THE BOY, HIS TEACHER AND THE LINGUIST: LEARNING TURKISH WITH AESOP FABLES

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Abstract
Can we "Aesopianise" other languages? This is what this article is about. You must be familiar with the fable of the Fox and the Grapes. Aren't you? Its popularity has crossed the borders and became one of the most shared fables in the world. That popularity (1) is in fact an asset for linguists to implement the linguistic context predictability (2) using narratives. On the other hand, borrowings (3) and collocational patterns (4) can be of paramount importance to unlocking linguistically related languages. Therefore, it would be interesting to approach fables through specific strategies to try to guess familiar texts in context. To test this novel approach, we invited ten master students to participate in an experiment where they were asked to perform a series of tasks using the four linguistic tools in a game-like exercise. The results showed that participants succeeded in the post-test 26.09% of the lexicon found in ten popular fables - which is for sure not excellent but highly encouraging- when compared with that little 2.94% in the pre-test. Furthermore, the study implies that linguistic awareness preceded by cultural awareness could be a significantly powerful tool for learning any foreign language.

Keywords: Aesopianisation, Aesop fable, borrowing, collocational pattern, linguistic context

Introduction

This is not a fable, but could be one. The boy is an epitome of any language learner around the world. The teacher is that language teacher who tries to teach a foreign language to challenged students who seem to be bored with useless long-form content and counterproductive strategies. The linguist could be that Aesopian "hero" who carries the four magical tools in his pocket to save both of them: The worldwide popularity of Aesopian narratives (1), the linguistic context predictability (2), lexical interlingual borrowings (3), and collocational patterns (4). The Aesopianisation of language - a coined concept- means simply the use of the popularity of Aesop's narratives and other related cultural/linguistic features to maximize content prediction (lexis, phrases, and sentences) in a text written in a foreign language.

Aesop's fables are widely recognized and familiar tales that have been passed down through generations (Handford, 2010). These stories feature anthropomorphic animals and teach moral lessons through their narratives. The familiarity of Aesop's fables stems from their timeless themes (Meynell, 2017), relatable characters, and relevance for readers of different generations. The enduring popularity of Aesop's fables is also due to their simplicity and accessibility (Morgan, 1995). The universal themes of the fables, such as greed, resonate with people across different cultures. Additionally, the fables often feature clever and memorable storytelling techniques, such as the use of irony and surprise endings (Tompkins, 1995). Overall, Aesop's fables continue to be cherished for their ability to entertain and educate. The popularity of Aesop's fables provides a valuable resource for learning foreign languages such as Turkish, Spanish, and Italian (Kennedy & Falvey, 1998).

The linguistic contexts found in Aesop's fables provide an excellent strategy for learning and reinforcing language skills. These narratives offer a rich tapestry of language usage with cultural nuances (Balla, 2000). By studying and analyzing the language within these fables, language learners can gain a deeper understanding of how words and phrases are used in context. For example, in a fable like *The Lion and the Mouse*, readers can predict the presence of thematically related lexicon, showing power dynamics (Patterson, 1991), found in sociology. Think of the notion of power that implies roaring, eating, claws—the list is exhaustive. That exhaustiveness enriches the game of predictability.

Lexical interlingual borrowings between Arabic and Spanish can serve as a valuable linguistic tool for language learners, offering a fun and gamified approach to guessing the meaning of words in the target language (Mohammad & Idris, 2022). By recognizing shared words or similar roots between Arabic and Turkish, learners can make educated guesses about the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary. This process not only enhances vocabulary acquisition but also promotes a deeper understanding of the linguistic connections between the two languages. Additionally, the gamified nature of this approach can make language learning more enjoyable (Song et al., 2017).

