



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Linguistics

**A LINGUISTIC STUDY ON THE SYSTEM OF PERSONAL NAME SIGNS IN  
TURKISH SIGN LANGUAGE (TİD)**

Abdullah Topraksoy

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2015



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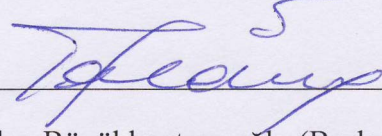
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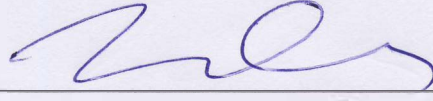
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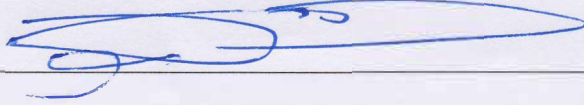
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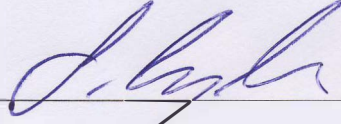
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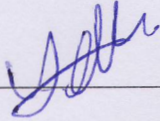
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## BİLDİRİM

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Abdullah Topraksoy

*To my Precious parents who was always, and Still with me*

*And*

*To my Love with whom I feel spirit and prime of my life*

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## ÖZET

TOPRAKSOY, Abdullah. *Türk İşaret Dili (TİD)' nde Kişi Özel Adları Üzerine Dilbilimsel Bir Çalışma*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2015.

Kişi adları; dil, kültürel ortam, toplumsal sınıf, etnik yapı vb. etmenlere bakılmaksızın dünyanın her yerinde kullanılmaktadır. Ancak, bu adların nasıl kullanıldığı ve nasıl ifade edildiği dile ve kültüre bağlı olarak değişebilmektedir. İşiten bireyler kendi kişi adlarını kullanıp duyabilirken; sağır bireyler bu adların yerine işaret adlarını kullanırlar çünkü kendi kişi adlarının sesletimini dahi duyamadıklarından ve adlarının toplumsal ve dilbilimsel öneminin kendilerine öğretilmesinin oldukça güç olmasından dolayı kişi adları işaret dillerinde erişilebilir değildir. İşaret adlarının algılanması, oluşumu ve sınıflandırılması; görsel bilgiye, sağır toplumdaki kültürel inanışlara ve dilsel ifade etme yoluna bağlıdır. Bu çalışma, Türk İşaret Dili(TİD)' nde işaret adlarının oluşumunu inceleyen ilk çalışma olmasıyla birlikte, Türk İşaret Dili'nde işaret adlarına ilişkin sistemi incelemeyi ve ad verme davranışını, kategoriler ve oluşturma yöntemleri bakımından tanımlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, anadili TİD olan ve Ankara'da işitme engelliler derneklerine mensup olan 25 sağır kişi çalışmanın katılımcıları olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu katılımcılara, kişisel yaşamları ve kendi işaret adları hakkında bilgi edinmeyi amaçlayan birtakım sorular içeren bir anket işaret dili tercümanı aracılığıyla bireysel olarak uygulanmıştır. Ardından, her bir katılımcıdan kendi işaret adını işaret ederek göstermesi istenmiş ve bu süreçte katılımcılardan görüntü kaydı alınmıştır. Daha sonra, aynı katılımcılardan kendi işaret adlarının yanı sıra, yerli/yabancı bazı ünlü kişiler ve karakterler için de işaret adlarını göstermeleri istenmiş; yine bu süreçte de katılımcılardan görüntü kaydı alınmıştır. Veri değerlendirme aşamasında, katılımcılardan işaret adlarıyla ilgili alınan veriler, işaret parametrelerine göre sistemli düzenlilikleri ve farklılıklarına bakılarak yüzdeler hesaplanıp çözümlenmiş ve işaret adları belirli kategorilere ayrılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, Türk İşaret Dili'nde dört farklı işaret ad grubu olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu kategoriler, diğer işaret dillerinde



bulunan kategorilerle benzerlik taşımaktadır. İşaret parametrelerine göre yapılan inceleme sayesinde, Türk İşaret Dili'ndeki kişi işaret adlarının kuralla dayalı ve sistemli örüntüler olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, çalışmada Türk İşaret Dili'nde ad verme davranışının, sağır kimliği ve toplulukla olan ilişki bakımından önemli kültürel değerler taşıdığı ortaya konulmuştur. Sağır toplumun, diğer kültürlerde olduğu gibi doğru ad seçimi, adın özgünlüğü gibi temel değerleri bulunmaktadır. Alanyazında benzer birkaç çalışma ile birlikte bu çalışma, adbilim alanına yeni bir çalışma konusu sunmaktadır. Son olarak, sağır toplumu özgün bir kültürel grup olarak anlamının yanında, bu çalışma, gelecekte oluşturulması muhtemel bir TİD isim envanteri oluşumuna katkı sağlayacak ilk ve önemli bir basamak olarak değerlendirilebilir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** İşaret dili, Türk İşaret Dili, kişi işaret adları, işaret parametreleri, sağır kültür, sağır kimlik

## ABSTRACT

TOPRAKSOY, Abdullah. *A Linguistic Study on the System of Personal Name Signs in Turkish Sign Language(TİD)*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2015.

Personal names are used throughout the world irrespective of language, cultural setting, social class, ethnicity, and etc. However, how these names can be expressed and used can differ depending on both language and culture. Moreover, while hearing individuals are able to use and hear their personal (phonetic/official) names, Deaf individuals use name signs, particular signs associated with the individuals' names, as a way to identify themselves to others particularly within the Deaf community because personal names are not accessible in sign languages: it is difficult to teach social and linguistic significance of personal names to Deaf people, as they cannot hear the pronunciation of these names. The perception, formation and categorization of personal name signs is based on visual information, cultural beliefs of the Deaf community and linguistic means of expression. Present study which is a preliminary one for the formation of personal name signs in Turkish Sign Language (TİD) aims at investigating the system of personal name signs and describing the naming behavior in TİD with reference to the categories and to the methods of forming personal name signs. To that end, twenty-five native Deaf signers of TİD have been selected as the participants of the study. A questionnaire, including a number of questions related to background information about their personal life and to their personal name signs, has been applied to each participant individually via a sign language interpreter. Afterwards, each participant has been requested to sign his/her name sign(s) and each individual has been recorded by a video camera during the signing process of their own name sign(s). In addition to their own name signs, the same participants have also been asked to demonstrate name signs for some public figures and popular characters from the hearing community individually and this procedure has also been recorded by a video camera. In order to evaluate the data, personal name signs of the participants have been sorted out and they have been

split into categories based on their frequencies and percentages. Moreover, personal name signs have also been examined in terms of the parameters of sign structure so as to account for associating systematic patterns. The results of the study have shown that there are four categories of personal name signs in TİD: Descriptive, Arbitrary, Initialised-descriptive and Loan/borrowed name signs. These categories are the same or similar to those found in other sign languages such as ASL, BSL, ESL and NZSL. Thanks to the analysis of personal name signs according to the parameters of sign structure, results have also shown that the personal name signs in TİD observed in the study have rule-governed and systematic patterns. In addition, name sign practices in the present study illuminate certain important cultural values in regard to deaf identity and connection with the group. The deaf community has, as in any other cultural group, basic values and customs that most members follow such as uniqueness of name signs, name signs as identity and picking the right name signs. Along with a few more studies of its kind in the sign language literature, this study contributes to the field of onomastics in offering a rather novel topic of study. Finally, this study can be regarded as an initial and a significant step as a contribution to the creation of a prospective corpus of name inventory in TİD as well as understanding Deaf community as a distinct cultural group in Turkey.

**Keywords:** Sign language, Turkish Sign Language, personal name signs, signing parameters, Deaf culture, Deaf identity.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The nature of personal names has been cogitated in linguistics within the context of onomastics - the scientific study of names-. A person's name is associated with several legal and cultural norms. Perceptions on attributing personal names vary according to the society, but certain common features are evident, such as choosing the right name, the uniqueness of the name, and the name as an expression of personal identity (Paales 2010: 319). Ancient Estonians believed that a mysterious connection existed between people and their names because one's name was seen as an integral part of one's soul, containing certain elements of one's personality (Loorits 1990 in Paales 2010:318).

When considering personal names in terms of onomastics, their classification is determined by various features. In general, naming behaviour is bound to the language and culture, and personal names are presented and used in many ways. For instance, in most cultures it is customary for individuals to be given at least two names: one is the *first name* or *given name* and the other is the *second name* or *surname*. However; there are some exceptions to this custom: Westerners often insert a third or more names between the given name and surnames; Chinese and Hungarian names have the family name preceding the given name; females often retain their maiden names (their family surname) or combine, using a hyphen, their maiden name and the surname of their husband; some East Slavic nations insert the patronym<sup>1</sup> between the given name and the family name; in Iceland the given name is used with the patronym, or matronym<sup>2</sup> and surnames are rarely used (Nomenclature, 2014).

