



## 18. VE 20. YÜZYILLARI ARASINDA OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NUN SOSYO-EKONOMİK DİL GÜCÜ VE TİCARET DİLİ TERCİHLERİ

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC POWER OF LANGUAGE AND TRADE LANGUAGE PREFERENCES OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE BETWEEN THE 18TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

BİLAL SÖYLEMEZ

#### Öz

Bu çalışmada ilk olarak para, güç ve dil kavramları arasındaki ilişkiler incelenecek ve açıklanacaktır. Bu üç kavramın birbiriyle ilişkileri esas alınarak “dilin sosyo-ekonomik gücü” kavramı mevcut örneklerle desteklenerek ele alınacaktır. Daha sonra bu bilgiler ışığında, 18. ile 20. yüzyıllar arasında devletin ticaretinde önemli bir rol oynayan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu şehirlerinin demografik yapısı ve bu şehirlerdeki yabancı ve yerli tüccarların etnik profilleri incelenecektir. Böylelikle bu şehirlerde ticarete en çok kullanılan diller belirlenecek ve ticarete tercih edilen diller üzerinden devlet ve dil nüfuzu değerlendirilmesi yapılacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dil, dilin sosyo-ekonomik gücü, para, prestij, ticaret.

#### Abstract

In this study, first of all, the relations between power, money and language phenomena will be examined and explained. Based on the relations of these three phenomena with each other, the concept of "socio-economic power of language" will be explained and supported with current examples. In line with this program, the demographic structures of the cities of the Ottoman Empire, which played an important role in the trade of the state between the 18th and 20th centuries, and the ethnic profiles of local and foreign merchants in these cities will be examined. Thus, the languages most used in trade in these cities will be determined and a state and language prestige reading will be made over the languages preferred in trade.

**Keywords:** Economy, language, money, prestige. socio-economic power of language, trade.

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#### Bilal SÖYLEMEZ

Social Sciences University of Ankara,  
Faculty of Political Science,  
International Relations



## 1. Introduction

Man is a social being by nature and is in constant contact with people. At this point, some facts are important when talking about human relations. One of them is power. A person naturally establishes a power relationship with other people with whom he is in a relationship, and based on this relationship, he either tries to be strong or tries to get along with the stronger one. Throughout history, there have been many tools that enable people to reach power, but this tool has long been money. Money is the tool that gives people power, if they have it. So people need money to get power. One of the most important things people need to reach money is communication, and this is where language comes into play. Language is the most important communication tool of people. When people choose the language they will use in communication, they prefer the language that will bring them the money in the shortest way. This situation should be expressed as the “socio-economic power of language”, that is, the potential of language to bring people closer to money. These languages are usually the languages of economically strong countries. The languages of economically strong nations are preferred by the people and they become active languages of trade.

## 2. Power, Money, Language Phenomena and Their Interrelationships

Power, money and language have always interacted with each other throughout history. In order to examine and interpret this interaction in detail and correctly, first of all, these three concepts should be examined separately. In this context; After examining the concepts of power, money and language separately, an analysis will be made by examining the relationships between these three concepts.

### 2.1. Strength

There is no single definition of what power is. Thinkers and researchers have made definitions by approaching from different points and have increased the diversity of definitions. German sociologist Max Weber while defining power ( *macht* ), Weber approaches it from a sociological perspective and reduces power to a social ground. According to Weber , power; It is the potential of an actor in a social relationship to fulfill his wishes, even when faced with resistance, regardless of whether the consequences are deterrent or not.<sup>1</sup>

Russell ; “Power” is the basic concept of social sciences. Russell states that power is the ability to direct the behavior of other people and therefore emphasizes that the concept of power is a relational concept. In other words, the concept of power refers to the relations between individuals, that is, social actors.<sup>2</sup>

Foucault , on the other hand, considers power as a set of actions. For him, power is a relationship, an action. But this is an action not directly on others, but on the current or future actions of others. The way to understand power is to look at power relations and how power is exercised. Power means directing behavior and the consequences that these behaviors can create.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gerth , H. H. , & Mills , CW (2014). *From Max Weber : essays in sociology* . Routledge .

<sup>2</sup> Bertrand , R. (1938). *Power : A New Social Analysis*, chapter 3. Allen and Unwin , London .

<sup>3</sup> Foucault, M. (2005). *Özne ve İktidar: Seçme Yazılar 2*. İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları.



