events at A2 and B1 levels (European Council 2001). In the process of learning a foreign language, learners are asked to convey their past positive and negative experiences in accordance with the authentic styles and structures of target languages. These skills are considered as to be acquired and are included in foreign language teaching syllabuses. At these levels, learners have to demonstrate the skills of reading, understanding and writing news items (raconter un fait divers) in the context of talking about past events.

Strong texts should contain elements that enable effective reading/writing both at the levels of reception and production. These elements, called paratextual elements, consist of main headings, subheadings, lead paragraphs, images, photos and captions. News item texts are not immune to this either.

The current study aims to compare news items in French and Turkish newspapers in terms of lead paragraphs, and, in connection with news items, to inform Turkish speakers of French learners about the skills to be demonstrated within the scope of reading comprehension and written expression at A2 and B1 levels. In line with this purpose, the study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. To what extent are French and Turkish news items similar in terms of their use of lead paragraphs (word numbers, sentence numbers, and clause numbers)?
2. Are lead paragraphs in French and Turkish news items similar in terms of presenting basic informational contents of texts?

* Corresponding author e-mail: mmavas@cu.edu.tr

^a Faculty of Education, Cukurova University, Türkiye

News Items

Increasingly appearing in both newspapers and newsletters, news items make their presence felt. In parallel with their high visibility in the media, they continue to be the focus of attention in some research fields, especially linguistics, sociology, literature and communication (for some linguistic studies, see Auclair, 1970; Barthes, 1964; Révaz, 1997). Studies on the use of news items in the field of foreign language teaching are also increasing (see, for example, Özçelebi 2014).

Many definitions have been made for news items so far. Larousse, for example, defines news items (*fait divers*) as "narrow-scope events that belong to daily life". Petit Robert defines them as "events of the day that have their own topic in the press, such as accidents, crimes, etc., with no correlation between them". Barthes (1964) defines texts of news items as immanent, closed structure that contains all the information about events covered in the press.

News items texts can be organized as simple or complex texts. The length of texts is effective in this organization. These texts generally consist of three parts: introduction, narrative core and closing (Adam, 1999). In the introduction section, where the event is presented or its summary is given, it is possible to find answers to questions who, what, where and when. In the narrative core section, where details are presented, events are generally narrated chronologically. Again, in this section, some other questions are added to those whose answers were sought in the previous section: how and why. In the closing section, where the news text ends, the situation after the event and the results of the event are usually given (Adam, 1999).

Paratextual Elements

Gérard Genette used the concept of transtextuality to describe any exchange between two works. Paratextuality, along with hypertextuality, architextuality, métatextuality, intertextuality, is one of the types of transtextual relations put forward by Genette. (Genette 1979, 1982, 1987). According to him, paratexts are secondary textual elements that consist of headings, subheadings, prefaces, epilogues, pictures, captions, warnings, notes. These elements remain outside a text, accompany the main text and bring it to attention. Genette defines the qualities of paratextual elements, which are of great importance in the process of making sense of, interpreting and analyzing a text, in terms of their values and functions: "spatial (where)", "temporal (when)", "manner (how)", "pragmatic and functional "(to what, from whom, to whom)". Lead paragraphs, along with headings, subheadings, pictures, captions, also stand out as paratextual elements in press texts. The current study included only lead paragraphs among paratextual elements.

Lead Paragraphs

The Dictionary of the French Academy defines lead paragraph as *short introductory paragraph which covers the body of a press article*. The Dictionaries of Larousse and Petit Robert give similar definitions for the word; *brief text which introduces a newspaper or magazine article* (Larousse) and *short text that covers and presents a newspaper article after the heading* (Petit Robert).

As can be seen from the dictionary definitions above, lead paragraph is a generally short text which is located just after the heading, and usually presented in larger and/or bold letters. It precedes the body of a press article and aims to encourage reading by summarizing the main elements of the text.

