



A RIGHT UNCLAIMED

Elective Language Courses on Living Languages and Dialects
in the Context of Language Rights

LAZ LANGUAGE EXAMPLE (2012-2021)

SUMMARY

Bülent Bilmez & İrfan Çağatay

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Gişkinani?

Gişkurani?

Biliyor musunuz?



Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı okullarda
Yaşayan Diller ve Lehçeler Seçmeli Dersi içerisinde
Ortaokul 5-6-7 ve 8. sınıflarda
Lazcanın seçimlik ders olarak okutulabileceğini biliyor musunuz?
Bunun için yapılması gereken tek şey Lazca dersini seçmek!

Önümüzdeki eğitim-öğretim yılı için tercih dönemi 4 Ocakta başladı,
Çocuklarınızın Lazca'yı okulda öğrenmeleri için
Lazca Seçmeli Dersini seçin, seçtin!

Hayde Lazuri dobigurat!

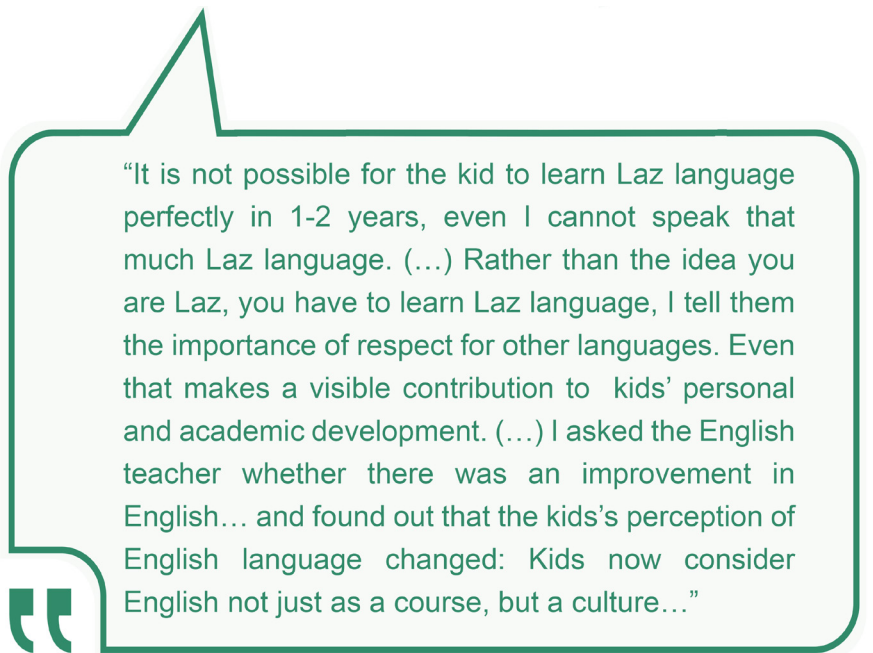
Son gün 22 Ocak!

FOREWORD

A project for teaching languages spoken in Turkey in the secondary schools governed by the Ministry of National Education (MNE), Elective Language Courses (ELCs) on Living Languages and Dialects (LLDs) became a topic of public discussion in Turkey in 2012 and was launched in the same year. Up until today, curriculums for Abkhaz, Adyghe (based on Cyrillic and Latin Alphabets), Albanian, Bosnian, Georgian, Kurmanci, Laz and Zazaki languages have been prepared and instruction began at secondary school level. However, for various reasons, enrollment numbers for the electives have been diminishing over the years.

This report examines the process in specific reference to Laz language within the context of language rights. It analyzes the legal and historical background to the issue. The report also evaluates related subjects such as the mother language problem and the debates thereupon, mother language teaching and education in mother language from a human rights perspective, and the relevant international and national regulations in Turkey.

Through literature reviews, workshops, and field studies, the report monitors the process mentioned above and brings together the knowledge and experience collected in a systematic way. It aims to bring the problem of ELCs on LLDs, which disappeared from the public agenda considerably in the last years,



“It is not possible for the kid to learn Laz language perfectly in 1-2 years, even I cannot speak that much Laz language. (...) Rather than the idea you are Laz, you have to learn Laz language, I tell them the importance of respect for other languages. Even that makes a visible contribution to kids’ personal and academic development. (...) I asked the English teacher whether there was an improvement in English... and found out that the kids’s perception of English language changed: Kids now consider English not just as a course, but a culture...”