- Power (  $P_{ab}$  ). The power of actor a over actor b is the amount of b's resistance that a could potentially overcome.
- Addiction (  $D_{ab}$  ). The dependence of actor a on actor b is directly proportional to a's motivational investment in b-mediated goals and inversely proportional to the existence of these goals outside the a-b relationship.
- (  $P_{ab} = D_{ba}$  ). a's power over b is equal to and based on b's dependence on a.

The whole theory revolves around these three concepts. Because power is based on the dependence of the other, most analyzes deal with the two variables that determine the dependence. Recognizing the reciprocal character of social relationships that include interdependence, a power-dependency relationship is represented as two sets of equations. However, this relationship can be balanced or unbalanced, which is expressed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{balanced: } & \left( \frac{P_{ab}=D_{ba} \quad "}{P_{ba}=D_{ab}} \right) \\ \text{unbalanced: } & \left( \frac{P_{ab}=D_{ba} \quad v}{P_{ba}=D_{ab}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

The balance of power does not neutralize power, because the relationship can be balanced at different levels of mutual power, resulting in a notion of cohesion in social relationships or groups. In an unbalanced relationship, someone with a power advantage (PA) is represented as  $PA_{ab}-P_{ab}-P_{ba}$  <sup>4</sup>.

## 2.2. Money

Traces of the first written records of one of the most important phases in the history of money, roughly defined as the use of precious metals as money, date back to BC. It is found in Mesopotamia and Egypt in the third millennium BC . In the millennia that followed, this practice continued throughout the world, first in Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia with the spread of coins, then through Western colonialism and the rise of modern industrial societies throughout the globe <sup>5</sup>.

The word money, which means "geld" in German, "i soldi" in Italian, "argent" in French , has passed into Turkish from Persian (para).<sup>6</sup> It is often described by economists in terms of its functions, most prominently as a medium of exchange, but also as a means of payment, a unit of account, and a store of value. These roles also express a logical explanation for how and why the use of money arose.<sup>7</sup>

Money comes into play as a third good during the exchange of two goods or services, allowing this exchange to take place at different times and places. While fulfilling the function of being a medium of exchange, it also performs the function of being a unit of account and value that enables these two goods and/or services subject to exchange to be expressed with the same unit of measurement. Since money serves the development of humanity and the needs of protecting the produced values, besides the two basic functions listed above, it is also seen as an element of accumulation. In modern times, we can say that in addition to these features of money, the feature of being an economic policy implementation tool in developed economies has been added.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Emerson , RM (1964). power-dependence relations : two experiments . Sociometry , 282-298.

<sup>5</sup> Eagleton, C., Williams, D. J., Cribb, J., Eagleton, C., Errington, E., & Kahya, F. (2011). Paranın tarihi. Türkiye İş Bankası.

<sup>6</sup> Özlük, D. (2019). Türkiye Türkçesinde Farsça Kökenli Kelimeler (Master's thesis, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü).

<sup>7</sup> Pamuk, S. (2000). *a monetary history of the Ottoman empire* . Cambridge University press .

<sup>8</sup> Keynes, J. M. , Moggridge , DE, & Johnson, ES (1971). the collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes ( Vol . 1, pp . 260-264). London : Macmillan .



### 2.3. Language

In the broadest sense of the term, language encompasses the means by which an individual's sensory, emotional and volitional experiences are expressed and transmitted to others. Sound, touch and body movements that convey auditory, tactile and visual impressions, respectively, can be used for this purpose. <sup>9</sup>Although language has taken place as a field of study supporting research in many social science disciplines, it actually has a much more important place. The thinkers have not refrained from expressing their views on language in the process from Ancient Greece to the present. Language occupied the agenda of the world of philosophy, especially in the 20th century, and even became the main agenda item of many thinkers such as Wittgenstein .

According to Heidegger , language is where man encounters in existence. “Language is the home of the being in which it exists by dwelling in it, in which man belongs to it by guarding the truth of existence”. Heidegger calls this mode of being that belongs to man as " Dasein ". When Heidegger says language is the home of being, he does not mean a simple accommodation built and owned by an individual. For Heidegger , language is a collective historical and linguistic accommodation that possesses this individual already, even before he learns to speak his own language.<sup>10</sup> In this way, Heidegger emphasizes the inclusive feature of language that includes the individual and associates language with culture.