Method

Data Collection

The corpus of the study consisted of traffic accident news. Traffic accidents are one of the most frequently covered news items in newspapers in Turkey and France, as in many countries. In addition, compared to other themes reported in news items, traffic accident news is more international in nature and therefore more suitable for comparisons. Five newspapers each from Turkey and France were determined to create the corpus. The internet versions of the newspapers in question, which were found to contain more numerous and more diverse types of traffic accident news compared to other newspapers, were included in the corpus. Traffic accident news obtained were brought together to form a pool and 100 of them were randomly selected for analysis.

Data Analysis

Lead paragraphs of news items about road accidents were first compared in terms of the number of words, clauses and sentences they contained. As previously mentioned above, an ideally constructed lead paragraph is expected to contain a brief summary of the text it is related to. This summary should include main informational contents of the text. In a previous study on news items about traffic accidents (Author), five informational components were observed to be frequently carried into paragraphs in both Turkish and French news texts: accident scenes, types of vehicles involved, information about victims, circumstances of the accident and data of casualties. So, news items texts of the current study were then examined to determine whether these informational textual components were moved into lead paragraphs.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent are French and Turkish news items similar in terms of their use of lead paragraphs (word numbers, sentence numbers, and clause numbers)?

Lead paragraphs of French and Turkish news items (hereafter respectively LPOFNI and LPOtNI) were examined in terms of the numbers of words, sentences and clauses they contained. As can be seen in Table 1, LPOtNI contained three times as many clauses and two times as many sentences than LPOFNI although the numbers of words used were similar in French news items (FNI) and Turkish news items (TNI).

Table 1

Average numbers of words, sentences and clauses in French and Turkish news items.

	Word numbers	Sentence numbers	Clause numbers
French news items	31.50	1.50	.50
Turkish news items	34.00	3.25	1.50

This result shows that long single sentences and fewer clauses were used in the paragraphs in FNI, while shorter sentences and more clauses were preferred in the paragraphs in TNI.

L'accident s'est déroulé ce dimanche matin dans la métropole lilloise entre un véhicule de la police nationale et une autre voiture, dont les occupants « sont défavorablement connus de la police pour alcool, usage de stupéfiants et outrages » (FNI 1-number of sentence : 1 ; number of clause : 1).

(The accident took place this Sunday morning in the Lille metropolis between a national police vehicle and another car, whose occupants “are unfavorably known to the police for alcohol, use of narcotics and insults”)

Mardin'de valilik ve üniversite çalışanlarını taşıyan servis aracı kontrolden çıkarak devrildi. Meydana gelen kazada 6 kişi hayatını kaybetti, 5 kişi yaralandı. Servisin valilik ve üniversite öğrencilerini taşıdığı öğrenildi (TNI 1-number of sentence: 3; number of clause: 3).

(In Mardin, a shuttle vehicle carrying governorship and university staff went out of control and overturned. 6 people died and 5 people were injured in the accident. It was learned that the shuttle transported the governor's office and university students)

Research Question 2

Are lead paragraphs in French and Turkish news items similar in terms of presenting basic informational contents of texts?

LPOFNI and LPOtNI were analyzed to see whether and which important textual contents were moved into lead paragraphs. As can be observed in Table 2, information about casualties was the most frequently textual item carried into lead paragraphs in both FNI and TNI.

Table 2

Average numbers of basic informational contents of texts in French and Turkish news items.

		Scenes	Vehicles	Victims	Circumstances	Casualties
French news items	%	65.00	37.50	72.50	40.00	72.50
	\bar{X}	(13.00)	(7.50)	(14.5)	(8)	(14.50)
Turkish news items	%	97.50	57.50	40.00	65.00	97.50
	\bar{X}	(19.50)	(11.50)	(8.00)	(13.00)	(19.50)

Apparue durant la saison 11 du télé-crochet américain diffusée en 2012 sur la Fox, Haley Smith est *décédée* samedi dernier à la suite d'une sortie de route en moto (FNI 1)

(Appeared during season 11 of the American talent show broadcast in 2012 on Fox, Haley Smith *died* last Saturday following a motorcycle accident)

Quarante personnes ont été *tuées* et une centaine *blessées* à Kaffrine lors d'un accident entre deux bus. Un deuil national de trois jours a été décrété (FNI 2)

(Forty people were *killed* and a hundred *injured* in Kaffrine during an accident between two buses. A three-day national mourning was declared)