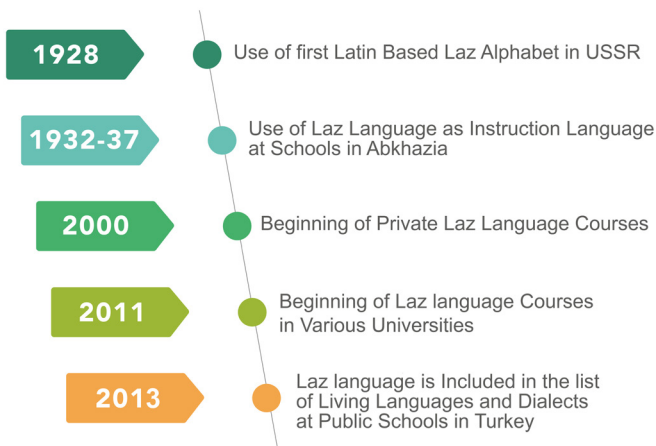
back into attention by focusing on the case of Laz language within the context of language rights and discuss the actual and potential solutions proposed by the elective courses.

As the result of a study on monitoring and documenting the implementation of ELCs on LLDs, this report evaluates every (positive or negative) issue that surfaced during the emergence, preparation and especially implementation stages of these courses during an almost eight-year process, documents the cases and developments that emerged from this process, and shares the data and findings after consolidating differing aspects in a systematic fashion. However, as one of the first studies on the subject, it does not pretend to cover every step that should be taken and accommodate every piece of information out there. There still is a lot to research and each similar report is a small step towards achieving a comprehensive account of the subject. The authors would be pleased if their report succeeds in making a contribution through its findings, conceptual-theoretical framework and methodology, and possibly inspires further research. They would be most pleased of all to contribute to studies by all parties and actors involved in the issue within the context of linguistic plurality and language rights.

The report not only discusses the gains obtained in legal regulations and reforms about language rights during the report's preparation period, but it also evaluates the problems encountered during the attempts to exercise this right. Always keeping in mind the issue of whether the rights gained were sufficient and with what means and towards what ends they were obtained or given, we

included the positive and negative attitudes of rights holders and defenders as much as the positive and negative attitudes of the authorities responsible for the execution of these rights.

Laz language in Education



ON THE EXTENT, SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The authors of this report (an academic working on linguistic diversity/plurality through theoretical and empirical aspects and a researcher working on Laz language for several years) accepted the task of writing a report based on a few months research and field study only because of their connections in the field and firm grasp on the theoretical/conceptual framework and historical background of the subject. Without these preexisting resources, it is not possible to furnish a report on the subject in only a few months without omitting its wide and complicated context.

In light of this, the first phase of this report's writing process, which is the result of a six month period collecting sources and undertaking field study, was to categorize the information collected unsystematically and to identify additional information necessary for the study. As a result of the first step bringing together scant available information about the legislation and implementation, the authors attempted to collect the pertinent statistical information (course selections, enrollment numbers, teachers, cities, municipalities, and schools in which courses were offered etc.), the lack of which was a serious constraint. For this purpose, periodicals, publications, websites and digital media sources in Laz language were browsed and available literature was reviewed. Although the systematic review remained less than comprehensive and exhaustive, it was strong enough to reveal quickly that the lack of statistical information was a broader problem that could not be remedied through media sources. In line with this conclusion, the project researchers visited the General Directorate of Basic Education (*Temel*

Eğitim Müdürlüğü) and the Directorate of Education Board (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı*) at the Ministry of National Education in June 2020, in order to retrieve lacking information. In addition, the Laz Cultural Association, coordinating the project, filed a written application to the General Directorate of Basic Education on 16 June 2020. After about a month, a list titled "The Number of Students Who Selected Laz Language Courses" was received as an attachment to a written reply. This data and the reasons why it fails to reflect the reality can be reviewed in our report's appendix section.

During the Ankara visit, project researchers carried out a prearranged interview with the executive committee members of Eğitim-Sen (Education and Science Workers' Union) on 8 June 2020.

Similarly, an extensive interview with Eđitim-Bir-Sen (Alliance of Educators Union) took place on 9 June 2020.