Wittgenstein , on the other hand, says in the Tractatus that language paints the world. According to that; the picture is the representation of reality in language. It is thanks to the logical form that language has in common that language can portray the world. Logical form mediates the organization of the world on the one hand and language on the other. According to Wittgenstein, language and the world construct each other hand in hand, and therefore the individual is both the subject and the object of the world and language.<sup>11</sup>

When we try to determine the place of language in language-human relations, human appears as an entity that both has language and is surrounded by language. In other words, human should be taken into consideration because he is both the subject and the object of language. Since the act of self-actualization takes place in a world formed by language, its own language is important for it. Man's own language is his home, in this house he lives and determines himself. The most important thing to be said about human language in this determination is that there is no special human language, that is, the biological genus called "homo sapiens " does not have a language like the "language of bees". Instead, there are many languages in man, and there is also the act of learning language. All human languages are based on communicating something to someone. Without identification through language, no learning, no tradition, and no transmission from generation to generation takes place. In this respect, language is the carrier of all human actions.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Boas , F. (Ed.) (1938). “Language.” General Anthropology . New York : DC Heath and Company , p. 124-145

<sup>10</sup> Heidegger , M. (2001). Poetry language thought \_ Harper and row .

<sup>11</sup> Wittgenstein , L. (2013). tractatus logico-philosophicus . Routledge .

<sup>12</sup> Wien, H. (1959). Tarih İnsan ve Dil Felsefesi Üzerine Altı Konferans, (çev. İsmail Tunalı), İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları



## 2.4. Power and Language Relationship

Power, hegemony etc. They are related concepts and they are all related to language. While language continues to exist as a different perspective in social sciences, it has also affected the explanations brought to the phenomenon of power. At this point, it is important to understand the relationship between power and language.

Language is never a neutral means of expression. Discourses are expressions of power relations and reflect the practices and positions associated with these relations. The use of a discourse therefore makes it possible for the speaker to position his knowledge of a particular field in such a way that he can claim to be justified according to criteria set within the discourse. Such professional discourses give users the power to control others.<sup>13</sup>

“To speak is to exercise a power; to speak is to risk one's own power; language is as important as the concept of discourse in Foucault's analysis, who says, "To speak is to risk winning or losing everything" . Because without language, discourse is not possible. In order to be in power, language must form discourse.<sup>14</sup>

Gramsci says, language is constituted as an arrangement of communicative concepts and functions, not cultural or ideological values. Cultural difference exists above all at the level of communication and is valuable primarily in terms of 'fitness to the situation'. In other words, linguistic difference does not imply significant cultural specificity; but simply different ways or styles essentially have common functions and concepts. Gramsci's interest in the process of becoming hegemonic of some languages is important as debates about the dominance and legitimacy of English in many fields are currently in full swing. As Gramsci states, the use of language is closely related to education, culture, ideology and politics, and therefore cannot be considered apart from the problems of dependency and domination.<sup>15</sup>

Language enables the person to establish a power against the person with whom he/she is communicating, but besides this, language represents the one who has the power. When people who speak different mother tongues communicate with each other, the person whose mother tongue is the preferred language rises to the position of power in that conversation. Because language represents power itself, as well as the power of discourse that enables power to be established. Power is the mighty; that is, he who has the power and has the authority to make decisions.

A good example of this is the preference of translators in diplomatic negotiations, even if the two parties know each other's language. The use of mother tongue is a natural expression of national identity. If one of the diplomatic parties agrees to communicate in the mother tongue of the other, it means accepting the superiority of that native-speaking diplomatic party and naturally the superiority of that native-speaking nation. At this point, the native speaker rises directly to a superior position, that is, to a strong position.<sup>16</sup> A state whose language is preferred in a place for various reasons is either preferred because it is strong, or it becomes powerful over time because its language is spoken. In other words, language affects or explains inter-state power relations as well as interpersonal power relations.

At this point , we need to refer to Emerson's formulation again. According to Emerson , a's power over b is equal to b's dependence on a, i.e. (  $P_{ab} = D_{ba}$  ). Here, the preferred language in the communication between the parties makes the native speaker strong. The person who speaks that

<sup>13</sup> Layder , D. (2005). understanding social theory . sage.

<sup>14</sup> Foucault, M. (2022). Kelimeler ve şeyler. EA Publish.