Terrible accident de la route en Corse, près d'Ajaccio, mardi soir. Le bilan est de *trois morts* et *quatre blessés*, dont deux graves (FNI 3)

(Terrible road accident in Corsica, near Ajaccio, Tuesday evening. The toll is *three dead* and *four injured*, including two serious)

Un homme est *mort* dimanche dans un accident de la route, sa femme est *en urgence absolue* alors qu'un nouvel accident s'est produit dans la même commune ce lundi (FNI 4)

(A man *died* on Sunday in a road accident, his wife is *in absolute emergency* while a new accident occurred in the same town on Monday)

Un dramatique accident de la circulation a fait deux *morts* dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche sur le pont de Dreuilhe, un secteur connu pour être dangereux (FNI 5)

(A dramatic traffic accident left two *dead* during the night from Saturday to Sunday on the Dreuilhe bridge, an area known to be dangerous)

Maltepe sahil yolunda seyir halindeki otomobil, aynı yönde giden otomobile çarptıktan sonra kaldırıma çıkarak reklam tabelasının direğine vurdu. Kazada 1'i ağır 2 kişi *yaralandı* (TNI 1)

(The car traveling on the Maltepe coastal road hit the pavement and hit the pole of the advertising sign after hitting the car going in the same direction. 2 people were *injured*, 1 seriously, in the accident)

Bursa'nın Yıldırım ilçesinde kayganlaşan yolda kontrolden çıkıp otomobile, oto yıkama servisinin kapısına ve otobüs durağına çarparak ikiye bölünen hafif ticari araçtaki 2 kişi *hayatını kaybetti*, sürücü *yaralandı* (TNI 2)

(In Bursa's Yıldırım district, *two people died* and the driver was *injured* in the light commercial vehicle, which went out of control on the slippery road, crashed into a car, the door of a car wash service and a bus stop and broke into two)

Kuzey Marmara Otoyolu'nda biri şehirlerarası yolcu otobüsü olmak üzere üç aracın karıştığı zincirleme kazada *11 kişi yaralanırken*, bir çocuk da şok geçirdi. Yaralıları sıkıştıkları yerden kurtaran itfaiye erleri kazazedeleri sakinleştirmeye çalıştı (TNI 3)

(In the chain accident involving three vehicles, one of which was an intercity passenger bus, on the Northern Marmara Highway, *11 people were injured* and a child was shocked. Firefighters rescued the injured from where they were stuck and tried to calm them down)

İstanbul Kâğıthane'de TEM Otoyolu'nda trafik kazası meydana geldi. 2 kişi *yaralandı*. Kazada yaralanan sürücüler 112 Acil Sağlık ekiplerince hastaneye kaldırıldı (TNI 4)

(A traffic accident occurred on the TEM Highway in Kağıthane, Istanbul. *2 people were injured*. The drivers injured in the accident were taken to hospital by 112 Emergency Health teams)

Manisa'nın Turgutlu ilçesinde bugün sabah saatlerinde meydana gelen trafik kazasında *1 kişi öldü 1 kişi de ağır yaralandı*. Polis ekipleri, kazayla ilgili soruşturma başlattı (TNI 5)

(*One person died and one person was seriously injured* in a traffic accident that occurred in the Turgutlu district of Manisa this morning. Police squad has started an investigation about accident)

While approximately 3/4 of LPoFNI (72.50%) contained information about victims, this was the least carried informational content into paragraphs in TNI (40.00%).

Vraisemblablement à cause d'un problème technique, *un chauffeur de taxi* a perdu le contrôle de son véhicule dans le 13e arrondissement (FN1)

(Presumably due to a technical problem, *a taxi driver* lost control of his vehicle in the 13th arrondissement)

Le coureur de 51 ans, vainqueur pendant sa longue carrière de certaines des plus grandes classiques, avait été renversé par un camion en novembre 2022. *L'homme* qui le conduisait avait pris la fuite (FNI 2)

(*The 51-year-old rider, winner* of some of the greatest classics during his long career, was hit by a truck in November 2022. *The man* who was driving it fled)