Again during the Ankara visit, interview request were extended to the members of the parliament and spokespeople of the parties represented in the parliament. However, we failed to receive a positive response from most of them due to the pandemic

conditions. Moreover, it was not possible to meet with the MPs who accepted our request, also because of the pandemic. We managed to do a short interview with CHP (Republican People's Party) Rize MP and the former president of the Laz Institute, Mehmet Bekarođlu, outside the parliament. This interview was very informative for the preparations for the field study in the Eastern Black Sea Region later on.

Interviews, some of which are on record, with Laz civil society actors (from NGOs and activists) in both Ankara and various towns of Eastern Black Sea Region; conversations with the mayor of Ardeđen Municipality on 16 July 2020 and again with CHP Rize MP and former president of the Laz Institute Mehmet Bekarođlu at his residence in his home village on 14 July 2020 played a crucial role in both understanding divergent viewpoints on the subject and performing a more efficient field study.

During the field study for the report, interviews with numerous teachers, two parents and one student between 12 and 21 July, were very important. These interviews were extremely useful in terms of understanding/learning the approach and attitude of the actors deeply embedded in the issue and obtaining detailed information about all phases and aspects of the implementation process. In fact, some of the statistical information included in the report was collected thanks to these exchanges in the form of in-depth, structured and semi-structured interviews. The interviews carried out during the field study were transcribed, archived and a majority of the findings were frequently referred to in the report.

Finally, the workshop held on 9 August 2020 with the participation of 25 people (experts on the subjects and actors in the field) was a very good opportunity for discussing the findings from the research and field study. A number of issues related to the content of the report were only clarified and finalized thanks to this workshop. Participants of the workshop were teachers of various language groups and activists. Lasting five and a half hours, the meeting was quite helpful in incorporating experiences of people working on other language groups in the report and making a comprehensive evaluation of the whole process.

EVALUATION: GENERAL POINTS AND FINDINGS

As the culmination of the cultural and linguistic rights struggle that started in the 1990s and the democratization process of the 2000s, Elective Language Courses (ELCs) on Living Languages and Dialects (LLDs) since 2012 could be considered as an undeniable achievement in a context dominated by linguistic uniformity and prohibition. It is a crucial step in cultural/linguistic plurality, an issue ignored by almost everyone up until today. It initially made its way into official correspondence and parliamentary records, later on evolved into legal regulations and legislation, and finally and most importantly, penetrated in the form of course materials in different alphabets into schools, which could be seen as the production and dissemination centers of the uniformist discourse.

Just the possibility of students at a formative stage of socialization encountering these languages in a fully legitimate, legal and formal context amounts to an important crack in the dominant uniformist language policy. By means not only of course books written in different alphabets and languages, and musical and theatrical activities in different languages, etc., but also because students carry this diversity back home from school, LLD courses can yield important results in increasing visibility, awareness, acceptance, and legitimacy.

Different than a mother language course, an ELC is rather an introductory course for a language than one that teaches the language in full. Hence, as we see in practice, offering an elective course on one of the languages of Turkey as LLD, can (or could) serve an important function as much as mother language education. As we witnessed in concrete cases during the preparation of this report, ELCs on LLDs offer an opportunity for a student who wants to learn or a parent who wants their child to learn a minority language (even if it is not their mother language) that is spoken widely in any given region. In this sense, these courses serve as important instruments, in the absence of any alternative means of promoting cultural/linguistic plurality and fostering awareness and receptiveness for the culture/language that characterizes the life of a given geography.

This transformation is also valid for the teachers and school administrators (primarily the school principals), who perhaps are the most important actors in this process. We observed during the preparation process of this report that these central actors were also educated through the very same uniformist mentality, which became dominant as a result of Kemalist language policies. Moreover, we should keep in mind the possibility of this change/achievement, which can be a precursor for an epistemological rupture, spilling over to teachers other than

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“As people passionate about this work, we weren’t able to appreciate these electives much. (...) Also parents weren’t very interested. They said, what’s the use, they should learn English, mathematics, something useful for life instead.”

the ones teaching SDD courses, and hence offering the possibility of a more comprehensive transformation.

Though mother language education is not our primary subject, it is also possible to see ELCs on LLCs as an opportunity for language activism, as individuals and institutions working on languages and cultures other than Kurdish often perceive the ELCs as mother teaching and use them appropriately while maintaining a critical outlook and principal/maximal demands.