The name category is linguistically universal and thus is also present in sign languages. Different sign languages have developed their own personal naming systems. Undoubtedly, Deaf<sup>3</sup> people have their own phonetic (official, verbal) names. Just like any hearing children; deaf children are also named with a phonetic name by their

<sup>1</sup> Patronym refers to a name derived from the first name of the father.

<sup>2</sup> Matronym refers to a name derived from the first name of the mother.

<sup>3</sup> The capitalization of *Deaf* has become a convention within both the Deaf studies literature and the Deaf community for referring to people who not only have a hearing loss but also identify themselves as "Deaf" socially, linguistically, and culturally with other Deaf people who use sign language. This spelling is in contrast to *deaf*, which denotes hearing loss but not necessarily a cultural or linguistic identity as being a part of a signing community.

parents after birth. However; as researchers of name signs from New Zealand have pointed out, phonetic names are not accessible in the signed discourse: it is difficult to teach their social and linguistic significance to Deaf children, as they cannot hear the pronunciation of these names (McKee & McKee 2000: 9 in Paales 2010: 326). Therefore, apart from their phonetic names, there is a common tendency to attribute personal name signs (person-denoting name signs) to the Deaf and hard of hearing people in Deaf communities. Moreover, name signs in sign languages represent a viable tradition regarding language and heritage; their formation and perception is based on visual information, historic cultural space, cultural beliefs of the group, and linguistic means of expression (Paales 2011: 47). In addition, name signs have been defined as part of Deaf folklore and a type of playful language creation (Klima & Bellugi 1979: 319–339; Rutherford 1993: 129–135; Carmel 1996: 197–200).

The pioneer of name sign research, Deaf linguist Samuel J. Supalla studied the personal name signs of American Deaf people (Supalla 1992). In different sign languages, onomastic studies were mostly related to personal name signs (Rainò 2000, 2004, 2005 for Finnish Sign Language; Hedberg 1994 for Swedish Sign Language and Delaporte 2002 for French Sign Language). Less attention has been paid to place name signs and other name signs (e.g. ethnonyms). Apart from their official names, the tendency of Deaf to attribute distinctive name signs to the other members of the Deaf community reflects the idea of “Deaf culture”. In various Deaf communities, as in Estonia, the process of name sign formation involves reference to a person’s notable visible features such as a mole, scar, missing limb, freckles, etc (Paales 2011: 49). As a hearing person, a name researcher should not be prejudicial and judgmental or should not decide, based on such personal name signs, that Deaf people are insensitive and rude. Personal connotations embedded in name signs derive from the peculiarity of the world perception of a Deaf person and do not necessarily mean that they should be interpreted as negative or mean (McKee & McKee 2000: 26). Paales (2011:49) states that if you ask whether a Deaf person “prefers” his/her official name or name sign, then the preference is undoubtedly given to his/her name sign as it is a symbol of his/her own Deaf culture and identity.

Generally speaking, a personal name sign and a personal name can be used to identify and differentiate people and their names from other people; but personal name signs have an additional function to emphasize the feeling of togetherness. Indeed, personal name signs are not used to address a person in the course of a conversation. Rather, a name sign has the function of indicating identity and solidarity among the members in a Deaf community. Further, personal name signs reflect whether one belongs to the Deaf community or has some relationship with it. The members of Deaf communities conventionally use appropriate personal name signs to denote their friends and others. Personal name signs represent a lexical group within sign language, which has major importance for the development of a Deaf person's self-esteem and for intra-group communication (Paales 2010: 319). There are cultural differences in the social values incidental to the practice of forming and using name signs in different communities.

Thus, on the one hand, the moment of attributing a personal name sign signifies the entry of that person into the sign language community, by creating a connection with the history and language of the group. On the other hand, a name sign is a linguistically efficient personal denotation; a cultural anchor for coping both in the sign language community and hearing society (Paales 2011:49).

Personal name signs are mostly signed near the head, face, or chest; if a particular name sign has not yet been developed, finger spelling of the given name and / or surname is used, as Paales (2011:49) reports. One significant thing distinguishing the naming behaviour in western hearing communities from Deaf communities is that usually Deaf children are given their personal name signs by their Deaf contemporaries at school. For example, Chinese researchers Yau & He (1990:245 in Paales 2011:50) describe a situation in which the newcomers are given a name sign by older co-students at the school for Deaf in China. Meadow (1977: 240 in Paales 2011:50), referring to the American Deaf community, points out three periods when a Deaf person is most likely to obtain a personal name sign: 1) in childhood (Deaf children of Deaf parents); 2) at a special school for Deaf (contemporaries); 3) in high school (Deaf co-students). Another important point is that it is more difficult to change one's name sign in a Deaf community than to change a personal (phonetic) name on their identity card. Thus, for instance, it is rather complicated for Deaf individuals in some Deaf communities, like in China, to change their name signs and in most cases the personal name sign obtained at

school will accompany a Deaf person throughout his or her life (Yau & He 1990: 249–250). In the same vein, changing of name signs is not common in the Palestinian Deaf community (Strauss-Samaneh 2001: 595). However; as Paales (2010:328) put forths, “Deaf communities in the United States and Europe appear to be more flexible in the alteration of name signs”. For these communities, a change of a personal name sign is possible in connection with a reference person’s different stages of life. For example, in the case of women, the name sign may change when they get married. Apart from this, changing a name sign and getting a new one may also arise when a Deaf person gets involved in a different Deaf community or takes on a new role in the same community in relation to a group of signers, such as getting a job as a teacher in a Deaf school. In this sense, name signs are like nicknames in that they both develop in social groups and mark in-group social statuses and social relationships among the members of the community (Morgan et al. 1979 in McKee & McKee 2000: 24). Moreover, like nicknames in spoken languages, name signs incapsulate the people’s entry to socialization in the signing community. On the contrary, Meadow (1977:243) and Mindess (1990: 14) point out that name signs and nicknames have a slightly different function. For the clarity between name signs in sign languages and nicknames entitled in spoken languages, McKee & McKee (2000: 25) states:

However, unlike most nicknames, name signs remain the primary identity symbol for Deaf people throughout life because participation in the “closed” social system of the sign language community is likely to continue and to remain of primary significance in Deaf people’s identity.

### **1.1. THE NEED FOR THE STUDY**

As noted earlier, name signs represent a viable tradition with respect to language and heritage; their formation, perception and attribution is based on visual information, historic cultural space, cultural beliefs of the Deaf community, and linguistic means of expression. The practice of using and forming name signs can vary among Deaf communities. What is more, the formation and attribution of a new name sign shows that the person has joined a sign language community, i.e. a sort of initiation. Although some studies have been done on personal name signs in different sign languages and researchers have described sign name customs in various Deaf communities including

the United States (Meadow 1977; Mindess 1990; Supalla 1990, 1992), China (Yau & He 1989), Sweden (Hedberg 1994), New Zealand (McKee & McKee 2000), Greece (Kourbetis & Hoffmeister 2002), France (Delaporte 2002), Belgium (Van Mulders 2005) and Estonia (Paales 2010, 2011); little or no information has been found on personal name signs in Turkish Sign Language (TİD henceforth)<sup>4</sup>. Descriptions of personal name sign systems in countries stated above and the gap in the TİD literature regarding personal name signs became the motivation behind carrying out the present study.

Carrying out such a study and the prospective collection of personal name signs in TİD can allow access to the name heritage of Deaf people in Turkey. Further, by doing so, this study can be seen as a contribution to the prospective establishment of a comprehensive corpus regarding personal name signs of the Deaf community in Turkey. Last but not least, studying personal name signs in TİD can shed light on the understanding of the cultural heritage as well as in-group attitudes of Deaf having their own linguistic and cultural identity in Turkey.

## **1.2. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.2.1. Aim of the Study**

Noticing the gap in the literature on studies concerning personal name signs in TİD, this study aims to describe the personal naming system in TİD with a linguistic viewpoint. More specifically, this study aims to describe personal naming system of TİD and methods of forming personal name signs with reference to naming categories and to the parameters of sign structure, and also to contribute to the further studies on TİD by being the first attempt on the linguistic analysis of personal name signs in TİD.

<sup>4</sup> As Aan (2007: 2) states, “ ‘TİD’ is an acronym representing the initial letters of each word in ‘Türk İşaret Dili’. Using acronym as this one is a widespread convention and points out that the sign language in question is a somewhat standard code being different from ‘home signs’ or ‘contact codes’ used among smaller Deaf groups.”