Collocating words in Arabic Aesop fables can provide valuable insights into collocations in Turkish. For example, the phrase "Kurt koyunu kovalıyor!" in Turkish, meaning "The wolf is chasing the sheep!" is a common collocation where "kurt" (wolf) typically collocates with "koyunu" (the sheep). In Arabic, the equivalent phrase "الذئب يطارد الخراف!" also demonstrates a similar collocation pattern, where "الذئب" (the wolf) collocates with "الخراف" (the sheep). By analyzing these collocations across both languages, learners can better understand how words are naturally used together in context. The same principle applies when comparing English to Turkish. For instance, in English, the phrase "The cat is chasing the mouse!" demonstrates a common collocation where "cat" typically collocates with "mouse." In Turkish, the equivalent phrase "Kedi fareyi kovalıyor!" follows a similar collocation pattern, with "kedi" (cat) collocating with "fareyi" (the mouse). By examining these collocations in both languages, learners can gain insights into how words naturally combine in sentences (Men, 2017; Nesselhauf, 2005).

In light of the above, this research seeks to answer the following question: *How do the linguistic features of Aesop's fables, such as cultural context, lexical*

borrowings, and collocational patterns, support language learning and vocabulary acquisition in foreign language learners, particularly in Turkish and Arabic contexts? By exploring the various linguistic tools embedded in Aesop's fables, this study investigate how these narratives can enhance the learning process through language predictability, interlingual connections, and contextual understanding.

Theoretical Framework
Popularity of Aesop narratives

Narratives are powerful tools for conveying cultural values, ideas, and moral lessons, and they have played a central role in human societies for thousands of years. According to Boyd (2010), narratives have their origins over 30,000 years ago, and even ancient texts like the Rig Veda (Cohen, 2017) show evidence of early storytelling traditions dating back to 1500 BCE. Initially expressed through cave drawings, narratives evolved into sophisticated forms, from oral traditions to written texts, illustrating the ongoing human need to communicate experience and meaning.

Aesop's fables stand out as a particular genre of storytelling that has maintained its popularity across generations. These short, morally instructive stories, often featuring animals and anthropomorphized characters, engage audiences through their simplicity and universal themes. Aesop's fables have been passed down through oral traditions, and despite the absence of original written works by Aesop himself (McCafferty, 2021), their adaptability in various cultural contexts (Robinson & Wilson, 2023) highlights their global impact and resilience.

The enduring popularity of Aesop's fables can be attributed to their clarity and ability to encapsulate moral lessons in brief, memorable narratives. As Scott (2013) notes, the timelessness of these stories has contributed to their continued relevance, even in the context of modern media, social networks, and digital formats. In addition, the fables' widespread use in education underscores their value as vehicles for moral and social instruction, as they offer insights into human behavior, ethics, and social norms.

Theoretical perspectives on narrative function

In analyzing Aesop's fables, one must consider the social functions of narratives as outlined by Keen (2015) and Kottler (2015), who suggest that narratives serve as tools for social change, education, and behavioral modification. These fables address a range of societal issues, such as the consequences of greed, pride, and dishonesty, and offer moral guidance through allegory and personification (Korhonen, 2019). As such, narratives like Aesop's provide a vehicle for communicating cultural values and promoting social cohesion by helping individuals understand the impact of their actions on society.

Fables' allegorical nature plays a significant role in shaping this process. Characters in Aesop's fables are often symbolic, representing human traits or societal problems, which allows the narratives to resonate across different cultures and time periods. For instance, the use of animals as protagonists enables an exploration of complex ethical dilemmas in an approachable and relatable way (Teupe, 2014). These stories are not only moralistic but are also shaped by

cultural norms and historical contexts, as seen in their frequent adaptation and translation across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Linguistic context predictability and learning

The linguistic context of Aesop's fables offers valuable insights into the predictability of language use, a key factor in language acquisition. The contextual richness of the fables (Decoo, 2011) enables learners to engage with language in a structured and meaningful way. For example, the repetition of simple sentence structures and vocabulary across various fables reinforces linguistic patterns that learners can easily recognize and internalize. The simplicity of the language and the clear moral lessons make Aesop's fables particularly effective for language learners (Harwayne, 2023), helping to expand vocabulary and foster an understanding of grammatical structures.

The fables also provide opportunities to explore lexical semantics and collocational patterns. As Danyari and Dehbashi Sharif (2015) suggest, the frequent pairing of specific words and phrases in fixed expressions (e.g., "slow and steady wins the race") allows learners to internalize not only individual vocabulary but also how words interact within a language system. Through repeated exposure to such collocations, learners can gain a deeper understanding of the subtleties of the language, aiding in the development of fluency and comprehension.