Une jeune femme, mère de famille, qui rentrait du bal masqué de son village a été mortellement *percutée* par un automobiliste. Le conducteur du véhicule, *âgé de 45 ans*, a aussi perdu la vie dans ce choc ultra-violent (FN3)

(*A young woman, mother*, who was returning from her village's masked ball was fatally hit by a motorist. The driver of the vehicle, *aged 45*, also lost *his* life in this ultra-violent collision)

Un homme de 46 ans aurait été *percuté* par un ou plusieurs véhicules alors qu'il se rendait à 5 heures du matin à son travail dans la zone d'activité près de Reichstett (Bas-Rhin). La gendarmerie lance un appel à témoins (FN4)

(*A 46-year-old man* was allegedly hit by one or more vehicles while *he* was going to work at 5 a.m. in the activity zone near Reichstett (Bas-Rhin). The police are calling for witnesses)

Un Ariégeois de 28 ans a perdu la vie, ce vendredi, vers 14 heures, dans un accident de la circulation survenu à Montjoie-en-Couserans, en Ariège. Pour une raison indéterminée, *le conducteur* a perdu le contrôle de son véhicule avant de percuter un rocher situé sur le bas-côté (FN5)

(*A 28-year-old Ariège resident* lost *his* life this Friday, around 2 p.m., in a traffic accident in Montjoie-en-Couserans, in Ariège. For an undetermined reason, the driver lost control of his vehicle before hitting a rock located on the shoulder)

İzmir'in Konak ilçesinde polis aracının kaza yapması sonucu biri *kadın*, 2 polis memuru yaralandı. (TNI 1)

(*Two police officers, including a woman*, were injured after the accident of a police vehicle in Konak, Izmir)

Antalya'da kontrolden çıkan otomobil önce refüjdeki aydınlatma direğine çarptı, ardından karşı yöndeki otomobille kafa kafaya çarpıştı. Kazada kontrolden çıkan otomobildeki *iki genç* hayatını kaybederken, 3 kişi ise yaralandı (TNI 2)

(The car that went out of control in Antalya first hit the lighting pole on the median and then collided head-on with the car in the opposite direction. *Two young people* died and 3 people were injured in the car that went out of control in the accident)

Çorum'un Osmancık ilçesinde yolcu otobüsünün kamyonla çarpıştığı kazada *1 çocuk* öldü, 9 kişi yaralandı (TNI 3)

(*1 child* died and 9 people were injured in the accident in which a passenger bus collided with a truck in Çorum's Osmancık district)

Galatasaraylı *Barış Alper Yılmaz* Giresun'da trafik kazasına karıştı. Yıldız ismin aracı hasar aldı. Futbolcunun sağlık durumuyla ilgili herhangi bir sıkıntı bulunmuyor. Sarı-kırmızılı kulüpten konuyla ilgili açıklama geldi (TNI 5)

(Galatasaray player *Barış Alper Yılmaz* was involved in a traffic accident in Giresun. The football star's vehicle was damaged. There are no problems with the football player's health condition. A statement regarding the issue came from the yellow-red club)

Accident scenes emerged in almost all of LPoTNI (97.50%) and in approximately 2/3 of LPoFNI (65.00%).

La voiture, qui transportait cinq jeunes d'une vingtaine d'années, a percuté un arbre à *Villeneuve-la-Garenne* (FNI 1)

(The car, which was carrying five young people in their twenties, hit a tree in *Villeneuve-la-Garenne*)

Le monospace transportant neuf membres d'une même famille a pris feu avant d'effectuer une sortie de route, dans *la Drôme*. Une enquête a été ouverte pour déterminer les causes du sinistre (FNI 2)

(The minivan carrying nine members of the same family caught fire before leaving the road in *Drôme*. An investigation has been opened to determine the causes of the incident)

Au moins 77 personnes ont trouvé la mort dans un accident de la route survenu mardi en *Centrafrique entre Bambari et Ippy dans le centre du pays* (FNI 3)

(At least 77 people were killed in a road accident on Tuesday in *the Central African Republic between Bambari and Ippy in the center of the country*)

Lundi soir, un homme de 42 ans est décédé à la suite d'un choc frontal entre son deux-roues et une voiture à *Grasse*, dans les *Alpes-Maritimes* (FNI 4).