### **1.2.2. Basic Assumptions and Research Questions**

The use of personal name signs can be regarded as an important part of Deaf culture. Not only does it identify an individual to others but it also means that fingerspelling one's name is not always necessary when conversing, thereby sometimes making it faster and easier for people in the Deaf community (Name Signs, 2013). Seeing that there are systems or ways of forming personal name signs in various sign languages aforementioned, this study has been projected to find out the formation and use of personal name signs in TİD and to categorize them in the light of these research questions:

- 1) Assuming the naming behaviour is a culture- and language-specific practice, what is the general pattern of personal naming system in TİD?
  - a) In what categories personal name signs are formed in TİD?
  - b) Does the naming behaviour in TİD have systematic patterns in terms of the parameters of sign structure?
- 2) Are there any similarities and/or differences in the formation of personal name signs attributed to the hearing vs Deaf community members?

### **1.2.3. Boundaries of the Research**

There are some restrictions on the content and the results of the study owing to the following facts:

1. The research has been carried out in Ankara, and is restricted to the data collected from a limited number of subjects who are native speakers of TİD.
2. As the investigator of the study is not a competent sign language user, all the communication with the Deaf subjects has been carried out with the researcher and with the help of sign language interpreters who are competent both in TİD and Turkish.

3. Due to the lack of previous linguistic research and published material on the subject in TİD, this study is restricted to the description, formation and the use of personal name signs in TİD. Sociolinguistic variables such as age, sex, socio-economic background and etc. of the subjects were not taken into consideration in this study.
4. Parameters of non-manual signals were not taken into consideration during the evaluation of the personal name signs obtained.
5. The findings presented in this study are to be regarded as a preliminary basis for future research on personal naming process in TİD and are open to every kind of reasonable suggestions.

#### **1.2.4. Methodology**

##### 1.2.4.1. Means of Data Collection

A total of 43 name signs have been collected from twenty-five (13 of which are male and 12 of which are female) adult native Deaf signers of TİD. These participants have been selected from a Deaf local in Ankara and they have been voluntarily committed to the study.

The data have been collected via interviews with the participants. A participant, a sign language interpreter and the researcher have been present in each interview. Each participant was directed a questionnaire including questions about their personal information and their personal name signs. The signers were assisted by the interpreter while they were filling in the questionnaire. On the one hand, questions related to their personal information were designed to learn about participants' official names and whether there are any other Deaf people in their family. On the other hand, questions regarding their personal name signs were created in order to reveal what the meanings of the name signs of the participants are, when these were given and who gave these name signs to the participants. Subsequently, each participant was requested to sign his/her name sign(s) and each individual was videotaped during the signing process of their own name signs. The video recordings were made from the front side of the participants during the signing process in order to observe the whole signing procedure

clearly and properly. The researcher conducted the study getting in face-to-face interactions with the participants in their daily environments with the aim of obtaining natural data. In addition to their own name signs, the same participants were asked to demonstrate sign names for public figures and popular characters individually. This section was also recorded by a video camera during the participants' signing process. These public figures and popular characters were selected from various domains such as football, politics, cinema, music, cartoon character and etc. Inclusion of these public figures and popular characters, as they are from hearing community, into the data of the study may give opportunity to compare the formation process of name signs attributed to both mediums of communities (Deaf community vs hearing community) and may help to answer whether there are different formations of personal name signs according to the people from hearing community versus Deaf community. The questionnaire which was utilized during the personal interviews with the participants is given in Appendix 3.

#### 1.2.4.2. Evaluation of the Data

In the general sense, personal name signs obtained from the participants in the present study were analyzed by applying the model of signing parameters (*Handshape, Location, Movement*) developed by Stokoe (1960) with the addition of *Orientation* parameter put forward by Battison (1978). These parameters were utilized in the analysis of the personal name signs in the present study since these parameters underly the internal structure of signs in sign languages. More specifically, bearing the fact in mind that most personal name signs are performed using handshapes and these handshapes may vary from a sign language to another, the handshape inventory of TİD and the manual alphabet<sup>5</sup> of TİD both presented by Kubuş (2008) were utilized in order to have scientific and systematic base for the analysis of personal name signs in the present study.

Later, personal name signs gathered have been sorted according to their categories of formation by calculating their percentages and frequency of use, and by considering

<sup>5</sup> As seen in studies on personal name signs in sign languages apart from TİD, some arbitrary name signs are created not by using handshapes but by using letters in the manual alphabet of the sign language in question. Thus, in addition to the handshape inventory, the manual alphabet of TİD was also utilized in the present study.

systematic regularities and differences among them after seeing that there are same or similar categories found in the examination of personal name signs on the basis of previous studies in different sign languages like ASL, BSL, ESL, NZSL and etc.

Name signs for public figures and popular characters were also analyzed on the basis of signing parameters and they were also split into the same categories after their percentages and frequencies of use were calculated and systematic regularities and differences among them were considered. The results obtained for the name signs regarding Deaf participants and public figures/characters were compared so as to understand whether there are either same or different formations of name signs attributed to the people from hearing community versus from Deaf community.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. LINGUISTICS AND SIGN LANGUAGE

In its general sense, linguistics tries to find out the rules that explain what language users know, so that we can understand how language works. More precisely, linguistics may be described as *the scientific study of language*. Here, linguistics is referred to as *scientific* because (a) linguists adopt an objective view of language and (b) they use scientific methods such as the use of observation, description and explanation in their study of language (Finch, 2000).

One of the aims of the field of linguistics is to understand exactly what language is. For a working definition of language, Baker and Cokely (1980) states: “a language is a complex system of communication with a vocabulary of conventional symbols, signs and grammatical rules that are shared by members of a community and passed on from one generation to the next, that changes across time, and that is used to exchange an open-ended range of ideas, emotions and intentions.” This extensive definition of language draws on a number of key features that were proposed by Charles Hockett (1960) to be central aspects of language structure and function, such as the use of arbitrary symbols and signs, grammaticality, discreteness, duality of patterning, cultural transmission, inter-changeability, reflexiveness, displacement and creativity (see Johnston & Schembri, 2007: 1-8). However, some of these features are shared by human languages and other communication systems, while others may be unique to human language.

#### 2.1.1. Presenting Sign Languages

A sign language is a system of communication which is composed of gestures made through the hands and other parts of the body in order to meet the basic functions of every aspect of face to face communication (Crystal, 1992:353). At this point, it is not wrong to state that a sign language is a non-verbal and visual medium of communication widely used among prelingually deaf and hearing-speech impaired people. Although some definitions present languages as vocal-auditory means of communication, the above stated definition of language in section 2.1.2 and the studies

carried out on sign languages since 1960s show that languages do not have to be oral mediums only. By virtue of the sign language studies (Deuchar 1984; Yule 1985; Kyle and Woll 1988; Isenhath 1990; Valli and Lucas 1992; Asher and Simpson 1994; Liddell 2003), it has become prominent that sign languages bear some kind of systematic and conventional rules similar to those of spoken human languages. Thus, studying spoken languages alone is not enough to explore human communication systems because studies to be carried out on sign languages can offer new striking and gripping insights into human languages.

#### 2.1.1.1. Some Misconceptions Regarding Sign Languages

Since sign languages have not been studied extensively until 1960s, they have been treated as far from being full-fledged and natural languages, and therefore, some wrongly held views have become popular. Among these are the following:

- There is only one sign language all around the world.
- Sign languages are invented by hearing majority in the society in order to help speech and hearing impaired people.
- They are simply pantomime and gesture.
- Sign languages are completely iconic.
- They are the reduced and simpler forms of the coexisting spoken languages of the majority in the same community.

All of these misconceptions and the facts against these wrongly held opinions will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

##### *2.1.1.1.1. Sign language is not universal*

In late eighteenth-century Europe, it was sometimes assumed that sign languages used by deaf people were a form of universal language. The Abbé de l'Épée, for example, who established one of the first public schools for deaf children in the world in 1760, believed that the sign communication used in his school in Paris could serve as the basis

of universal language (Kendon, 2004). However, sign language is not a universal language. Studies (Jordan and Battison, 1976; Siple, 1978; Klima and Bellugi, 1979; Wilbur, 1979; Tanokami, Peng, Maeda and Mori, 1976; Ahlgren and Bergman, 1980) have clearly put forward that there are many different sign languages around the world, and many of these have developed independently of each other with differing grammar and vocabulary. For instance, although American and British communities speak English with some dialectal variation, the language of American and British Deaf speech communities -ASL and BSL, respectively- are quite distinctive codes which are mutually unintelligible (see Deuchar, 1984: 106).

#### *2.1.1.1.2. Sign languages are not invented by hearing people*

That any single individual, hearing or deaf, invented natural sign languages such as Australian Sign Language (Auslan), BSL, ASL, French Sign Language (LSF) and etc. has not been evidenced so far. Sign languages appear to have been in use among deaf people elsewhere in the world before schools for deaf children were established in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, there are references to the use of sign language by deaf people in the writings of Plato (Rée, 1999).