Additionally, Aesop's fables highlight the cultural dimension of language learning, as they provide insight into both linguistic and cultural practices. The moral lessons embedded in these narratives reflect broader societal values, which differ across cultures. McGuigan (2009) and Rios (1996) discuss how studying these stories allows learners to gain cultural awareness while simultaneously improving their linguistic skills. By engaging with these fables, learners not only expand their vocabulary but also develop an appreciation for cultural diversity and the ways in which language reflects societal norms and values.

Lexical interlingual borrowing and language evolution

The phenomenon of lexical interlingual borrowing (Mott & Laso, 2020) is especially relevant in the study of Aesop's fables across different languages. The process of borrowing words from one language into another serves as a window into the historical and cultural interactions between different linguistic communities. Aesop's fables, which have been translated into multiple languages, often include borrowed terms from various linguistic traditions, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of language (Raţă, 2009). For instance, in Turkish translations of Aesop's fables, we observe numerous borrowed words from Arabic and Persian, such as "hikaye" (story) and "kıssa" (tale), which demonstrate the deep cultural exchange between these linguistic traditions (Suleiman, 2004).

These borrowings not only enrich the target language but also highlight the interconnectedness of cultures throughout history. As Treffers-Daller (2010) points out, the study of borrowed terms in literary works reveals much about the broader sociolinguistic context in which a language evolves, showing how cultural and historical influences shape the vocabulary and expression in a given language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Aesop's fables offer a rich theoretical framework for exploring narrative structures, language acquisition, and cross-cultural interaction. Through their simplicity and moral clarity, they continue to serve as effective tools for learning and cultural exchange. The fables' impact is amplified by their ability to reflect universal truths and provide insight into both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of communication. By analyzing the themes, linguistic structures, and cultural aspects of Aesop's fables, we can better understand their enduring appeal and their potential as educational tools for learners of all ages.

Method

In this paper, we followed the one-group pretest-posttest design. This design entails observing a single group without a control or comparison group. However, the group is tested at two different points in time: once before the intervention is implemented and once after the intervention is implemented. Ten master students voluntarily participated in this study. They had been informed that they could withdraw their participation in this study at any time without any penalty or consequences. The following ten Aesop fables are considered the most popular amongst a long series of less popular ones like the Eagle and the Arrow to mention only this.

1. The Tortoise and the Hare
2. The Boy Who Cried Wolf
3. The Fox and the Grapes
4. The Ant and the Grasshopper
5. The Lion and the Mouse
6. The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs
7. The Crow and the Pitcher
8. The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass
9. The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse
10. The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Pre-test

The ten master students were then asked to complete four tasks before the intervention mentioned bellow. The tasks included:

Task 1: Asking the students to predict the lexis of the 10 fables from the titles using the Linguistic Context Predictability (LCP) technique without reading the fables.

Task 2: Asking students to spot borrowings without any explanation

Task 3: Asking students to translate the maximum of sentences found in the 10 fables

Task 4: Asking students to identify nouns, and /or verbs using Linguistic context predictability (LCP) and Collocational patterns (CP)

Post-test
Step one

We equipped the experiment group with the following principals (1) and notions (2):

a. Popularity of Aesop fables (see introduction and theoretical framework)

b. Linguistic context predictability (LCP) (see appendix n° 1)
c. Borrowings (Turkish/Arabic/French) (see Theoretical framework)
d. Collocational patterns (CP) (see Theoretical framework)
e. Lexis especially those predicting nouns or verbs presence in a structure. E.g. (Bir, ve, Bu) (see appendix n° 2)
f. Grammar/ basic sentence structure (see appendix n° 2)
g. Basic notions in pronunciation. E.g. (Hayaċan) /dj/ *dehşet /sh/* (see appendix n°3)

Step two

Task 1: Asking students to predict the lexis of the 10 fables from the titles using (LCP) without reading the fables.
Task 2: Asking students to spot borrowings as explained
Task 3: Asking students to translate the maximum of sentences found in the 10 fables
Task 4: Asked students to identify nouns, and /or verbs using LP and CP as explained

Findings and Discussion
Task 1: Asking students to predict the lexis of the 10 fables using (LCP) without reading the fables by showing them only the titles in English.