(Monday evening, a 42-year-old man died following a head-on collision between his two-wheeler and a car in *Grasse*, in the *Alpes-Maritimes*)

Un homme, âgé de 44 ans, est décédé des suites de graves blessures dans un accident de voiture, le dimanche 9 juillet 2023, près de *Conilhac-Corbières*. Une enquête est en cours pour déterminer les causes de ce drame (FNI 5)

(A man, aged 44, died from serious injuries in a car accident on Sunday July 9, 2023, near *Conilhac-Corbières*. An investigation is underway to determine the causes of this tragedy)

Bolu Dađı Tüneli çıkışı TEM Otoyolunda 4 otomobil zincirleme trafik kazasına karıştı. Kazada yaralanan olmazken araçlar kullanılmaz hale geldi. Trafik ise bir saat boyunca kapandı (TNI 1)

(4 cars were involved in a chain traffic accident on the *TEM Highway, exit of the Bolu Mountain Tunnel*. No one was injured in the accident but the vehicles became unusable. Traffic was closed for an hour)

Niğde Otoyolu'nda otomobil ve şehirlerarası otobüslerin karıştığı zincirleme kaza meydana geldi. Vatandaşların ihbarı üzerine otoyola çok sayıda polis ve ambulans ekibi sevk edildi. Ekiplerin otoyoldaki çalışmaları devam ediyor (TNI 2)

(A chain accident occurred on *Niğde Highway*, involving cars and intercity buses. Upon citizens' notice, many police and ambulance teams were dispatched to the highway. Teams' work on the highway continues)

Acıpayam'da meydana gelen trafik kazasında otomobile motosiklet çarpıştı. 1 kişi hayatını kaybetti, 1 kişi de yaralandı (TNI 3)

(In the traffic accident that occurred in *Acıpayam*, a car and a motorcycle collided. 1 person died and 1 person was injured)

Tokat'ın Niksar ilçesinde trafik kazası meydana geldi. Yaşanan kazada biri polis memuru 6 kişi yaralandı (TNI 4)

(A traffic accident occurred in *Niksar district of Tokat*. 6 people, including a police officer, were injured in the accident)

Gaziantep'te iki aracın çarpışması sonucu araçlardan biri uçuruma uçtuktan sonra alev topuna döndü. Alev topuna dönen araçtaki bir kişi feci şekilde yanarak hayatını kaybederken kazada 5'i ağır toplam 8 kişi de yaralandı. Feci kazanın ardından aracın alev alev yandığı anlar ise cep telefonu kamerasına yansdı (TNI 5)

(As a result of the collision of two vehicles in *Gaziantep*, one of the vehicles flew into a cliff and turned into a ball of fire. One person in the vehicle was severely burned and died, while a total of 8 people were injured in the accident, 5 of them seriously. The moments when the car burst into flames after the terrible accident were captured on a mobile phone camera)

As for information about vehicles and circumstances, results indicated that they were the least included textual items in LPoFNI (respectively 37.50 % and 40.00%) while they appeared nearly in 2/3 of LPoTNI (respectively 57.50 % and 65.00 %).

La voiture est tombée dans un ravin avant de percuter violemment un arbre qui a tué les passagers sur le coup, selon les pompiers (FNI 1)

(The car fell into a ravine before violently hitting a tree which killed the passengers instantly, according to firefighters)

Selon la version donnée par la police et confirmée par le parquet, *le scooter aurait grillé un feu rouge et percuté un véhicule tiers*, tuant sur le coup le mineur, âgé de 17 ans, au guidon du deux-roues. Son passager, majeur, est mort à l'hôpital (FNI 2)

(According to the version given by the police and confirmed by the prosecution, the scooter ran a red light and hit a third party vehicle, instantly killing the minor, aged 17, on the handlebars of the two-wheeler. His passenger, an adult, died in hospital)

Un véhicule avec deux gendarmes à bord est violemment entré en collision avec un taxi lundi soir sur la zone aéroportuaire de Roissy. La voiture des militaires a fait plusieurs tonneaux. D'un côté comme de l'autre, les victimes s'en sortent miraculeusement. Certaines blessures sont graves mais aucun pronostic vital n'est engagé (FNI 3)