#### *2.1.1.1.3. Sign languages are not simply pantomime and gesture*

It is sometimes believed that communication between signers is achieved by simply pointing at objects, drawing pictures in the air or by acting out descriptions of events. “People often use the term ‘sign language’ to refer to this kind of improvised visual-gestural communication that occurs when two people who are not deaf and do not speak each other’s language meet” (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 14). In short, this misconception results from the confusion between ‘sign language’ and ‘non-verbal communication’ and ‘body language’ *a sort of “ad hoc gesture system used to communicate with people whose language one does not speak”* (Deuchar, 1984: 3-4). Gestures such as body language or non-verbal communication are manual or bodily actions which only accompany language having limited expressive and communicative

functions relying mostly on immediate context (i.e. pointing out objects) and having no grammatical function. However, sign languages are not restricted to such immediate context and there seems to be no limits to what signers can communicate through sign language. Although Crystal's (1992) definition of sign language includes the term 'systems of gestures', it is completely different from that of used among people who do not share a language or that of used to accompany speech. Signing is much more systematic than gesturing and this idea is supported by what Asher and Simpson (1994: 3890 in Açıkan 2013:78) state: "signs are distinguished from gestures by having an internal structure composed of elements which form a system of contrasts, and whose usage is rule-governed".

#### *2.1.1.1.4. Sign languages are not always iconic*

Languages involve iconic elements as well as arbitrary ones, and cases of onomatopoeia in spoken languages can be regarded as examples of this kind of elements. However, the presence of iconicity in sign languages should not be overemphasised (Woll, 1990). There are instances in which signs have no apparent iconic, but arbitrary, relationship to their meanings. In Auslan, for instance, the signs for 'BEACH' and 'LIBRARY' lack an iconic form-meaning relationship in *Figure 1*. below (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 15)

:



LIBRARY



BEACH

Figure 1. *Two signs that lack a form-meaning relationship in Auslan.*



Therefore, it is not wrong to state that the formation of signs in sign languages is never determined solely by their resemblance to an object or action. Moreover, an evidence from experimental studies of short-term memory and language production errors ('slips of the hand') suggests that signers use the structural components of handshape, orientation, location and movement when remembering and producing signs rather than their iconic properties alone (Emmorey, 2002). In addition, as Deuchar (1984: 16, 20) puts forth: "it is important to realize that while iconicity means non-arbitrariness, it does not necessarily mean non-conventionality. The iconicity in sign languages does not result in a complete freedom; iconic signs too, are determined culturally".

Sign languages seem to display three types of signs, namely, (i) symbolic –which are arbitrary in terms of their connection to their referents; (ii) indexic –which directly point out their referents; and (iii) iconic –which resemble, or depict their referents (see Dobrovolsky, 1997: 591-592; Deuchar, 1984: 13-15). At this point, it is important to note that 'iconicity' and 'transparency' should not be taken as identical and interchangeable terms. Although there are considerable amounts of iconic or indexic signs in sign languages, many of them cannot be interpreted unless one knows their meanings beforehand.

#### *2.1.1.1.5. Sign languages are not simpler forms developed out of coexisting spoken languages*

Although sign languages are seen as the reduced forms of coexisting spoken languages, sign languages of deaf communities are not based on spoken languages. Emergence of this misconception may simply be based on the idea that these languages are often later-developed when compared to the coexisting spoken language of the majority and thus they are associated with a sort of poverty of complexity. Nonetheless, some investigations (Deuchar, 1984; Isenhath, 1990; Valli and Lucas, 1992; Asher and Simpson, 1994; Kyle and Woll, 1998; Liddell, 2003) have already clearly made evident that sign languages are rule-governed systems of communication and have a structure of comparable complexity to spoken human languages, comprising similar rules and performing similar range of functions. Just like natural spoken languages, they have

grammatical levels of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics as well as a rich lexicon. In addition, sign languages seem to exhibit defining aspects of language (arbitrariness, duality, discreteness, productivity, displacement and cultural transmission) that were proposed by Charles Hockett (1960), and sign languages perform similar range of communicative functions (functional properties) offered by Jakobson (1973: 53-55 in Açıkan, 2001: 38) such as referential, conative, emotive, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic functions. The descriptions of these properties are given below:

1. *Referential function*, which has to do with conveying information
2. *Conative function*, which has to do with getting other people to do things
3. *Emotive function*, which has to do with conveying feelings
4. *Phatic function*, which has to do with signalling contact between people
5. *Metalinguistic function*, which has to do with talking about language yourself
6. *Poetic function*, which has to do with using language for aesthetic or literary purposes

Like spoken languages, all of these properties seem to be carried through by sign languages except poetic function. Açıkan (2001: 39) states the study on poetic function in sign languages is quite restricted. However, it is known that British Sign Language (BSL) is used for story-telling and jokes (see Deuchar, 1984: 23 for details).

As sign languages have similar processes that are found in spoken languages, sign languages must be learnt in early ages. If the speech impaired children do not learn any sign language until the ages of 5 or 6, it becomes more difficult for them to learn not only sign languages but also spoken languages later (İşaret Dili Nedir ?, 2004).

#### 2.1.1.2. The Internal Structure of Signs

The similarities between the linguistic uses of sounds in spoken languages and of gestural elements in sign languages were recognised recently. William C. Stokoe (1960) was the first researcher to demonstrate that the signs used by deaf people actually had

internal structure in the same way as the words in spoken languages. Before Stokoe started to study the sign structure, signs had been generally regarded as simple, unanalysable gestures with no internal organisation, rather like those used in gesticulation (Bloomfield, 1933). However, with the publication of *Sign Language Structure* in 1960, Stokoe showed that many signs of ASL were produced using a limited number of gestural features just as hundreds of thousands of English words are produced using a very small number of different sounds. Then, Stokoe found that the action of a sign had three main aspects or parameters: a *handshape* oriented in a specific way, at a specific *location* and with a specific type of *movement*. He proposed that these parameters be known as *cheremes*, which is analogous with the *phonemes* of spoken languages.

*Handshape* refers to the shape of the hand used in a sign. As possible shapes, hand may be closed into a fist, or the fingers may be spread out or held together. The hand may be bent at the wrist, or the fingers may be bent at the knuckles or joints. The thumb may be extended, held parallel to the fingers or held across the palm. The index, middle, ring or little finger may be extended, bent, or may be in contact with each other. However, “despite the great number of possible hand configurations that can be produced, each particular sign language tends to use only a limited number of handshapes to create signs in the core lexicon” (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 79).

*Location* refers to the position of the hand on the body or in the space around the signer. Like handshapes, there are a great number of different locations on the body and in space that may possibly be used but locations used when signing are limited just as there are limited number of handshapes when signing.

*Movement* covers hand movements such as straight, arc, circular directions and many others. In other words, the hand may move away from the body (of signer), towards it, upwards, downwards, forward and back or vice versa, in an arc, a circle, or spiral directions when signing. “In general, sign languages have two kinds of movements: path movements and internal movements. Internal movements can be either “handshape changes” and/or “orientation changes” (Sandler and Lillo-Martin, 2006: 197 in Kubuş 2008: 38). There are also secondary movements which include the repetition of handshape or wriggling of fingers. Like handshape and location, only a limited subset of

all of those movements of the fingers, hands and arms are used when signing. The significance of movements comes from the fact that signs are not well-formed without them (Brennan, 1990). The movements in the signs of natural sign languages are an intrinsic part of the signs. Of course there may be possibility to perform signs without movements but such signs are not generally observed in natural sign languages. Signs with movements are different from transitional movements in regard to phonetics, and they also carry lexical and morphological contrasts. To understand the three parameters mentioned so far, a sample sign ‘NOT KNOW’ from Auslan is given in *Figure 2* below (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 80).



NOT KNOW

*Figure 2. Handshape, location and movement direction in a simple sign in Auslan*

For the handshape regarding the above sign ‘NOT KNOW’, the fingers of the hand are held flat and close together. The hand is held near the forehead as the location in the same sign above, and the hand moves away from the signer in regard to the movement parameter.

As a contribution to Stokoe’s study of sign structure, Battison (1978) put forward that *orientation*, which refers to the direction of the palm and fingers when signing, is as important as the other three parameters (handshape, location and movement) in sign phonology. A specific handshape can be oriented in a number of different ways in relation to the signer’s body. For instance, the palms and fingers may be oriented left, right, up, down, towards or away from the signer. In the sign NOT KNOW in *Figure 2*. above, the palm of the hand faces toward signer.

Although hand orientation was previously regarded as a separate parameter, sign language linguists now generally include orientation in their descriptions of signs and many appear to agree that it counts as one of the four (with handshape, location and movement) most basic building blocks in sign structure (Woll, 1990).

There is one more significant constraint to be mentioned in the production of signs, *the signing space*. The signing space refers to an area which “extends from approximately just above the head to the waist, and in width from elbow to elbow when the arms are held loosely bent” (Brennan 1992: 22) and sign language users tend to use only those parts of the body and locations in space during the production of signs (see *Figure 3* below)



Figure 3. *Signing Space* (Pfau and Steinbach 2006 p.27)

Apart from the parameters above mentioned, sign languages convey much of their prosody through non-manual signs. Postures or movements of the body, head, eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, and mouth are used in various combinations to show several categories of information, including lexical distinction, grammatical structure, adjectival or adverbial content, and discourse functions.