Table 1. Predicted words % out of the number of words in the fable

	Fable	Predicted words	Word	Popularity
1	The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse	Cat-cheese-noise-calm-food-rich-poor-running-afraid-catch-visit-escape	6	Very low
2	The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass	Mill-idiot-work-farm-grain-eat-transport-drive-travel	2	Very low
3	The Tortoise and the Hare	Run-race-win-fast-slow-speed-sleep-woke up	8	Very high
4	The Fox and the Grapes	Eat-jump-beautiful-sour-forest-juice-look-miss-again	7	Very high
5	The Ant and the Grasshopper	Work-sing-musik-eat-food-refuse-cry-winter-summer-forest-ask-hungry	8	Very high
6	The Lion and the Mouse	Forest-eat-danger-afraid-small-roar-run	4	Very low
7	The Boy Who Cried Wolf	Forest-danger-eat-devor-help-village-villagers-run-save-sheep-sheperd-dog	7	Very high
8	The Crow and the Pitcher	Stone(pebbles)-drink-water-succeed-thirsty-forest-tree-pick up	5	High
9	The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs	Owner (Countryman)-rich-kill-poor-sell (took to the market)-nest	5	High
10	The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing	Eat-devour-prey-afraid-run-hungry (could not get enough to eat)-trick (*deceit*)-sheperd-flock-wear(dress)	4	Very low
	Total		56 words out of 1495 (3.75%)	

NB: The words in bold were the words successfully predicted.
There are a total of 1495 words in the ten (10) fables.

Task 2: We asked the students to spot the borrowings. Borrowings could be mainly Arabic or even French in rare instances. When comparing the pre-test/post-test phase results we got the following:

Table 2. Numbers of borrowings spotted in the 10 fables

Fable	Words number in the fable	Borrowings Identified by students in pre-test	Borrowings Identified by students in post-test	Borrowings In the 10 fables
1.The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse	263	15	18	21
2.The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass	295	5	7	13
3.The Tortoise and the Hare	137	7	10	12
4.The Fox and the Grapes	112	5	5	8
5.The Ant and the Grasshopper	98	3	4	8
6.The Lion and the Mouse	135	2	4	7
7.The Boy Who Cried Wolf	195	4	4	6
8.The Crow and the Pitcher	74	3	3	6
9.The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs	102	4	4	5
10The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing	84	1 false borrowing	None	None
Total	1495	48	59	86

Task 3: To translate the maximum of sentences/phrases

When students were asked to translate the maximum of sentences/phrases found in the 10 fables they could not be able to do so in pre-test. The Turkish language was too challenging not to say intimidating. After explaining the four principles (Popularity of Aesop fables, b. Linguistic context predictability (LCP) c. Borrowings, d. Collocational patterns (CP), students were expected to show a certain linguistic awareness including a satisfaction with the gamified tasks. The absence of any stake made the exercise more edutaining and above all constructive. The percentages were approximately calculated according to the number of words guessed in context. The following sentences that could be translated were the following:

Table 3. Identified sentences in post-test phase

	Turkish sentence/phrase	The students translation	% of success
1	Bir zamanlar	Once upon a time	100%
2	Çocuk tekrar "Kurt! Kurt!"	Wolf! Wolf! Repeated the (farmer)	75%
3	Çocuk dehşet içinde "Kurt! Kurt!"	The (farmer) astonished cried "Wolf! Wolf!"	75%
4	"Lütfen beni bırak…"	"Please spare me…"	50%
5	…bir grup insandan	A group of men	100%
6	Bir Kasaba Faresi bir zamanlar ülkede yaşayan bir akrabasını ziyaret etmişti.	One day a mouse invited a relative for a visit	50%
7	yavaş ve istikrarlı ilerlemenin sıkça aceleci olmaktan	Be slow but steady, don't be in a hurry	75%
	Average of %		75%

NB: The words in bold were the guessed words. The combination of them constructed a predictable meaning. The presence of some linguistic/extralinguistic items like: (! , " ", repetitions, and tone) helped a lot to solve some linguistic problems. Yes, even the story tone is a part of meaning (Roof, 2020)