<sup>15</sup> Ives , P. (2004). *Language and hegemony in Gramsci* ( pp . 144-160). London : Pluto press .





language as a foreign language accepts the power of the person who speaks that language as a mother tongue, because he agrees to speak that language. Here the native language in question represents power and let's call it "L". The foreigner who accepts to speak the mother tongue is dependent on the native speaker for various reasons and therefore he accepted his power. In this case, it is dependence. Let's call this reason "X". In this case, our formula becomes: (PLab = Dxba), that is, actor "b" is dependent on actor "a" to the degree of importance of cause "X", and "L" language of actor "a" gains importance for actor "b" in direct proportion to the importance of "X" reason, and it gives power to actor "a" in the same proportion.

## 2.5. Power – Money – Language Pyramid

Humans naturally want to survive. In other words, they are like a machine programmed to survive and adapts to the conditions in this direction or creates new conditions that will enable it to survive, when necessary. This understanding is found at a fundamental point in Hobbes' philosophy. According to him, on the basis of human behavior, his orientation and avoidance; "The desire to survive, the desire to continue to exist" lies. The most basic impulse in man, the ultimate goal of his desires and hatreds, is "survival". Man's greatest fear is the fear of death. For this reason, people want to survive and protect their existence. To achieve this, they need power. It is this sense of survival and power that lies at the root of human behavior. For this reason, Hobbes accepted that the most basic right of man is "the freedom to do anything to protect his own life".

Hobbes argues, there are two main rights that the law of nature grants to people. These are "self-defense" and "not obeying a state that is not strong enough to provide security of one's life". These natural rights are laws that the human mind makes clear to man. Both fundamental rights actually have a single purpose. It is also "preserving life and avoiding death". This is the reason for the existence of the state. If the state cannot fulfill this duty, the human being gets rid of the obedience debt by using this natural right.<sup>17</sup>

Nietzsche also associates the will to survive with power. According to him, the will to power symbolizes individualism and the instinct for obtaining power. In this framework, the individual turns to power by using knowledge, that is, his mind, in his struggle to survive and adapt to his changing environment.<sup>18</sup> In short, man needs power to survive, and in line with his power need and will, he tries to either be strong or find someone or something that is strong.

So, what makes a person strong? Since the first day of his existence on earth, man has tried to reach power in some way and has used different things as a tool in line with this effort. For example; consider a caveman. This caveman instinctively tries to survive. It must feed himself to survive. It must hunt in order to feed himself, and must use a spear or arrow to hunt. Here, this caveman uses arrows or spears to gain power, that is, he turns these hunting tools into tools in the process of accessing power. When we adapt the same situation to today, we see that money is used instead of these hunting tools. In other words, a person now uses money as a tool to obtain sufficient power in the process of reaching the food he needs for nutrition. Today this is called commerce.

<sup>16</sup> Baker, M. (1997). non-cognitive constraints and interpreter strategies in political interviews in *Translating sensitive Texts* ( pp . 111-129). brill

<sup>17</sup> Hobbes, T., & Missner, M. (2016). Thomas Hobbes : Leviathan ( Longman ) library of primary sources in philosophy ). Routledge

<sup>18</sup> Nietzsche, F. (2017). the will to power \_ Penguin UK .



So, what do people use to get money? One of the most important things in business is communication. This is where language comes into play. Language is the most important communication tool of people. When people choose the language they will use in communication, they prefer the language that will bring them the money in the shortest way.

The rate of foreign language proficiency of shopkeepers in Istanbul - Grand Bazaar is a good example for this. A research was conducted under the leadership of Üsküdar University Head of Sociology Department Prof. Dr. Ebulfez Süleymanlı, on "Sociological Analysis of the Contribution of the Craftsmen of the Grand Bazaar to Culture and Tourism from Past to Present". Avrasya University Department of Social Work Dr. in which Faculty Member Nihan Kalkandeler also took an active role.

In the research, it is important that it determines the foreign language knowledge, comprehension and speaking proficiency, since tradesmen who sell to 30.6 percent domestic tourists and 62.9 percent foreign tourists are in constant communication with tourists. 74.2 percent of the participants prefer to communicate mainly in English. English is followed by Arabic with 30.6 percent, Russian with 17.7 percent, German and Spanish with 9.7 percent, French with 6.5 percent and Persian with 1.6 percent. The rate of tradesmen who can both understand and speak several foreign languages is 25.6 percent. The rate of tradesmen who have language problems is recorded as only 14.5 percent.