Grammatical structure that is shown through non-manual signs includes questions, negation, relative clauses (Boudreault and Mayberry, 2006), boundaries between sentences (Fenlon et al., 2008) and the argument structure of some verbs (Thompson, Emmorey and Kluender, 2006). ASL and BSL use similar non-manual marking for yes/no questions, for example. They are shown through raised eyebrows and a forward head tilt (Baker and Cokely, 1980). Moreover, some adjectival and adverbial

information is also conveyed through non-manual signs, but what these signs are varies from language to language. For instance, as Sutton-spence and Woll (1998: 89) asserts, in ASL a slightly open mouth with the tongue relaxed and visible in the corner of the mouth means 'carelessly,' but a similar sign in BSL means 'boring' or 'unpleasant'.

### 2.1.1.3. A Brief History of The Study of Sign Languages

Recognition of sign languages may be traced back to the work of Plato in Ancient Greece. In his philosophical work *Cratylus* (written in 360 BC), “Plato wrote that if we had no voice or tongue, ‘should we not, like the deaf and dumb, make signs with the hand and head and the rest of the body?’ ” (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 21). According to Descartes, in the eighteenth century, sign languages of deaf people represented examples of true human languages. Similar beliefs were shared by nineteenth-century scholars such as Edward Tylor in Britain, Wilhelm Wundt in Germany and Garrick Mallery in the United States of America (Kendon, 2004). Modern sign language linguistics is often considered to have begun in 1960 with the publication of *Sign Language Structure* by William Stokoe, a hearing lecturer at Gallaudet College in Washington DC. His study became popular as the first analysis on sign languages and he analyzed ASL structure using linguistic methodology, then, he presented persuasive evidence that ASL was indeed a language with a grammar and vocabulary independent of English. In fact, Stokoe’s publications were preceded by a work published by a Dutch linguist Bernard Tervoort. As a doctoral dissertation, he described the signed communication used by deaf children in a residential school in Netherlands (Johnston and Schembri 2007: 22). Tervoort recognised this signing as a language, but his study was less influential than the later work by Stokoe. After some years, in 1965, *Dictionary of American Sign Language on Linguistic Principles* was published by Stokoe, Casterline and Croneberg. Nonetheless, despite these premier studies, sign language research in 1960s aroused little interest and some members from Gallaudet University, where Stokoe and his colleagues were carrying out research on sign language, maintained a stance against sign language studies claiming that sign languages were not ‘real’ languages and they questioned the value of these researches (Maher, 1996). In ten years time, interest in ASL began to grow with the leadership of researchers Klima and Bellugi at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. They recognised that the study of

human language would be incomplete without research into the visual-gesture communication of deaf communities, and they trained a whole generation of deaf and hearing sign language researchers in their sign language laboratory in San Diego (Emmorey and Lane, 2000). Later, sign language research began to spread out across the world: such studies started in Europe in the mid 1970s, and began in Australia in the 1980s. In the following years after 1980s, signed language research has begun to become a seriously international field of research, with research papers published on sign languages from South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America. Subsequent research has aimed to establish the validity of the linguistic universals in sign languages although these universals were originally proposed for spoken languages. Other research has attempted to determine the impact of modality on language structure (e.g., Meier, Cormier, & Quinto-Pozos, 2002), namely, to what degree sign languages are different from spoken languages. The differences such as the grammatical use of non-manual features and space in sign languages have been perceived as additional special characteristics peculiar to language in the visual-gestural modality. Moreover, how to interpret the emerging facts of sign language description and integrate them into an overall and coherent model of human language has been a recent inquiry.

#### 2.1.1.4. Deaf community and Identity

With regard to a definition of ‘Deaf community’, Baker and Padden (1978: 4) states that “the deaf community comprises those deaf and hard of hearing individuals who share a common language, common experiences and values, and a common way of interacting with each other, and with hearing people”. Ladd (2003: 43) put forths the following:

Deaf communities differ from other linguistic minorities in one crucial aspect - their language and culture can be transmitted down the generations only by the 5–10% with Deaf parents. For the other 90% of Deaf children, born to hearing parents, access to a sophisticated language and its traditions can only be gained by attending Deaf schools.

It is generally agreed that Deaf schools and Deaf clubs form the foundation stones of the Deaf communities. Deaf schools make newly entering Deaf children socialised, enabling Deaf norms, values and traditions to develop and to be passed down from

generation to generation. Likewise, Deaf clubs provide a crucial central focus for Deaf adult life by maintaining the language and culture of childhood, as well as extending the Deaf experience into all of the organizational forms required in maturity.

Records indicate that in the Western and Middle Eastern worlds, sign language-using Deaf people have gathered together for at least 7,000 years, and evidence for the existence of sign communication in various first nations indicates a Deaf presence which may be even older (Woll and Ladd 2003: 151). Most of the historical description and sociological research data as well as theories about Deaf communities has belonged to European and North American Deaf gatherings for the last two decades. Gaining formal acceptance of the term “Deaf community” has not been unproblematic. Nonetheless, its vernacular use spread widely in time and the concept of ‘Deaf community’ has almost completely replaced the older term ‘Deaf world’. Recent literature on Deaf communities (Bahan and Nash, 1996; Lane, Pillard, and French, 2002; Ladd, 2002) offers conceptual frameworks and models for various manifestations of Deaf existence. Bahan and Nash (1996) describes the type of community found in industrialized societies where Deaf people form a small percentage of the population and where Deaf community life is organized separately from the hearing community as a ‘suppressing’ community. The taxonomy made by Bahan and Nash suggests that Deaf communities are formed in ways that correlate with how Deaf people have been treated and how sign languages have been viewed by majority societies or majority communities.

Researchers have discussed for many years how Deaf people join together in order to create social groups and Deaf identities (Flournoy, 1856; Erting, 1978; Markowicz & Woodward, 1978; Higgins, 1980; Lawson, 1981; Lane, 1984; Padden & Humphries, 1988; Ladd, 1998). For these researchers, Deaf people create communities based on three factors: deafness, communication, and mutual support. In another study, Johnson (1994) reviews how these three factors lead to “communities of communication”, “communities of ethnic identity, and “communities of solidarity”(see Johnson, 1994). As previously mentioned above for the taxonomy of Bahan and Nash, the existence of Deaf communities, the identity of Deaf people, and the experience of Deafhood is mainly determined depending on the Deaf people’s experiences in majority societies.



However, without interaction with community members across generations and participation in the various activities and structures of the community, it may be difficult for Deaf individuals to develop an awareness, acceptance, and celebration of both individual and collective Deaf self. An important point is that the main difference between the lives of majority society and those of Deaf community is the form of communication they adopt: spoken language in majority society and sign language in Deaf community. At this point, for the significance of sign language, Woll and Ladd (2003: 153) asserts:

The centrality of a sign language is reflected not only in the social and political organization of these communities, but in their strong cultural tradition of sign-play, jokes, storytelling, and poetry. In the most practical sense, then, the central fact of Deaf community membership is seen as linguistic membership

Another point that should be taken seriously is that the membership within Deaf communities is also seen as determined, not by audiological measurement, but by self-identification as Deaf and reciprocal recognition of that identification, and Baker and Cokely (1980) refer this demeanor as ‘attitudinal deafness’. In other words, individuals with minor hearing losses may feel full membership of the Deaf community, while other individuals with profound hearing losses may not identify themselves with Deaf community. Many Deaf people don’t see themselves as handicapped (Lane, 2002) but rather consider themselves members of a linguistic minority with its own culture, values, customs, traditions and with its own language distinct from those of the hearing community. In short, both the linguistic and attitudinal differences reinforced by restricted access to society underpin a Deaf solidarity, Deaf culture and a sense of identification among Deaf people who share similar experiences (Ladd, 1998).

#### 2.1.1.4.1. History of the Concept of Deaf Community

Deaf people have been present from the beginning of humanity, and the first written evidence of their existence can be found at the rise of the Mediterranean societies in the fifth century BC. In the process of time, Greek philosophers like Herodotus, Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, and their equivalents in Roman and Jewish society philosophized about the nature of Deaf people’s presence and their place in society.