Task 4

Asking students to identify nouns, and /or verbs using LP and CP as explained in this task students were asked to identify nouns and verbs in the 10 fables without translating/explaining them. In the pre-test as usual nothing was explained. In the post-test students were equipped with enough linguistic tools to spot those nouns and verbs. The task was somehow confusing for the sentences were (very) long ones. The result yielded the following:

Table 4. lists of nouns and/or verbs identified by students

	Fable's title	Nouns	Verbs
1	The Tortoise and the Hare	Zamanlar- tavşan- kaplumbağa- yarış-fikre- meydan- Yarışmacı- zamanı- mola- ağacın- karar- arada- devam- Hikayenin	Vardı- etti- gülerken ve ederken- okumayı- dizildi- bıraktı- Verdi- durmadan- ilerlemeye- kaldı- uyurken- yarıştı- geçmişti- kazandı- Öğretisi- sıkça- olmaktan- olduğudur.
2	The Fox and the Grapes	Gün-Tilki- ağacın- salkım- Tilki'nin- sulandı- Grup- daldan- farkla- Bu yüzden- mesafe- kez- kaldı- Tekrar tekrar- boşuna- kadar- Salkım- şeyleri	Gördü- sulandı- kaldı- Iskalamıştı- kaldı- baktı- Dedi- yıpratıyorum- yürüdü- var.
3	The Boy Who Cried Wolf	Çoban-ormanın- efendisinin- otlatıyordu. Şey- gün- plan- Efendisi- Kurt- "Kurt! Kurt! - Heyecanla (meraya)- büklüm- akşam- Kurt- Koyunun- Çocuk- "Kurt! Kurt!"- Köylüler- daha- Kurt- Çocuğun- söyleseler	Otlatıyordu. oynamaktı. Düşündü söylemişti. Diye. Koştular. gördüler. düştü. Dehşet. Diye. Koşmadılar. dediler. Sıvıştı. Inanılmaz.
4	The Ant and the Grasshoper	Günde- Karınca- ailesi-Çekirge- kemanı- ısırık- yemek yemek- Karıncalar- "Kış şey Çekirge"- Müzik- yapmakla- kadar- Karıncalar- "Müzik- Pekâlâ- Çekirge'ye- zamanı .	Yalvardı-Yapıyordunuz- Sızlandı- Meşguldüm- silktiler- Yapıyordun- Ağladılar- Dans- Ettiler.
5	The Lion and the Mouse	Aslan- Fare- bir anda... beni- gün- ödeyeceğim." Farenin- eğlendi- kadar- Aslan'a- iyilik.	Koştu- Koydu- Bağışla- Yalvardı- Bırak- Ödeyeceğim- Verdi- Yakalandı- Doldurdu- buldu- Kaldı- Dedi- görüyorsunuz- gitmez
6	The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs	Bir zamanlar- Taşralı vardı- ziyaret- Kaz- yumurta- Kaz'a- altın- gün- kerede- fikri- Kazı- ölmüştü- sahip- şeyi	Vardı- Yumurtladı- Başladı- Veriyordu- Zenginleşmiyordu- Geldi- Ölmüştü- kaybederler.
7	The Crow and the Pitcher	Kuşlar- şey- Karga- sürahi- kadar- Karga- Zavallı- şey- fikir- çakıl.	Buldu- Ulaşamadı- Hissetti- Geldi- Attı- Olabilir.
8	The Miller, His Son, and Their Ass	Zaman- gün- Değirmenci Oğlu- Eşekle- kadar- üç tüccar- adam!- adamın- Tüccarları- Bir sonraki- şeylerle- kadınlara- Zavallı- Çocuğa- grup insandan- hayvanı- başkası-Zavallı-şeyin- süre direğe- kalabalık- insane- işaret- köprüyü- nehre- Zavallı- şekilde.	Gidiyorlardı- düşünüyorlardı- Güldüler- Diye- yürümek- değil"- Söyledi- Geçti- Var- ağladılar- ver- Tırmandı- Yetiştiler- biri- Tünemiş- Söyledi- Yükseldi- Yüklemek- görünüyorlar- dedi- Çıktı- Koştu- Çözüldü- Yuvarlandı- Çıktı- kaybetmişti- edemezsiniz.
9	The Town Mouse and the Country	Kasaba- Faresi- zamanlar akrabasını- ziyaret- miktar. Kasaba- Faresi- şekilde- hayatından- rahat-	Etmişti- etti- koydu- Bahsetmiş- Dinlemiş- Uyudular- Gördü- dedi- Buldular- Vardı- Duydu- Edemediler-