On the flip side, understanding this right as something that was not gained through concrete and specific struggles and demands for rights coming from below, but as an achievement that was given (or granted) from above as a result of the opening/democratization process, which was a part of European Union (EU) adjustment and accession process, leads, mildly speaking, to a ‘detached’ approach towards the subject.

However, we should discuss this separately as a problematic approach as well. In the process of recognizing or ‘granting’ any right, benevolence and magnanimity cannot play a determining role and personal/willful factors such as generosity cannot adequately explain the phenomenon. In fact, as much as the EU accession and adjustment process, the attitudes of the government and administrators at the time towards the subject of rights in general played a role in ELCs as an achievement. However, the indirect role of a more radical and comprehensive rights struggle (which can be the source for the dismissal of the ELCs issue as a form of instrumentalization and reformist counter-maneuver) in this process should not be ignored either. Therefore, even if the real objective had been instrumentalization or a reformist counter-maneuver, this achievement (together with other gains) can be seen as the success of these struggles too.

In essence, this achievement should not be understood merely as the government’s reformist maneuver against radical/revolutionary demands of the Kurdish movement. This achievement should also be added to the

score sheet of cultural rights struggles of civil society actors from all groups - especially the language activism – which emerged from the culture and identity politics and struggle that had been on the rise since the 1990s on a global scale.

Another important conclusion of the study is that even though ELCs on LLDs were not imagined and designed as a “mother language course,” many language activists and institutions perceived Laz language courses as one and embraced them accordingly. However, it is evident that teaching any language only through ELCs is not possible because of the limited weekly course hours, inadequate course materials, and insufficient number of teachers. Nevertheless, the real benefit of the courses is that they provide previously unavailable cultural and political opportunities for these languages.

ELCs contribute to the idea of linguistic plurality, provide language activists

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As one of the leading political parties with its staunch discourse and attitude in defense of cultural/language rights, the HDP - as well as Eğitim-Sen that carried out important work on education in mother language in the past - assume a negative or indifferent/apathetic attitude, since education in mother language is not possible within the LLDs framework. They keep the subject out of their agenda and sometimes even use a deterrent discourse against the exercise of this right. The meaning and importance of this maximalist attitude during the initial phase of the process can be discussed separately and even understood from a certain point of view. However, persistence of the same, almost frozen, attitude without understanding the changes within the process and current conjecture shows up as an important factor during our general observations on the implementation of ELCs on LLDs.

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with a realm of legitimacy, and destroy social prejudices and political skepticism. Elective courses on LLDs have the potential to provide means for students to gain consciousness about their mother language and identity. Therefore, this provides opportunities for training more people who work on these languages and cultures in the future. The students enrolled in ELCs seize an opportunity for learning about different languages and cultures these languages represent. Mutual respect and understanding and the tolerance that emerge from getting to know each other contribute to

overcoming prejudices based on ethnicity which continues to create a serious rift in the society.

Another observation from the field study was that the activist initiatives centered in Istanbul had a very limited impact on the Laz-language-speaking region in terms of bolstering LLDs elective courses. We clearly observed that the campaigns initiated by some associations based in Istanbul, which focused more on social media, failed to provide the expected contribution in terms of course enrollments. Nevertheless, beginning from 2013, some less systematic campaigns at the local level by teachers and activists were quite successful in terms of mobilizing MNE administrators, promoting courses, and increasing the motivation of teachers.

“If students could select courses electronically, we would see how many parents liked to teach their children Adyghe language, and produce something accordingly. Otherwise, it looks like there are only 5 classes currently and only 50 people in Turkey seem to demand the learning or teaching their kids Adyghe language. This picture is not realistic. If online selection were possible we could get a more realistic picture.”

The academic staff generated at the local level gradually dispersed after a process that began in 2016. The number of students attended the courses decreased continuously and reached zero in a short time period.