"Do you prefer to attract the attention of domestic or foreign tourists?" 75.8 percent of the participants answered the question "foreign tourists" and 12.9 percent "domestic tourists".<sup>19</sup>

When choosing the languages they prefer to communicate, the shopkeepers of the Grand Bazaar decide according to the ethnic density of the tourists. In other words, they prefer to learn the languages most spoken by incoming tourists. This is an indication of the utilitarian approach of the tradesmen. Artisans approach language learning from a utilitarian perspective, because language is a tool on the road to money.

The three languages most spoken by shopkeepers are English, Arabic and Russian, because if tradesmen can speak these languages, they can communicate with tourists who speak these languages, so they can make more sales and earn more money. In other words, language connotes money in the minds of tradesmen. Here we need to talk about the concept of "socio-economic power of the language". The most learned language is the most profitable language. In other words, the most learned language is the language with the highest socio-economic power.

A similar situation is also valid for Edirne, which is located on the Bulgarian border. After the rapid depreciation of the Turkish lira, many tourists from Bulgaria flocked to Edirne for shopping due to the exchange rate difference. Bulgarians who come to the city mostly prefer the city markets as well as the shops between the shopping malls and the street . With this influx, while tradesmen hung signs in Bulgarian in their shops, some companies started to use only promotional posters written in Bulgarian . In a news broadcast by CNN Türk on 08.08.2022, the following statements were included:

<sup>19</sup> Marketing Türkiye, "Kapalı Çarşı Esnafılığı Bitiyor mu?", erişim: 20.11.2022, <https://www.marketingturkiye.com.tr>.

Marketing Türkiye, "Kapalı Çarşı Esnafılığı Bitiyor mu?".

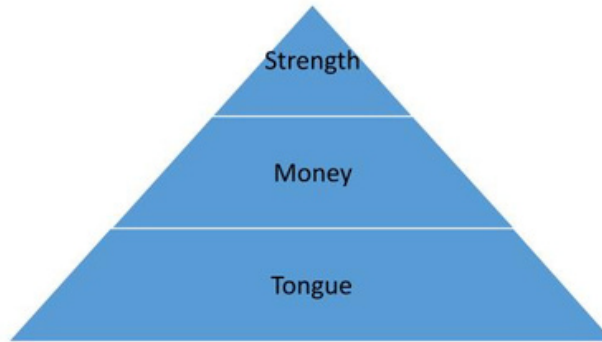


“Gülhan Ali, who came from Bulgaria, stated that the signs in Bulgarian were positive and said, ‘I think it is very nice. Because people are struggling. The shopkeepers of this place benefit from foreigners. I think it should not be reduced, it should increase’ she said.”<sup>20</sup>

As we can see from the news text, tradesmen use Bulgarian to attract Bulgarian tourists. The reason for this is the socio-economic power of Bulgarian, that is, the potential of Bulgarian to bring tradesmen to money.

It is possible to see a similar situation in the Georgian city of Batumi. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the activities of Turkish businessmen began to penetrate the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. Cultural interaction gained momentum with the spread of Islamic education for Georgian youth in the region, along with the economic activity led by the Turks. With the impact of the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, Turkish influence continued to increase. The first striking project of the Turks was the construction of the Sheraton Hotel in 2006. In 2007, two airports were built, one in Tbilisi and the other in Batumi. From 2011, Turks began to control the Batumi real estate market. The biggest Turkish influence in Adjara was energy projects such as hydroelectric power plants. When the economic superiority in the region is in the hands of the Turks, it also affects the rate of Turkish Language usage in this region.

Turkish signs stand out on Georgian streets. Kutaisi, one of the central streets of Batumi, has long been known as the Turkish corner. Mostly Turkish is spoken in Kutaisi than Georgian<sup>21</sup>. This is an example of the socio-economic power of Turkish Language.



As seen in the pyramid above, there is a hierarchical order in the power-money-language relationship from language to power. To put it briefly; money is the tool that gives people power, if they have it. So people need money to get power. One of the most important things people need to reach money is communication. Language is important here. Language is the most important communication tool of people. When people choose the language they will use in communication, they prefer the language that will bring them the money in the shortest way. This situation should be expressed as the “socio-economic power of the language”, that is, the potential of language to bring people closer to money.