	Fable's title	Nouns	Verbs
	Mouse	yuvaya sabaha- kadar- rahatlık. Lüks- zevklerine- sahip Şehir-Faresi- Kasaba Faresinin- ziyafetten Peynirler- Ancak- leziz pastayı- Kedinin- korku yere- nefes- cesaret ziyafete- Köy-Faresi, Kasaba- Faresi'nin şemsiyesini-kadar- lükslere- lezzetlere-derim.	Geldi- durdu- Dedi- ederim- iyidir.
10	The Wolf in Sheep's clothing	Kurt- Ancak- gece- kenara koyun-meraya- (false borrowing/cognate)-bıçak.	Doyamıyordu- Buldu- Yürüdü-götürüldü- Girdi- Gitti- Uğrar.
	Total	191 nouns	133 verbs

So, a total of 21.67% out of the words were found in the 10 fables. The results can be summarized as follows:

Table 5. Summary

N°	Tasks	%
1	Predicting lexis through titles	3.75 %
2	Identifying borrowing	3.94 %
3	Translating phrases/sentences	75 %
4	Identifying nouns & verbs	21.67 %
	Average of lexical items learnt	**26.09 %**

Discussion

The findings from this study provide valuable insights into the impact of using Aesop's fables as a tool for language learning, specifically in enhancing students' ability to predict vocabulary, identify borrowings, translate phrases, and recognize parts of speech. The results show that when students are exposed to Aesopianized content, their linguistic awareness and ability to predict and understand new language elements improve significantly.

Predicting lexis

The results of Task 1, where students were asked to predict lexis from fable titles, revealed a low success rate (3.75%) overall. However, the success rates varied according to the popularity of the fables. For example, more familiar fables like *The Tortoise and the Hare* led to better prediction outcomes, as students were able to infer certain vocabulary based on cultural familiarity. This finding aligns with the concept of linguistic context predictability (LCP), suggesting that students can rely on their background knowledge of popular stories to predict language elements. However, the generally low prediction success indicates that titles alone do not provide enough context to accurately predict a broad range of vocabulary. This highlights the importance of using more contextual clues, such as key thematic phrases or initial sentences from the fables, to aid prediction.

The low prediction rate underlines the limitations of surface-level exposure to language. It suggests that while familiarity with the content may support lexical guessing, deeper engagement with the full narrative is essential for successful language learning. Therefore, further exploration of how students can engage with

the fables beyond titles (e.g., via contextualized language tasks) may lead to higher success in vocabulary prediction.

Identifying borrowings

The increase in the identification of lexical borrowings from 48 to 86 across the pre-test and post-test phases (an increase from 3.94% to approximately 6%) suggests that the exposure to and explicit focus on borrowings helped students improve their recognition of interlingual cognates. This result demonstrates that knowledge of language similarities, particularly between languages with shared historical and lexical roots like Arabic and Turkish, enhances learners' ability to recognize familiar words across languages.

This finding supports the idea that recognizing linguistic borrowings between related languages can be a powerful tool in language acquisition. The fact that students were able to identify more borrowings after learning about the concept further emphasizes the value of metalinguistic awareness. By explicitly teaching students to spot borrowings, language educators can foster a deeper understanding of the linguistic connections that exist between languages, promoting easier vocabulary acquisition and improved retention.

Translating sentences/phrases

The most striking improvement in student performance occurred in Task 3, where students were asked to translate sentences or phrases from the fables. In the post-test, students achieved a 75% success rate, a substantial improvement from their initial struggles in the pre-test. This can be attributed to the instructional focus on linguistic tools like LCP, borrowings, and collocational patterns (CP), which equipped students with strategies for identifying and interpreting language in context.