From the fifteenth century onward, two characteristics of Western approaches are considerably significant for the existence of Deaf people. One is the positive view of Deaf potential regarding ‘groups’ of Deaf people; and the other is the negative view that only notices Deaf ‘individuals’ isolated from their peers. Van Cleve and Crouch (1989) note that the positive viewpoint for Deaf groups is found in Judaic/Old Testament writings and the negative one arises from Christianity’s view of Deaf individuals. The positive view prioritizes Deaf people’s ability to make sense of the world through their own visual skills, their ability to communicate with each other, and the communicative power found in sign language, and perceives them as constituting a community of their own with the potential to administer their own affairs while achieving degrees of participation in the majority society. On the contrary, the negative viewpoint regards Deaf people essentially as ‘empty vessels’ that could be made to resemble “normal” humanity in external appearance. However, with the arrival of Renaissance, Deaf people have become more respected. Achievements by Deaf individuals and groups in business domains are noted by Zwiebel (1994). Moreover, there were networks of Deaf artists and their Deaf friends during that period (Plann, 1998), or even the beginnings of small Deaf communities which may be considered as proto-Deaf (which means existing before deaf education) communities. The clearest evidence for the existence of proto-Deaf communities comes from the Ottoman court from the fifteenth century onward. During that time, successive Sultans took as many as 200 deaf people into service with various responsibilities, including teaching sign language to the rest of the court (Miles, 2000). In addition to this, several deaf people were among the Sultans’ closest companions and the reason behind this convention is that speech was seen as an undignified method of communication in the presence of the Sultan, and sign language was felt to be more appropriate.

Sign languages began to flourish when Deaf educational establishments started to bring together large numbers of Deaf children and Deaf adults during the mid eighteenth century (see de L’Epee, 1984). When Deaf people graduated from deaf schools, Deaf meeting places such as large numbers of clubs and religious societies were consequently established across Europe and the United States and many of them were founded by Deaf people (Lysons, 1963). By the early nineteenth century, Deaf graduates attained professional positions for the first time, and Deaf magazines and newspapers were

developed to facilitate regional and national communication. Later, these developments were enhanced in 1867 by the establishment of Gallaudet College in the United States. Documents from the era show high levels of Deaf self-confidence, including beliefs that sign language was a “universal” language, which underpinned their conviction that hearing people could learn from their example (see Mottez, 1993). During this era, struggles were made to formalize the concept of an independent Deaf-Mute Nation, both in France and in the United States (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). In addition to these developments, while the stream of oralism sought to remove sign languages and deaf teachers from the schools and to replace them by advocating the sole use of spoken communication, Deaf communities responded to oralism by founding national organizations such as the National Association of the Deaf in the United States in 1880, and the British Deaf and Dumb Association in Britain in 1890. During the twentieth century, Deaf communities continued to exist and grow but with low rates of literacy because of the effects of oralism. Toward 1970s and 1980s, some factors including Deaf activist organizations like National Union of the Deaf in Britain; linguistic recognition of sign languages and their restoration to a place in deaf education; Deaf visibility in the media; rediscovery of Deaf history and the development of Deaf studies as an academic discipline contributed partly to Deaf revival. In short, a rise in Deaf confidence and pride has taken place since the 1980s thanks to the revelation of the linguistic complexities of sign languages. On the contrary, there has been limited consideration of social and cultural issues and of the internal and external factors responsible for creating, maintaining, and changing Deaf communities compared to the amount of linguistic research carried out.

## **2.2. TURKISH SIGN LANGUAGE (TİD) AND DEAF COMMUNITY IN TURKEY**

Turkish Sign Language (TİD) is the sign language used by the Deaf community in Turkey. Much of the research on Turkish Deaf people has been conducted by either governmental institutions related to disability or by medical institutions with the aim of providing health services. Research on the linguistic structure of Turkish Sign Language has been a recently undertaken phenomenon.

### 2.2.1. A History of Deaf Existence in Turkey

Accounts of existence of deaf people in Anatolia can be grouped into three main periods: the Hittites (Soysal, 2001; Murat, 2008), the Ottoman Empire (Miles, 2000, 2009; Selim, 2006; Batır, 2008) and the Republic of Turkey (Zeshan, 2002, 2003; Kemaloğlu & Kemaloğlu, 2012). Soysal (2001) clearly presented that deaf men and women were working in Hittites' religious ceremonies by using sign language. In addition, Murat (2008) reports a Hittite city as 'the city where deaf people talk' near 'Hakmis' (today called 'Amasya' – a city in northern Turkey). In spite of the fact that there is not much data found yet on what 'deaf people talk' mean in the ancient sources, one shouldn't overlook the fact that this city might have hosted the oldest signing community which is in some ways similar to the Martha's Vineyard Island in the United States (Ladd, 2003), Yucatec Maya village in Mexico (Johnson, 1991) and Desa Kolok in Indonesia (Marsaja, 2008). Moreover, Nearly 2700 years after the Hittites, we find the earliest established sign language community in Constantinople, namely, the capital of the Ottoman Empire (Miles, 2000). From 15th century onward, we see '*mutés*' in the Ottoman court, along with the dwarves and other entertainers, as the daily companions of Sultans. Many deaf and mutes were hired at the Sultan's court and they were endowed with some missions such as as convenient and secretive servants, guards, executioners and couriers between the years 1500s to 1700s (Miles 2009: 24,31). Especially, around late 16th century the mutes and dwarves even had their own quarter in the seraglio. In the Ottoman palace, those people were named as 'Dilsiz' ('dil' in Turkish means that both 'language' and 'tongue'; hence 'dilsiz' can refer to 'without tongue', 'without language' or 'speechless'). What is more, the signing system of these *mutés* or *dilsiz* staff which was handed down from one generation to the other, became popular among the hearing people in the palace, especially among successive Sultans (Fisher & Fisher, 1987; Miles, 2000). However; although it is known that sign language in the Ottoman court was capable for discussing many topics and was transmitted to the next generations, there was no evidence regarding whether TİD originated from the Ottoman court.

In spite of the fact that Deaf and mutes in the Ottoman Seraglio created a small Deaf community before the emergence of educational institutions for the deaf, Deaf histories

usually begin in educational institutions because such establishments provide the language and social opportunities for deaf people who would otherwise be isolated as individuals. Studies indicate that Turkish deaf education began in two metropolitan cities, İstanbul and İzmir respectively (Ergin, 1939; Yıldırım, 1997; Zeshan, 2003; Batır, 2008). The first school for the deaf, *Yıldız School for the Deaf and Blind*, was founded in İstanbul by an Austrian merchant Grati Efendi around 1889 (Ergin, *ibid*). However, due to the disrupted instruction and lack of funding during the decline of Ottoman Empire, that school had to be closed down in 1926 and the students were transferred to the İzmir Deaf School founded in 1923. Sign language used and instructed in these two Deaf schools was most probably originated from French Sign Language (LSF), and used by adding some extra finger positions to demonstrate Arabic letters and Turkish vowels of the Ottoman Turkish. As an evidence for this assumption comes from Haydar (1925): He notes in his study that Grati adapted French fingerspelling to Ottoman script in order to aid teaching at the Deaf school. It was a one-hand alphabet as in LSF and ASL. Turgut and Taşçı (2011) reported that this alphabet was used in the deaf schools in İstanbul and İzmir till the Alphabet revolution in 1928 after foundation of Republic of Turkey, then a two-hand alphabet, which is almost similar to contemporary TİD alphabet, became popular in the Deaf community. In addition to these schools, there were some other deaf institutions. In 1944 Süleyman Sırrı Gök, who is a key figure in the establishment of deaf education in the early Turkish Republic, founded a deaf association in Aksaray along with a school for the deaf where he taught sign language both to deaf students and hearing teachers (Gök, 1958). Also, it should be noted that Gök's three books<sup>6</sup> written on the deafness and deaf education in Turkey (Gök, 1939; 1940; 1958) are of great significance in regard to the Deaf population since his books encompassed the daily activities and significant problems of deaf in Turkey compared to the situation for the deaf people in Europe. However, with the foundation of a deaf school in Ankara in 1952, Gök's private school for the deaf was taken over by the state government in 1953. Although there is a belief that sign language use was banned at deaf schools in 1950s in Turkey (Özyürek et al. 2004), the following excerpt from İlkbaşıaran (2013: 29) may be regarded as an opposition to that belief:

<sup>6</sup> For more descriptions of these books see İlkbaşıaran & Taşçı (2012: 1775).

My interviews with former teachers of the deaf from İstanbul in 1980s confirm that the teachers were not aware of such a ban and that they in fact commonly used signs to communicate with their students both in and out of the class.

In short, for the period of early Turkish Republic, it can be said that most of the initiatives and developments in sign language, and the environment in which sign language and deaf culture could flourish were provided by Gök despite the effects of oralist attitudes that were becoming more diffusive in Turkey. In addition, as İlkbaşıran & Taşçı (2012: 1776) points out, we understand that despite seeing deaf people as poor and disabled, Gök struggled and found a way for integrating them under the notion of deaf solidarity and advocated deaf education as an instrument to create a strong and capable society.