<sup>20</sup> CNN Türk, “Edirne'de Bulgarca Tabela Tartışması”, erişim: 20.11.2022, <https://www.cnnturk.com/>. CNN Türk, “Edirne'de Bulgarca Tabela Tartışması”

<sup>21</sup> Haber7, “Oraya Gidenler Hangi Ülkede Olduğunu Şaşıyor”, erişim: 20.11.2022, <https://ekonomi.haber7.com/>. Haber7, “Oraya Gidenler Hangi Ülkede Olduğunu Şaşıyor”





### 3.1. The Social and Economic Structure of the Ottoman Empire in its Last Two Centuries

The social and economic life of the Ottoman Empire in the last period was adversely affected by the wars and the lack of merit. The fact that the West played an increasingly important role in the Ottoman economic life deepened the place of non-Muslims, who constituted the bourgeois part of the Ottoman Empire, in the Ottoman economy. With the effect of this situation, there were also efforts to create a Muslim-Turkish Bourgeoisie.

Population of the Ottoman Empire is generally categorized as Muslims and Non-Muslims. In the last period of the Ottoman Empire, non-Muslims took a great place in the social and economic field. Non-Muslims generally lived in cities and operated in non-agricultural areas. Muslims, on the other hand, generally lived in rural areas and were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. It is also known that minorities had a significant place in the domestic and foreign trade of the period.

The Ottoman's continuous loss of territory and the liberalization of the economy and its integration with the world economy had transformed the distribution relations in the country in favor of non-Muslims. The middle strata of the empire, which were getting stronger, had difficulty in finding a common denominator regarding Ottomanism as an upper identity. Despite the Tanzimat reforms, the religious position of the state was making the non-Muslim Ottomans uneasy and reinforcing their community identities. In the 19th century, as a result of opening up, Ottoman foreign trade and financial obligations elevated non-Muslims and foreigners who were active in these fields to a different position in the Ottoman lands. The real "bourgeois" of the Ottoman Empire that took shape in the 19th century were largely non-Muslim Ottomans, Levantines, and foreigners settled in port cities. As the Ottoman Empire opened up, the Muslim craftsmen, who continued their production with traditional methods, became relatively poor under the conditions of free competition, and in some regions they lost their craft.<sup>22</sup>

As can be seen, the Ottoman bourgeoisie is largely composed of non-Muslims. In addition, this bourgeoisie was engaged in commerce, not industry. The Turkish and Muslim bourgeoisie were weak, scattered, unorganized and largely dependent on the current situation<sup>23</sup>. One of the reasons for this weakness is the Turkish-British Trade Agreement signed with England in 1838 and other trade agreements signed with other European States in the years following this agreement. These treaties made the Ottoman Empire a market for the west. Trade was out of the control of the state and all foreign traders gained the right to trade freely within the borders of the Ottoman State. In addition, another disadvantage of local traders against foreign traders is that they have to pay internal customs duty in addition to trade taxes.<sup>24</sup>

For the 17th. Century, the British dominated the Ottoman-European trade. The large profits of the Levant Company merchants, who generally bought raw materials such as raw silk, mohair, cotton and licorice in the Ottoman countries, and sold finished products such as woolen fabrics and metalware, contributed significantly to the capital accumulation in England and the development of British mercantilism. For the Ottoman economy, "it is an economy with scarce supply and abundant demand; That's why we have to keep it," said Colbert. The French, who made important strides with Colbert's economic policy, gained importance in the trade of the Ottoman Empire with Europe in the 18th century. The French were also selling more industrial goods to the Ottomans. However, the presence of some low-quality cotton fabrics, cotton and mohair yarn among their imports from the Ottoman

<sup>22</sup> Toprak, Z. (2012). Türkiye'de Milli İktisat: 1908-1918, Doğan Kitap, 1. Baskı, İstanbul.

<sup>23</sup> Boratav, K. (1988). Türkiye iktisat tarihi, 1908-1985 (Vol. 1). Gerçek Yayınevi.

<sup>24</sup> Yapp, ME (1982). Ages Keyder : The definition of a peripheral economy : Turkey 1923 1929.( Studies in Modern Capitalism .) viii, 158 pp

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press : Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme , 1981.£16 . *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* , 45 (3), 590-591



Empire, even in the late 18th century, is interesting in that the Ottoman economy had not yet lost its artisanal industries enough to become an absolute exporter of raw materials.<sup>25</sup>

The balance in the commercial facilities granted to the European states deteriorated against the Ottomans from the beginning of the 18th century. In the said period, a great increase in production was achieved when steam power began to replace manual power in Europe.