The results suggest that the use of Aesopian narratives as a tool for language learning is particularly effective in helping students build meaningful connections between words and their meanings. By understanding linguistic patterns and predicting word meanings based on context, students were able to translate phrases with greater accuracy. This supports the idea that familiar, predictable structures -such as those found in Aesop's fables- can scaffold learning and enhance the students' ability to apply their linguistic knowledge in real-world contexts.

Moreover, the gamified and engaging nature of the tasks likely contributed to the increased motivation and retention, as students were able to experience the satisfaction of correctly predicting words and translating phrases within an enjoyable learning framework.

Identifying nouns and verbs

The results of Task 4, where students identified nouns and verbs, showed a 21.67% success rate, which is a significant improvement compared to the pre-test. The post-test results indicate that after learning how to recognize linguistic patterns, students were better able to identify key parts of speech within the fables. However, despite the improvement, identifying parts of speech in longer and more complex sentences remained a challenge. This suggests that while students

became more adept at recognizing basic language structures, there may be additional challenges posed by sentence complexity that need to be addressed.

This improvement reinforces the importance of understanding collocational patterns and linguistic context when identifying grammatical structures. By teaching students to focus on common collocations and predictable linguistic structures, we can enhance their ability to break down complex sentences and identify key elements like nouns and verbs. However, further research might explore how more targeted training on grammatical structures, as well as practice with varied sentence lengths, could improve success in this area.

Summary and implications

In summary, the study highlights the potential of using Aesop's fables as an engaging and effective tool for language learning. The integration of linguistic tools such as LCP, borrowings, and CP significantly enhanced students' ability to predict vocabulary, identify borrowings, translate phrases, and recognize parts of speech. The improvements across all tasks suggest that providing students with linguistic scaffolding helps them build confidence and competence in foreign language learning.

While the results are promising, they also suggest areas for further investigation. For instance, tasks involving more complex sentence structures could benefit from additional linguistic support or more extensive practice. Moreover, the effectiveness of Aesopian narratives as a learning tool might be further examined in different language contexts or with a wider range of learners to assess its generalizability.

Ultimately, these findings contribute to our understanding of how predictable and familiar linguistic content- like Aesop's fables- can support language learners in acquiring new vocabulary and grammatical structures. By incorporating such content into language curricula, educators can provide students with an enjoyable, motivating, and effective way to develop language skills.

Conclusion

Combining the popularity of Aesopian narratives with the linguistic phenomenon of borrowing presents a valuable opportunity for language learners. Aesop's fables, being widely known and easily accessible, provide learners with engaging and relatable content are a real linguistic treasure. By leveraging the linguistic phenomenon of borrowing, learners can identify words in the fables that are borrowed from their native language or other languages they are familiar with. This recognition can help them infer the meaning of unfamiliar words in more than one language. Moreover, understanding the borrowing process between languages can deepen learners' appreciation for the "interconnectedness of languages and cultures" (Nash et al., 2015). Any student can acquire more foreign languages like Spanish, Italian or Turkish besides English and French to become multilingual if they are made aware of the potential of the mentioned linguistic principles. So, combine the four tools and your foreign language will unlock its entire secret and become proficient in them.

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Appendices
Appendix 1
Linguistic context predictability (LCP)
E.g. of the "The Lion and the Mouse"
Linguistic Context Predictability (LCP) is a concept that refers to the ability to anticipate or predict the meaning of words or phrases based on the surrounding context. For example, in the fable "The Lion and the Mouse," the setting of the story in a forest or jungle immediately suggests the presence of certain elements such as trees, animals, and

predators like lions. Words like "prey," "hunt," "hunters," "roar," "claws," and "teeth" are predictable given the presence of a lion as one of the main characters. So, let your mind play guessing games with LCP, it's proverbially fun!