One important finding of this report is that LLD courses are very vulnerable to current political developments. When elective language courses entered the public agenda in the first half of the 2010s, Turkey was passing through a process named the “Resolution

Process” or “opening,” which was influenced by the EU accession and adjustment process. As an outcome of this process, elective language courses were one of the projects created and implemented by the government, such as Committee of Wise Men and Negotiation Committees. However, the government shifted from pluralism towards a nationalist discourse with the changing conjuncture. As a requirement of the new discourse, the government disowned most of its former projects and removed them from the political and public agenda, even though it didn’t deny them entirely. Unfortunately, elective LLD courses, which can be considered as an important achievement in terms of language rights, shared a similar fate and were rendered obsolete by the government. Elective LLD courses became less visible in the government-friendly mainstream media. Today, the attention given to the courses during the initial years of the project by these circles seems to have disappeared.

Compared to the government perspective on the matter, those actors in opposition held a more negative point of view on elective courses. Demanding education in mother language, the Kurdish movement, the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) and allied groups denounced any attempt with a lesser status and expressed from the very beginning that implementing the LLDs was a low status project. They remained distant towards LLD courses, which in their mind was a trick by the government. As the leading political party in the field of cultural/language rights with its staunch discourse and attitude, Peoples’ Democracy Party (the HDP) maintained that “education in mother language” was impossible within the context of LLD courses and held a negative or indifferent/apathetic position based on a maximalist political attitude.

As the union of democratic teachers, Eğitim-Sen’s has maintained an unwavering crass reaction to elective courses to this day. This negative attitude has been an important factor in the failure of elective language courses. From the very beginning of the education in mother language question in Turkey, Eğitim-Sen advocated for education in mother language against elective LLD courses.

The unions close to the government believed that teaching the mother language rather than education in the mother language was sufficient and supported the government’s ELCs on LLDs initiative. Although there were a few cases in which the Eğitim-Bir-Sen Diyarbakır branch tried to promote Kurdish elective courses by producing and disseminating posters and advertisements, they also regarded LLDs elective courses as a concession to the Kurdish movement and did not fully embrace them.

Representing the other wing of the opposition, “Republican” or “Atatürkist” (Kemalist) groups

felt distant towards the courses from the beginning and approached them with an extreme caution. However, apart from a few harsh statements, they did not openly and directly oppose elective LLDs courses. Instead of opposing elective LLDs courses, they expressed various criticisms and worries, thereby fostering doubts about the subject in the public opinion.

The Nationalist Action Party (MHP) that was

among the opposition parties during the Resolution and Opening period, openly opposed the courses. However after it formed the *Cumhur İttifakı* (Alliance for the Public) with the AKP government, decided to remain silent on the issue.

Today, only a few civil society organizations hold on to the courses as much as their capacity permits and try to run campaigns for the continuation of them. Despite sincere efforts by these institutions and individuals, elective language courses on LLDs in general and Laz language courses in particular, are misperceived and problematically affiliated with the Kurdish question in public opinion. Therefore, parents and especially teachers and school administrators are nervous about issues such as course offers and pedagogical leadership.

Although the government seems to offer elective LLD courses as a proposal against education in mother language demands, it is misleading to perceive them as alternatives to each other. Elective courses on LLDs should be valued as an important opportunity for normalizing and elevating education in mother language to a legitimate status and training a qualified teaching staff necessary for it.

According to our field observations, none of the elective Laz language courses offered under LLDs were opened because of initiatives or demands coming from students. Unfortunately, the role of parents in the process remained limited. Only one class in Arhavi was opened on the parents' suggestion and all other classes were opened thanks to teachers' initiatives and in some cases after a great effort to convince students, parents and school administrators. We understand that the primary role in the selection of Laz language courses under LLDs and opening of classes belongs to teachers and school administrators. However, a big majority of these actors takes a negative attitude towards the issue due to lack of information and their prejudice against the courses as being "unnecessary and useless." According to our impressions from the field and the social media, parents, students, NGOs and the general public opinion are not sufficiently informed about elective Laz language courses under LLDs. A lot of people don't even know that Laz language is offered as an elective course at school! When we asked about the proportion of people who were

informed about Laz language courses in our interviews, generally the estimates we came across were under 10 percent. In short, there is a huge information gap about elective Laz language courses. We also observed during the interviews that, when faced with elective course selection, the major concern for parents, students and school administrators alike was

“Elective courses were not so much elective. Selection of courses like science, mathematics, Turkish was more important to the school administration. These courses were preferred because it was thought that it [the selection of Elective Language Courses] would decrease the general success rate. There hasn’t been much support for Laz language. (...) [At the beginning, parents] used come to classes and be interested in it. They used to support it. Sometimes they invited us to their homes. Some would stop by after the class and check the blackboard to see the course content. There used to be a lot of interest at the beginning. It was a topic of conversation in these regions. People would talk about it on the streets. (...) Kids I taught took this course gladly and willingly. They are at the high school now, will go to university soon. I don’t think the light inside them will wane. I think there will be permanence, and some, if not all, will work to keep this language alive.”

central examinations and concern for future. Since students had to prepare for centralized high school entrance examinations and questions on LLDs were not covered in the exam, students and parents gave priority more to mathematics, science and English courses.