(A vehicle with two gendarmes on board violently collided with a taxi Monday evening in the Roissy airport area. The military car rolled over several times. On one side or the other, the victims escaped miraculously. Some injuries are serious but no life-threatening prognosis is involved)

L'enquête sur le corps d'un piéton de 21 ans retrouvé mort dimanche matin sur une route départementale des Vosges a permis d'identifier *une automobiliste octogénaire qui ne s'est pas arrêtée, pensant avoir percuté du gibier (FNI 4)*

(The investigation into the body of a 21-year-old pedestrian found dead Sunday morning on a departmental road in the Vosges made it possible to identify an octogenarian driver who did not stop, thinking she had hit a game animal)

Un homme de 61 ans a été gravement blessé *après avoir percuté une remorque* au guidon de sa moto, ce vendredi 28 avril. Il a été transporté en urgence à l'hôpital d'Auch (FNI 5)

(A 61-year-old man on his motorcycle was seriously injured after hitting a trailer this Friday, April 28. He was rushed to Auch hospital)

Ankara Kazan'da *otomobil ile kamyonun çarpışması* sonucu meydana gelen trafik kazasında 5 kişi yaralandı (TNI 1)

(5 people were injured in the traffic accident that occurred as a result of the collision between a car and a truck in Kazan, Ankara)

Tuzla TEM Otoyolu'nda alkollü ve ehliyetsiz bir sürücü, *otomobiliyle seyir halindeki tıra arkadan çarparak kaza yaptı. 4 aracın karıştığı kazada* yaralanan olmazken 2 araç hurdaya döndü. Alkollü ve ehliyetsiz sürücü polis merkezine götürüldü (TNI 2)

(On Tuzla TEM Highway, a drunk and unlicensed driver crashed his car into the back of a moving truck and had an accident. While no one was injured in the accident involving 4 vehicles, 2 vehicles were wrecked. The drunk and unlicensed driver was taken to the police station)

Avclar'da *kavşağa aynı anda gelen cip ile otomobil çarpıştı*. Güvenlik kamerasına da yansıyan kazada 2 kişi yaralandı (TNI 3)

(A jeep and a car collided at the intersection in Avclar. 2 people were injured in the accident that was captured on security camera)

Başakşehir'de hastane dönüşü bir araca, *kırmızı ışıkta geçtiği öne sürülen otomobil çarptı*. Kazanın etkisiyle araç takla attı ve 1 kişi öldü, 2 kişi de yaralandı (TNI 4)

(On the way back from the hospital in Başakşehir, a vehicle was hit by a car that allegedly went through a red light. Due to the impact of the accident, the vehicle rolled over and 1 person died and 2 people were injured)

İđdir’da otomobil ile motosikletin arpışması sonucu meydana gelen kazada 3 kiři hayatını kaybetti, 2 kiři yaralandı (TNI 5)

(3 people died and 2 people were injured in the accident that occurred after a *collision between a car and a motorcycle* in İđdir)

Discussion, Conclusion, and Suggestions

The study delves into the comparative analysis of lead paragraphs in French and Turkish news items, particularly focusing on the portrayal of traffic accidents. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages mandates language learners, at A2 and B1 levels, to engage with news items as part of speech acts concerning past events. This involves conveying both positive and negative past experiences in alignment with the linguistic styles and structures of the target language. The study, motivated by this framework, aims to shed light on the similarities and differences in lead paragraphs between French and Turkish news items, focusing on both structural elements and the inclusion of key informational contents.

The selection of traffic accident news as the corpus is justified by its frequent coverage in newspapers of both Turkey and France, making it a suitable thematic choice for cross-cultural comparisons. The internet versions of the selected newspapers were included in the corpus due to their richness in diverse traffic accident news compared to traditional print versions. The rigorous data collection process involved compiling a pool of traffic accident news, from which 100 samples were randomly selected for detailed analysis.