Appendix 2
Grammatical items indicate the presence of nouns
Suffixes: For example, the suffix "-ı" is used to indicate the accusative case (e.g., "kitabı" means "the book"), and the suffix "-ler/-lar" indicates plurality (e.g., "kitaplar" means "books").
Demonstratives: Words like "this," "that," "these," and "those" are used as demonstratives in Turkish to indicate specific nouns. For example, "bu" means "this" and "şu" means "that." "These and those" mean "bunlar ve şunlar"
Possessive Pronouns: Turkish uses possessive pronouns to indicate possession. These pronouns are attached to the possessed noun as suffixes. For example, "kitabım" means "my book."
Quantifiers: Words that indicate quantity or amount are often used with nouns in Turkish. For example, "bir" means "one," "birkaç" means "a few," and "çok" means "many."
Numbers: Numbers ofen collocate with nouns. E.g "üç tüccar" (three merchants).
0   sıfır- 1 bir- 2 iki- 3 üç- 4 dört- 5 beş- 6 altı- 7 yedi- 8 sekiz- 9 dokuz- 10 on.

Grammatical items indicate the presence of verbs
Verbs in Turkish are typically characterized by various suffixes and markers that convey information about tense, aspect, mood, person, and plurality. Some of the key grammatical items that indicate the presence of verbs in Turkish include:
Personal Endings: These are suffixes that attach to the verb root to indicate the subject of the verb. They vary depending on the person and number of the subject. For example, in the verb "yazmak" (to write), the ending "-m" indicates the first person singular ("yazıyorum" means "I am writing").
Tense Markers: Turkish verbs can be marked for present, past, or future tense. These markers typically come before the verb root. For example, the suffix "-iyor" is used for the present continuous tense (e.g., "yazıyor" means "he/she is writing").
Aspect Markers: Turkish verbs can also be marked for aspect, indicating whether an action is completed or ongoing. For example, the suffix "-di" indicates the past tense (e.g., "yazdı" means "he/she wrote").
Mood Markers: Turkish verbs can be marked for mood, such as the subjunctive or imperative. For example, the suffix "-sın" is used for the second person singular imperative (e.g., "yazsın" means "write!").
Negative Markers: Turkish verbs can be negated by adding the suffix "-me" or "-ma" before the verb root. For example, "yazmıyorum" means "I am not writing."
Voice Markers: Turkish verbs can be marked for passive voice by adding the suffix "-n" or "-nıl" after the verb root. For example, "yazıldı" means "it was written."

Some basic syntactic structures
In Turkish, basic sentence structures follow a Subject- Object- Verb (SOV) order.
Here are some examples:
Subject + Verb: "Ali okur." (Ali reads.)
Subjec+ Object+ Verb: "Ben kitap okurum." (I read a book.)
Subject + Adverb + Verb: "O hızlı koşar." (He runs fast.)
Subject + object + Adverb +Verb: "Kedi fareyi hızlı yakalar." (The cat catches the mouse quickly.)
Adj + noun: "lezzetli peynir" (deliscous cheese)

Adj+article+noun : "lezzetli bir peynir" (A deliscious cheese)

Appendix 3

Basic notions in pronunciation

Vowels: Turkish has eight vowels, which are pronounced consistently:

Aa - like the "a" in "father"

Ee - like the "e" in "met"

Iı - similar to the "i" in "bit," but shorter

İi - like the "ee" in "see"

Oo - like the "o" in "hot"

Öö - like the "u" in "fur"

Uu - like the "oo" in "moon"

Üü - similar to the "u" in "blue"

Consonants: Most consonants in Turkish are pronounced as in English, but there are a few differences:

Cc - pronounced like the "j" in "jam"

Çç - pronounced like the "ch" in "chat"

Ğğ - known as "soft g," this letter lengthens the preceding vowel and is not pronounced itself

Şş - pronounced like the "sh" in "shoe"

Stress: Turkish is a language with a very regular stress pattern. Stress generally falls on the last syllable of a word.

Double Vowels: In Turkish, double vowels are pronounced as separate syllables. For example, "aile" is pronounced "a-i-le."

Diphthongs: Turkish has a few diphthongs, which are combinations of two vowel sounds pronounced in one syllable:

/ay/ as in "hayır" (no)

/ey/ as in "neyse" (anyway)

/oy/ as in "koy" (put)

Nasal Vowels: Turkish does not have nasal vowels like in French or Portuguese.