According to another observation, people think that listing of the courses under the title Living Languages and Dialects is not sufficiently and directly informative about the course content. A student who wants to select Laz language does not directly come across a Laz language option on the elective course list and this leads to confusion. This situation negatively impacts the familiarity with courses, and hiding the exact name of the course damages their legitimacy. In addition, collapsing all eight languages under the title “Living Languages and Dialects” (in other words hiding them, even if this may be unintentional) eventually leads to a negative outcome and creates obstacles to obtaining course-related statistical information.

Another very important problem we observed in the field was the competitive aura around the current elective courses list on the selection of some course groups listed under certain titles. Circles close to the government especially promote the group of religious courses whereas secularist circles work against them and propose and encourage alternatives from the list they find favorable. In a list of 58 courses with only 3 courses to select from, this competition poses the biggest obstacle for any language virtually hidden under the title LLDs. Moreover, the tendency of parents to push children towards mathematics and science classes in order to carve out an advantage on the arduous path towards the central examination for university enrollment has a negative impact.

Under the current system, selecting from courses competing with each other effectively means sacrificing another course. In an environment of increasing polarization, the competition between courses unfortunately turns students and their preferences into an instrument of harsh ideological competition.

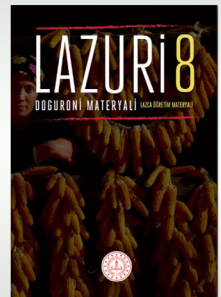
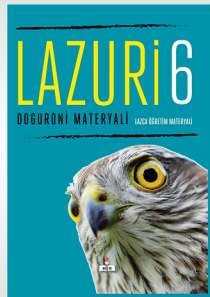
Within this context, another limitation we came across in general and related to Laz language in particular was the role of school administrators as

the final decision makers in the preparation of course selection forms. School administrations determine a certain number of courses to appear on the form through a vague process that uses a method, which is impossible to ascertain, perhaps in a manner in line with the aforementioned competition, and hand out these forms to students. When school administrations choose to exclude elective LLDs courses from these forms, selection becomes impossible for the student and the selection process is obstructed from the very beginning.

Changes in the course selection period and uncertainty in the academic calendar have a negative impact on individuals and institutions intending to pursue and implement campaigns in favor of elective LLDs courses.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to state that in their current state, the implementation of LLDs courses is a failed project in general. Behind this failure, as it is highlighted in the title of this report, lies the lack of care and claim for these courses as a gain in linguistic rights. The political authority that created this project, the Ministry of National Education, which is responsible for its implementation, politicians from all sides, actors from NGOs and civil society who approach the issue politically and apathetically are all equally responsible for this failure.

Ministry of National Education (MNE) Approved School Books



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** An open endorsement from the **Ministry of National Education (MNE)** encouraging the selection and implementation of elective courses on Living Languages and Dialects (LLDs) would help to eliminate political anxieties in the narrow sense, and even paranoia, which are widespread among teachers and school administrators interested in the courses. Beginning with the **Ministry of Culture, all related ministries** must promote these courses and encourage them in wider public opinion for their contribution to the cultural wealth of the country.
- 2** Exact dates for LLDs selection, which takes place at the end of first semester of the previous year, should be announced by the **MNE** to interested institutions and individuals ahead of time, not at the last minute, as it has been the case so far.
- 3** LLDs course selection dates and selection process should be made absolutely transparent by the **MNE**. Situations such as the school administration coordinating the process behind closed doors and in an arbitrary fashion or refraining from informing parents and teachers of student preferences should be eliminated. If teachers and parents know the number and grades of students selecting this course, necessary steps to fill the minimum quota to open the course can be taken. In addition, this practice will raise the accountability standards of state institutions and reinforce the ties based on trust between the state and society. We can add here, as a practical recommendation, that an online selection process (open to all teachers, students and parents) should be devised by the **school administrations and local and provincial directorates of national education**.
- 4** Access to data on the number of course selections and opened classes from previous years and the current year should be made available to the public by the **MNE** immediately.