As a natural result of this, states such as France, England and Russia entered into a fierce competition to obtain the Ottoman market. After 1774, the way was opened for the Ottoman Greeks, who wanted to break through the capitulations, to become consuls or to act as foreign merchants by entering the consulates as servants. In addition, the official titles of the consuls, most of whom were local, who made money through trade, agriculture, usury, provided them with an advantageous position in their relations with the government.<sup>26</sup>

Considering these changes, we can say that; Ottoman control over the country's economy in the eighteenth century was considerably weaker than in the sixteenth century. The most important reason for this was that the European states existed in the Ottoman lands with their consuls, captains and merchants, as well as money and employment opportunities. In addition, Christian merchants often entered the service of a consulate as an interpreter to ease their tax burdens, with an emphasis on approaching foreign merchants and consuls.<sup>27</sup>

In general, we can see that both non-Muslims and western powers played an active role in Ottoman trade. The absence of a Muslim-Turkish Ottoman bourgeoisie also played a major role in this. This is one of the main reasons why economic power was generally in the hands of non-Muslims. As we explained in detail under the previous headings, we know that modern people use money as a tool to gain power. This means that the holder of the money has reached a position of power. Considering the recent general economic situation of the Ottoman state, we can say that a similar situation is valid for non-Muslims and Western states as well. Since non-Muslims and Western states held the money, they rose to a stronger position compared to the Turks.

### 3.2. Preferred Languages in Commerce in the Ottoman State

The Ottoman Empire had a multinational structure and some nations were prominent in commercial activities. Among the Ottoman subjects, Greeks, Armenians and Jews were active in trade. Even though they were not citizens, Western nations also gained economic power with the privileges given. This situation made the languages of these nations strong in trade. A local representative who knew the market conditions was indispensable for foreign traders who wanted to do business in Anatolia, and these representatives should know Greek or Turkish and general business conditions. German manufacturers, in particular, employed representatives who knew local languages and local habits, thus addressing the market. The intermediaries, usually local non-Muslims, were the guides for the foreign trader. However, over time, some of these intermediaries opened their own trading houses and started to import European products to the Ottoman country themselves or started exporting directly from the Ottoman country. The trade with England and the Ottoman country was largely in the hands of these intermediaries. Elements such as the higher education levels of the local non-Muslims, their business understanding, commercial experience and skills, knowledge of Muslim-Turkic traditions and languages and their familiarity with European languages made them indispensable partners for European traders.

<sup>25</sup> Tezel, Y. S. (2002). Cumhuriyet döneminin iktisadi tarihi:(1923-1950). Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı

<sup>26</sup> Çadırcı, M. (1991). Tanzimat döneminde Anadolu kentleri'nin sosyal ve ekonomik yapıları (Vol. 124). Turk Tarih Kurumu Basmevi.

<sup>27</sup> Faroqhi, S. (1997). İktisat Tarihi (17. ve 18. yüzyıllar). Türkiye Tarihi, 3, 191-215.



In addition to their own trade houses in centers such as Istanbul and Izmir, some of them also opened branches/representations in various centers in Europe. Business houses of Greeks and Armenians were especially common in England.<sup>28</sup>

A series of reports on the financial situation of the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the 19th century, prepared by the officials responsible for the Ottoman desk of England, the greatest political and economic power of the period, were translated into Turkish and made into a book. This work, which was compiled and published from the British archives, is very important in that it is based on first-hand sources and expresses the official views of England, the greatest imperialist power of the period, on the Ottoman finances. In the book, there are reports written on Ottoman budgets, problems in the financial system, the introduction of taxes and the Düyûn - ı Umumiye in 1861, 1863, 1869, 1883 and 1892. The reports compiled by Nezih VARGAN "British Reports on Ottoman Finances (1861-1892)" were published by the "Turkish Ministry of Finance, Research, Planning and Coordination Board". The work, which is in the Central Library of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, gives important information about the languages used in the Ottoman trade.