There are now Deaf clubs and associations as well as specialized schools for the Deaf in all parts of the country. The Deaf community is organized in a centralized way: All clubs and associations are associated to the Turkish National Federation of the Deaf (TSMF). “Meetings among the members of Deaf associations are conducted in sign language. Taken into account all of these factors, the Deaf community has achieved a considerable degree of self-governance” (Zeshan 2003: 44). The Deaf community in Turkey meets on a regular basis. The most active gathering seems to be at the level of sports organizations, with many tournaments organized at all levels. Notwithstanding, cultural activities are much less developed, with rare sign language theater and forms of sign language literature. Except for the modern metropolitan areas where both Deaf men and women often participate equally in social activities, social clubs in other parts of the country are sometimes dominated by men, with only a day or two open to women and families (Zeshan, *ibid*).

#### 2.2.1.1. Deaf Identity in Turkey

The way that Deaf people talk about their language and community can be a good hint to have a look at Deaf identity. As Zeshan (2003: 47), there is no word for ‘sign language’ in TİD. This is also the case for some other sign languages (Kyle et al. 1985 for British Sign Language, Zeshan 2000 for Indo-Pakistani Sign Language). The sign language is referred to as İŞARET ‘sign’ (see *Figure 4. İŞARET ‘sign’*) in TİD.



Figure 4. *İŞARET* 'sign'

Interestingly, it seems that deafness supersedes ethnicity as a marker of identity in Turkey. That is, people primarily identify themselves as 'Deaf' rather than 'Turkish Deaf', 'Kurdish Deaf', and etc. in spite of the fact that the territory of Turkey includes people from different ethnicity who do not identify themselves as 'Turks'.

The Deaf community particularly in the metropolitan areas in Turkey, has had some exposure to the issues of the redefinition of deafness as involving a linguistic and cultural minority. This kind of issues have recently been discussed in Deaf communities in Western countries as well. As Zeshan (2003) mentions, a significant number of Deaf people have travelled abroad, mostly to European countries for Deaf sports competitions or to visit their relatives. Although there is also a flow of Deaf European tourists coming into Turkey, contact with foreign Deaf communities is still limited. The use of the internet in general and e-mail in particular is also very limited among Turkish Deaf, whereas messaging with mobile phones is hugely popular among them.

### **2.2.2. Deaf Population and Deaf Education in Turkey**

As Zeshan (2003: 43) asserts, "so far the available evidence suggests that the sign language is used all over Turkey, with some regional dialectal variation, mainly in the lexicon". The apparent linguistic unity of TİD throughout Turkey is probably reinforced by the social and political organization of the community which involves regular meetings of Deaf people from all regions of Turkey. However, there is not a clear-cut report on the number of Deaf and hard of hearing people living in Turkey. According to The Turkey Disability Survey of 2002, there were 250,000 people with 'hearing disability' as of 2002, which means nearly 0.37 percent of the general Turkish population (Demir & Aysoy, 2002). Taking into account the national population as

reported by the 2013 census, “there should be about 284,000 deaf people in Turkey. Overall, most individuals with hearing impairment in Turkey are either between the ages of 10-39 years, or older than 70 years, with the prevalence being higher among men” (İlkbaşıran 2015: 59). As a result of this survey, the prevalence of deafness is lowest in the Eastern Anatolia (0.31%) and highest in the Black Sea region (0.45%). The Mediterranean region is placed between these two parts of Turkey with a percent of 0.34. However, according to İlkbaşıran (2015), this survey uses reports of family members rather than medical reports, so the numbers obtained can be misleading and unreliable with respect to actual number of Deaf prevalence in Turkey.

In regard to the medical field, a recent study of newborn screening indicates that 2 in every 1,000 people have congenital deafness in Turkey (Genç et al. 2005). However, this estimate seems to be significantly lower than the numbers articulated by Deaf rights organizations in the country, since these organizations estimate that there are about 2.5 - 3 million deaf and hard of hearing people in Turkey. In addition, the prevalence of non-genetic deafness in Turkey decreased with the increased opportunities of health care including elimination of maternal rubella, and widespread vaccination for spinal meningitis (İlkbaşıran, 2015). As a result of this progress, congenital deafness is becoming a significant predictive factor of future geographies of deafness and sign language in Turkey (Tekin & Arıcı, 2007). Apart from congenital deafness, an important social factor in the genetic epidemiology of deafness in Turkey is the consanguineous marriage patterns, namely, marriages between close relatives. Tekin and Arıcı (ibid) suggests two different patterns: a) consanguineous marriages among hearing people increase in both magnitude and proximity as we go towards Eastern Turkey, and b) marriage between deaf people rises as we go towards the West and they attribute the rise of such marriages in the west part of the country to the longer history of deaf schools in Western parts of Turkey since, the prevalence of sign language in west parts could have most probably resulted in assortative mating based on linguistic homogamy.

Typically more than 90% of deaf children around the world are born to hearing parents who do not know sign language, and thus, these children often spend the first few years of their lives with little or no access to a full-fledged language (Padden, 2000). For the



first steps into a deaf environment, deaf schools provide the initial opportunity for these children to meet and regularly spend time with their deaf peers. It can be said that most of the deaf children in Turkey are exposed to Turkish Sign Language belatedly, when they begin to meet their peers at the age of six or seven. The recent statistics on deaf schools in Turkey comprises a total of 62 schools for the deaf and hard of hearing, serving 5,482 students at 44 elementary and 18 Special Education Vocational High Schools (MEB, 2014). However, when compared to the statistics in *Figure 5* below for the years 2005-2006 which identify a total of 70 deaf schools that serve 5,857 students at 49 elementary and 21 Special Education Vocational High Schools (MEB, 2005)<sup>7</sup>, it is understood that there is an overall decrease in the number of deaf students enrolled in these schools and this may be a result of the fact that more deaf children get cochlear implants and some parents seek better standards in education than is currently provided at schools for the deaf.

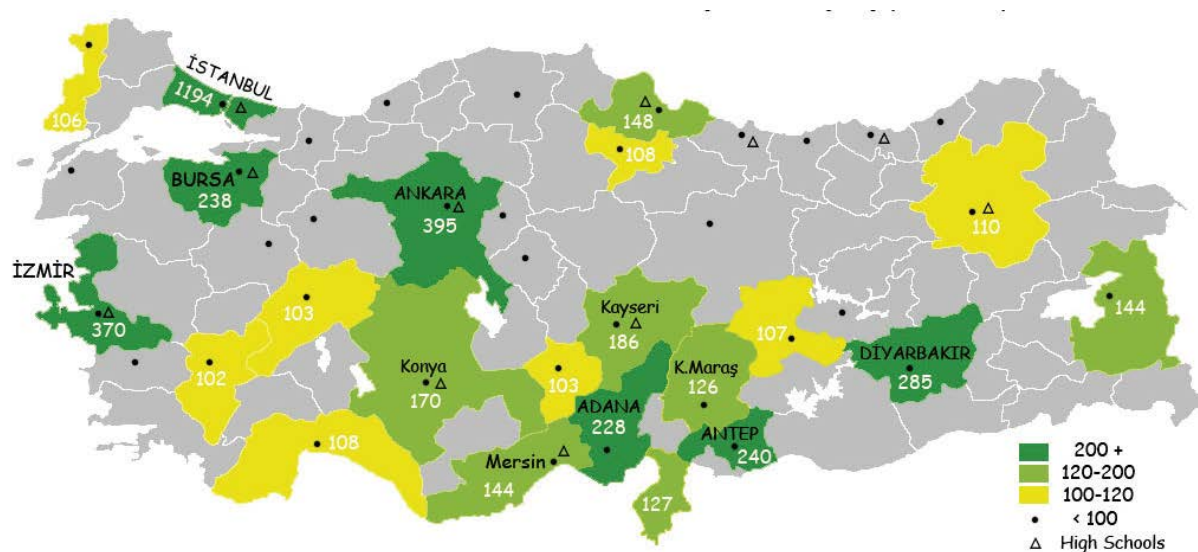


Figure 5. Distribution of deaf students in deaf elementary schools and high schools by city (2005-2006)

Teachers have been required to specialize in teaching deaf students since 2005, but there are only three universities in Turkey that offer four-year bachelor degree programs in Teaching for Deaf Education currently: Anadolu University (Eskişehir), Karadeniz

<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, there is not a proper map of statistics for the years after 2005-2006 regarding deaf schools in the website of MEB.

Technical University (Trabzon) and Ondokuz Mayıs University (Samsun) (ÖSYM Tercih Kılavuzu, 2013). Nonetheless, new teachers completed any of these training programs typically arrive at deaf schools with neither proper sign language skills to communicate with deaf students, nor skills to teach academic content using sign language. This is probably due to the fact that these teachers are not provided a proper training program in sign language in none of the universities mentioned above since there is a shortage of professional and instructional materials in TİD (İlkbaşıran, 2013: 31).