5

MNE authorities should devise a precise education strategy for LLDs courses in general, and the Laz language course in particular, in dialogue with civil society actors, and the courses should be structured accordingly. Whether elective Laz language education is a foreign language-training model or a mother language improvement course focusing on literature, linguistic aspects etc. for students

who already speak the language, should be clarified, and authorities should proceed accordingly. We recommend developing professional strategies and methods for both needs and following them during any preparation and implementation phases.

a

It is not possible to teach these languages sufficiently, from square one as a new foreign language within the elective LLDs courses framework, due to the lack of material, teaching experience and background, peculiarities of these languages, course numbers, political context and various other factors. Structuring these courses with the purpose of promoting the languages of Turkey, and teaching them at a minimal level, would contribute to increasing students' general culture, developing awareness around cultural and linguistic plurality and multiculturalism in general, and providing a sense of another language of the homeland for students.

b

Among the elective LLDs courses, Laz language is one of the languages mostly without a developed written culture and practiced at home and/or the streets. Programs structured for developing the already existing informal level of language proficiency and teaching literary and linguistic features should be devised.

c

Pedagogic methods should be examined in order for teachers to creatively employ the material prepared for two purposes, separately or together according to the context.

6

Centralized high school entrance examinations (*Lise Giriş Sınavları*, LGS) are viewed as the biggest impediment to increasing the take-up of elective LLDs courses by parents, school administrations and teachers. If the **MNE** revises this exam to cover at least few questions on LLDs course, which the student would take throughout their secondary school years, it would both increase interest in the courses and their weight.

7

Elective Laz language course should go beyond secondary school and continue into the high school curriculum with a legal revision by the **MNE**. This would not only ensure better teaching of the languages but also play an important role in establishing the culture of linguistic plurality and the idea of pluralism in the long run.

8

All concerned parties should mobilize to ensure success in increasing selection rates and implementation, in order to contribute to combating the rise of marginalizing discourse in Turkish society and to the development of awareness necessary for Turkey's different cultural and linguistic communities to live together in peace.

a

Starting from individuals and institutions involved in language activism, all **civil society actors** should undertake campaigns to promote and encourage the selection of LLD courses during enrollment periods and monitor the implementation process closely.

b

Teachers' Unions are crucial actors in the most important phase of the LLDs process. A genuine and sincere support and endorsement during the selection and implementation of elective courses on LLD from unions working for democratization and pluralism could play a determining role.

c

Political parties that are responsive to pluralism in general and cultural and linguistic plurality, in particular, should be sympathetic to the subject of elective courses on LLDs, support the campaigns, and monitor the process.

d

Government authorities in particular should issue positive statements about the LLDs issue and raise its importance and value for cultural pluralism and democratization in the public agenda exclusively during the course selection periods. With likely normalizing and legitimizing impact, these statements are crucial towards eliminating the current mistrust.

9

The **MNE** should assume more responsibility and initiative in the preparation and printing of textbooks in Laz language and further support the society actors working on the issue.

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Lazuri nenaşı sinifepe manžinu



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b. 6

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deine isaniseri, hiyo iyu. **b. 4**

Xalas (Borçxa) Lazuri Sinifi do Mamgurapalepe

10 In order to increase quality, the **MNE** should develop on-the-job training programs for teachers and textbook authors and implement them in collaboration with civil society actors.

11 The **MNE** should redefine the role of students, which constitutes a structural problem, in the preparation of elective course lists and the course selection process.

a The current list and selection system that create ideological competition especially between courses grouped under certain titles should be rearranged. In order to avoid instrumentalization of elective courses for ideological purposes, selection of a course from the LLDs list should not compromise an elective course from another group.

b Students' freedom to choose, with the support of the parents, and further care and claim for the process should be ensured through encouragement to take more active role in the selection process.

12 In order to resolve the deficit in the number of qualified teachers, the **Council of Higher Education (CHE)** should device a regulation to introduce Laz language into universities at undergraduate and graduate levels and create a Laz language teacher-training program. This would resolve the problem of the lack of qualified teachers for elective Laz language courses.