Lingua franca in the Ottoman market was French. French was preferred in commercial transactions and correspondence with abroad, because Ottoman merchants and non-Muslim subjects were more familiar with French. In addition, knowing Greek was beneficial in trade. The language spoken by everyone who directly or indirectly engaged in trade in İzmir was Greek, and French was widely spoken in business circles as it was taught in every school. The most useful language for business purposes in Edirne was French. Greek and Spanish were also spoken in the markets. In Izmit, the merchants were in contact with foreign countries through the big business houses in Istanbul, and the merchants who tried to establish direct contact with the English trading houses were having difficulties because of these companies' neglect of the French language. Commercial travelers to be sent from England around Adana were required to know at least French. Since French is dominant in commercial life, it was emphasized that price and product lists, catalogs and advertisements to be sent to the country should be in French. Catalogs and price lists to be sent in Adana were required to be in French or Greek. The most useful language in trade in Trabzon was French. After the First World War, it was stated that the English merchants who wanted to trade in the country should use Greek or French.<sup>29</sup>

The activeness of non-Muslims in commercial activities has also been the reason why they are active in trade education. For this reason, especially for commercial purposes, French and Greek language trainings were given. The school that was opened in this sense and can be considered as the first private commercial school of the Ottoman Empire is the Elen (Greek) Commercial School or Heybeliada Greek Commercial School. The school, which was founded by wealthy Greek merchants and bankers during the reign of Mahmut II, set an example for many schools established in this area. In addition, the efforts of the Greek bourgeoisie to create a qualified middle class and the need for staff of the Greek merchants engaged in trade were met from these schools. Greeks played an important role in the field of banking and finance as well as trade in the Ottoman Empire. The Western life experience gained together with the established commercial relations has created extremely creative effects on the Greeks. Economic development has created a new intellectual segment that presents a historical past to their ethnic communities and interprets the future in line with the openings brought by enlightenment. This segment has become more active in trade day by day and has had a say. They sent their children to Western countries, which they thought would be better for education, thanks to the wealth they gained in order to continue their commercial activities, especially in the hands of the Greeks, and at the same time, they established schools within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the foundations of the first trade schools in the Ottoman Empire were laid by the Greeks.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Baskıcı, M. Osmanlı Piyasasında Ticaret: Yabancı Tüccarların Dikkat Etmesi Gereken Hususlar (1870-1920). Ankara Üniversitesi Sbf Dergisi, 64(01), 39-55

<sup>29</sup> Vargan, N. (ed), Osmanlı Maliyesi Hakkında İngiliz Raporları (1861-1892), T.C. Maliye Bakanlığı, Araştırma, Planlama ve Koordinasyon Kurulu Başkanlığı, Yayın No: 355, Ankara 2000.

<sup>30</sup> Taşdemir, S. S. Osmanlı Devleti'ndeki Rumların Ticaret Eğitimine Bakış Açısı; İstanbul-Heybeliada Rum Ticaret Mektebi ile Milli Lisanlar ve Ticaret Mektebi. Muhasebe ve Finans Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi, (2021 Özel Sayı), 155-176.



## Conclusion

As can be seen, the French and Greeks, who were economically strong in the last period of the Ottoman state, also influenced the languages used actively in trade. French and Greek were used more and more and became the languages of communication in Ottoman trade. French and Greek were also used by Turkish subjects in commercial activities. French and Greek were taught in trade schools.

We need point to Emerson's formulation again. The preference of French and Greek in the communication between the parties makes the French and Greeks strong. Turks and other nations accept the power of the French and Greeks because they agree to speak French or Greek. Because Turks and other nations are dependent on the French and Greeks for economic reasons. If we express this relationship with a formula, our formula becomes as follows:

“P” for “Power”, “D” for “Dependence”, “G” for “Greek”, “g” for “Greeks”, “F” for “French Language”, “f” for “French People”, “t” for “Turks”, “E” for “Economic reasons”;

“PGgt = DEtg or PFft = Detf”. The “t” actor is dependent on the “r”/“f” actor in the degree of importance of the “E” cause. And the “R”/“F” language of the “r”/“f” actor gains importance for the “t” actor in direct proportion to the importance of the “E” reason and gives the “r”/“f” actor the same power.

As we mentioned under the title Power - Money - Language Pyramid, there is a hierarchical order in the power - money - language relationship from language to power. Well; Turks and other nations used Greek or French to reach money. Thus, they had enough power to reach the money and continue their lives.

If we approach it in line with the concept of "socio-economic power of the language", the fact that they are actively used in trade indicates that French and Greek are economically strong. In other words, these two languages are the two languages with the highest potential to bring money to the parties in the Ottoman trade. Both foreign traders and Turkish subjects used French and Greek in their commercial activities, so they accepted the superiority of these two languages.

As we mentioned earlier, Wittgenstein said that “language is the home of man”. In other words, language is the domain of man's dominance, the region in which he has power. If we approach from this point of view, the acceptance of French and Greek in trade means the acceptance of these two languages and therefore the power/dominance of these two nations.

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