The comparative analysis of LPOFNI and LPO TNI revealed noteworthy distinctions. LPO TNI exhibited a higher number of clauses and sentences compared to LPO FNI, indicating a preference for shorter sentences with more clauses in Turkish news paragraphs, while French paragraphs tended to feature longer single sentences with fewer clauses. The examination of textual contents moved into lead paragraphs showed that information about casualties was consistently the most frequently included element in both French and Turkish lead paragraphs. However, there were variations in the inclusion of other informational components. Notably, information about victims was less frequently included in Turkish paragraphs compared to French paragraphs, while accident scenes were highly prevalent in Turkish lead paragraphs.

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the linguistic and structural differences between French and Turkish news items, specifically in the context of traffic accidents. The analysis of lead paragraphs revealed nuanced distinctions in sentence and clause structures, indicating variations in the preferred writing styles of the two languages. The prominence of information about casualties in lead paragraphs underscores its importance in news reporting, transcending linguistic and cultural differences.

The findings of this comparative study on lead paragraphs in French and Turkish news items, particularly focused on traffic accidents, have several implications for language learners, teachers, and those involved in cross-cultural communication.

The study highlights the importance of understanding and mastering the structural nuances of lead paragraphs in news reporting when learning a foreign language. Language learners, especially those transitioning between Turkish and French at A2 and B1 levels, should focus on not only vocabulary but also sentence and clause structures to effectively convey past events.

The variations observed in the inclusion of informational components, such as information about victims and accident scenes, underscore the need for cultural sensitivity in language learning. Learners are encouraged to delve into cultural contexts, understanding which elements are more prevalent and expected in news reporting in both languages.

Teachers can utilize the study's insights to refine language teaching approaches at A2 and B1 levels. Emphasizing the importance of constructing lead paragraphs with appropriate sentence and clause structures, as well as including key informational components, can enhance the practical language skills of learners.

The study's focus on lead paragraphs as crucial elements in news reporting suggests that learners achieving proficiency in constructing these paragraphs are likely to enhance their overall competence in reading, understanding, and writing news items. This competence extends to both the reception and production aspects of language learning.

The observed differences in sentence and clause structures between French and Turkish lead paragraphs suggest that learners should be encouraged to adapt their writing styles based on the conventions of the target language. This adaptability is crucial for effective communication and integration into the linguistic and cultural norms of the language being learned.

Beyond language acquisition, the study contributes to a broader understanding of cross-cultural communication. The disparities in how information is presented in news items emphasize the intricate interplay between linguistic structures and cultural expectations. This awareness is valuable for individuals engaging in communication across diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In conclusion, the implications drawn from this study go beyond the realm of language learning and extend into the broader landscape of effective cross-cultural communication. By recognizing and incorporating these implications, language learners can navigate the complexities of news reporting, thereby enhancing their language proficiency and cultural awareness.

References

- Adam, J.-M. (1999). *Linguistique textuelle: des genres, des discours aux textes*. Paris: Nathan.
- Auclair, G. (1970). *Le mana quotidien: Structures et fonctions de la chronique des faits divers*. Anthropos. Paris.
- Conseil de l'Europe (2001). *Cadre europeen commun de reference pour les langues: Apprendre, enseigner, evaluer*. Conseil de l'Europe. Strasbourg.
- Barthes, R. (1964). *Structure du fait divers: Essais critiques*. Editions du Seuil. Paris.
- Fait divers (n.d.). In French Academy online dictionary (9th ed.). Retrieved from <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/academie9/chapeau>
- Fait divers (n.d.). In Larousse French online dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/chapeau/14674>
- Fait divers (n.d.). In Petit Robert French online dictionary. Retrieved from <https://dictionnaire.lerobert.com/definition/chapeau>
- Genette, G. (1979). *Introduction à l'architexte*. Paris : Seuil.
- Genette, G. (1982). *Palimpsestes*. Paris : Seuil.
- Genette, G. (1987). *Seuils*. Paris : Seuil.
- Özçelebi, H. (2014). Didactiser un fait divers dans les cours de production écrite en français. *Synergies Turquie*, 7, 151-166.
- Révaz, F. (1997). Le récit dans la presse écrite. *Pratiques*, 94, 19-33.