Schools that has offered Elective Laz Language Courses and Enrollment Numbers

2013
2014

Student number	Grade	School	Province
12	6	Fatih Sultan Mehmet Ortaokulu	Arhavi
7	-	Atatürk Ortaokulu	Arhavi
4	-	Nuri Özalton Ortaokulu	Arhavi
45	5 ve 6	Muammer Çiçekoğlu Ortaokulu	Fındıklı
33	5 ve 6	Aksu Atatürk İÖÖ	Fındıklı
91	3	5	Total

2014
2015

Student number	Grade	School	Province
17	5	Fatih Sultan Mehmet Ortaokulu	Arhavi
17	5	Cumhuriyet Ortaokulu	Arhavi
16	6	Cumhuriyet Ortaokulu	Arhavi
16	5	Muammer Çiçekoğlu Ortaokulu	Fındıklı
19	6	Muammer Çiçekoğlu Ortaokulu	Fındıklı
36	7	Muammer Çiçekoğlu Ortaokulu	Fındıklı
30	5	Aksu Atatürk İÖÖ	Fındıklı
29	6 ve 7	Aksu Atatürk İÖÖ	Fındıklı
12	6	Düzköy İlk ve Ortaokulu	Borçka
12	7	Düzköy İlk ve Ortaokulu	Borçka
25	6	Yavuzselim İÖÖ	Ardeşen
17	7	Yavuzselim İÖÖ	Ardeşen
13	7-A	TOKİ Ortaokulu	Pazar
15	7-B	TOKİ Ortaokulu	Pazar
274	14	7	Total

2015
2016

Student number	Grade	School	Province
12	6	Cumhuriyet İÖÖ	Arhavi
26	5	Aksu Atatürk İÖÖ	Fındıklı
33	5	Pazar TOKİ İÖÖ	Pazar
71	3	3	Total

2016
2017

Student number	Grade	School	Province
10	7	Cumhuriyet İÖÖ	Arhavi
11	5	Demirciler Ortaokulu	Borçka
10	8	Demirciler Ortaokulu	Borçka
31	3	2	Total

2018
2019

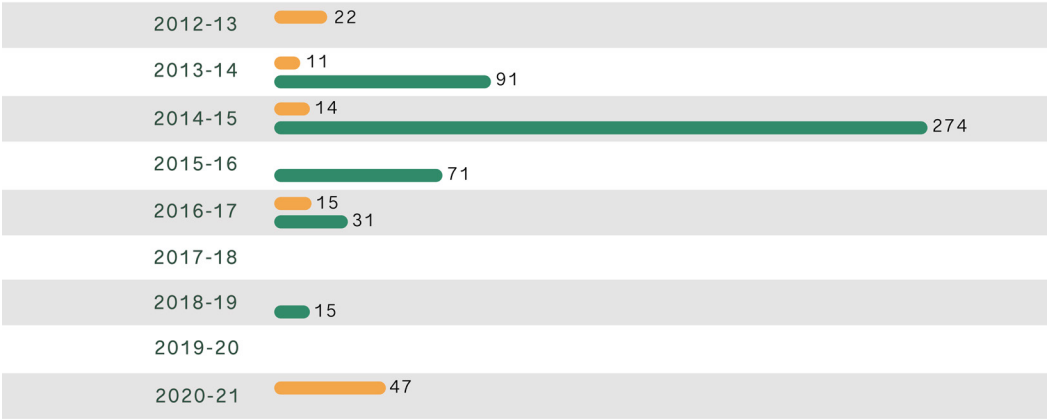
Student number	Grade	School	Province
15	7	Gündoğdu Nenehatun Ortaokulu	Beykoz/İst.
15	1	1	Total

Yearly Number of Students Who Took Laz Language Courses

2018	Student	: 15
2019	Grade	: 1
	School	: 1
2016	Student	: 31
2017	Grade	: 3
	School	: 2
2015	Student	: 71
2016	Grade	: 3
	School	: 3
2014	Student	: 274
2015	Grade	: 14
	School	: 7
2013	Student	: 91
2014	Grade	: 3
	School	: 5



Number of Students Who Elected Laz Language Courses (Eventually Opened and Not Opened)



■ Number of Students in Courses Opened
■ Number of Students Selected Courses Not Opened