### **2.2.3. Current State of TİD**

TİD is a recently investigated language in terms of linguistic viewpoint, because as previously mentioned, much of the research on Turkish Deaf people has been conducted by either governmental institutions related to disability or by medical institutions with the aim of providing health services. Even so, there have been some major linguistic attempts which shed light on the current studies on TİD as listed below:

*‘A Study on Sign Languages and Turkish Sign Language’* (2001) and *‘Linguistic Analysis on Basic Sentence Types in Turkish Sign Language(TİD) with reference to non-manual activity’* (2007) both by Açıkan are two of the linguistic works that deal with TİD in terms of its basic linguistic characteristics. Açıkan (2001) describes some syntactic and semantic properties of TİD in regard to individual signs and beyond, and also provides an insight in order to appreciate TİD as a “real language” in her study titled *‘A Study on Sign Languages and Turkish Sign Language’*. To that end, she prepared a written set of simple and complex Turkish sentences and participants were requested to assert TİD equivalences of these sentences and they were recorded by a video camera. In addition, some general information about TİD were obtained from the participants beforehand the prepared corpus including declarative, interrogative, negative and imperative sentences that were prepared to obtain their TİD equivalences. Her findings indicated that TİD is adequate to be seen as a natural language although it differs from Turkish in many respects. In another study of her own, Açıkan (2007) attempts to contribute to the linguistic description of TİD on basis of the analysis of basic sentence types (i.e declarative, interrogative, negative and imperative sentences) within the frame of non-manual activity. Non-manual activity comprises the use of the head, bodily

movements, sounds uttered by vocal organs and etc. For this purpose, she collected the data from four native TİD informants through a presentation of a set of pictures that were shown to these participants with the aim of obtaining questions and statements from them. The participants were requested to produce many statements and questions in TİD with the consideration of the people and the settings. Participants were recorded by a video camera during their production of statements and questions in TİD. The findings of the study revealed information regarding sign structure, sentence types, word order and the use of non-manual activity. First of all, it has been found that TİD signs can be equated to words in spoken Turkish in a rule-governed way, resulting from the application of signing parameters: location, handshape and movement. Secondly, the study showed that TİD makes use of different sentence types that are also found in spoken languages such as declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives and negative sentences. Açı (2007:236) adds that these types of sentences are marked by non-manual activities. Thirdly, this study revealed that TİD exhibits S-O-V word order that is similar to Turkish but this does not mean that the grammar of both languages are same. Finally, judging from the results obtained in that study, non-manual activities of the face and body contribute to the grammatical and stylistic features in TİD.

Zeshan worked with the grammatical structure of TİD and the spread of its use within the educational system. Among the best known works of her are *'Sign Language of Turkey: The story of a hidden language (2002)*, and *'Aspects of Türk İşaret Dili (Turkish Sign Language) (2003)*. In *Aspects of Türk İşaret Dili (Turkish Sign Language)*, Zeshan(2003) first gives an overall historical, sociolinguistic and educational information about TİD as well as giving information about Deaf community of TİD in Turkey. In regard to TİD grammar, she has investigated five aspects including *completive aspect movement derivation, types of nonmanual negation, negative cliticization, an honorific classifier, and TİD question particle*.

The studies of Özyürek, İlkbaşıaran and Arık (2004) focus on the understanding the grammar of TID and its relation to other sign languages of the world (see <http://turkisaretdili.ku.edu.tr>.) In another study, İlkbaşıaran (2013) examines communicative practices of Deaf people in Turkey and the features regarding sociolinguistics of TİD.

The project of Haberdar (2005) with the title '*Saklı Markov Model Kullanılarak Görüntüden Gerçek Zamanlı Türk İşaret Dili Tanıma Sistemi*' deals with TİD with an aim to establish a satisfactory lexical and sentential recognition of the signs used in TİD.

The study of Dikyuva (2006) titled as '*Education, General History and Materials of Turkish Sign Language*' gives an exhaustive explanation about the background of TİD and about the ways, methods and materials to be utilized in the teaching of TİD.

Apart from the studies referred to above, Arık (2013) has recently compiled main topics studied on Turkish Sign Language. A list of these domains and of the researchers who carried out studies on these topics is given in *Figure 6* below:

Basic grammar	Açan (2001, 2007), Sevinç (2006)
History of the language	Zeshan (2002, 2003), Kemaloğlu & Kemaloğlu (2012)
Phonetics, phonology, and morphology	Kubuş (2008), Kubuş & Hohenberger (2011), Özkul (2013), Taşçı (2012)
Nonmanuals, negation, interrogatives	Zeshan (2006), Gökgöz & Arık (2011), Gökgöz (2011), Makaroğlu (2012)
General syntax	Gökgöz (2009)
Locational and motional events	Özyürek and her colleagues (e.g., 2010), Arık (e.g., 2009)
Acquisition of locatives	Sümer et al. (2012)
Classifiers -- complex predicates of location, motion, and action	Arık (2013)
Locatives, existentials, and possessives	Arık & Wilbur (2008)
Methodology	Özsoy et al. (2012)
Bilingualism and multilingualism	Ergenç and her colleagues (2013)

Figure 6. *Overview of the studies carried out in TİD*

Apart from these academic studies, the Turkish government passed a bill within the Disabilities Act<sup>8</sup> with regard to recognizing Turkish Sign Language (TİD) and enforcing its documentation and use within state institutions in 2005 and then objectives such as developing a TİD dictionary, studying the linguistic aspects of TİD, and

<sup>8</sup> The original text for this law (No. 5278) that was published on the Official Gazette with the title "Özürlüler ve Bazı Kanun ve Kanun Hükmünde Kararnamelerde Değişiklik Yapılması hakkında Kanun" can be found in

<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2005/07/20050707>.

[htm&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2005/07/20050707.htm](http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2005/07/20050707.htm)

developing bilingual educational materials (Turkish and TİD) were on the agenda. Nonetheless, as İlkbařaran (2015: 68) states, not much progress on the documentation of TİD has been made due to frequent reorganization, bureaucracy and lack of professional specialization and ability within the Turkish Sign Language Science Council (TİDBO) founded in 2005. The comprehensive and instructional materials on TİD are limited. The first known resource on TİD dates back to 1995 with the title “Sign Language Guide for Adults” printed by the Turkish Ministry of Education and was based on research that began as recently as 1983 and revised in 2012 under the title of “Dictionary of Turkish Sign Language” including 2000 signs with their photographs. In the 2000s, Zeshan (2002) organized the first TİD training program by using a special methodology and material. This program was continuously run under the name of the Turkish National Deaf Federation (TSMF) and mainly supported by the İstanbul City Municipality (Kemalođlu & Kemalođlu, 2012). Later, “TİD Word List” was created based on Özyürek’s research on the grammar of TID between the years 2000 - 2004 at Koç University (Özyürek, İlkbařaran & Arık, 2004). However, there is no contemporary dictionary of TİD which is based on a comprehensive linguistic study conducted across Turkey. The only instructional book on TİD belongs to Dikyuva and Zeshan with the name “Turkish Sign Language –Level 1” published in 2008.

Unfortunately, there are no academic departments or institutions on Turkish Sign Language or TİD interpreting in Turkey. The reason behind this is that the academic research on the linguistic properties of TİD only began in the 21st century, and the language is not fully documented yet. A workshop<sup>9</sup> was held in 2007 with a concrete result of voting to recognize two-handed TİD alphabet formally. Afterwards, on November 25, 2010, the Association of Sign Language Interpreters (İDTD) was founded in collaboration with TSMF, which made it possible for TİD interpreters to collaborate with the World Association for Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) and European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI). As İlkbařaran (2015: 70) notes that foundation of İDTD was a significant step in the professionalization of TİD, however a two to four year college degree on TID interpreting is yet to be established in Turkey. In spite of the slow progress in developing scientific research, academic programs and instructional resources on TİD, the General Directorate of People with

<sup>9</sup> Birinci Türk İşaret Dili Çalıştayı. Türk Dil Kurumu Konferans Salonu. Ankara: June 7-8, 2007.

Disabilities and the Elderly (EYH) passed a bill that makes TİD instruction obligatory at academic programs for Teachers of the Deaf as of the 2014- 2015 school year and later on, a group of Turkish Deaf people were certified to teach TİD (İlkbaşaran 2015). This can and should be taken as a remarkable step in the empowerment of Deaf people in Turkey, not only with respect to future job opportunities, but also to their contribution to the language development of new generations of Deaf people in Turkey.

#### **2.2.4. Some Aspects of TİD Grammar**

As other sign languages around the world, TİD is a visual-gestural natural human language. Thus, it is not unnatural that some features that are similar to those in some other sign languages can be found in TİD as well. As in spoken languages, sign language have their own alphabets, but in a different medium. They use manual alphabets that are created by hands since the medium of language is different from that of spoken languages. Sign language manual alphabets can be either one-handed or two-handed. Like BSL, TİD has a two-handed manual alphabet which is fairly different from ASL and DGS having a one-handed manual alphabet. However, few letter signs such as C, I, L, O, P, V are created with one hand in TİD but other letter signs are performed with two hands. TİD manual alphabet has 29 manual letter signs which has the same number found in the alphabet of spoken Turkish. Some letter signs such as Q, X and W, which are used less frequently by TİD native signers, are not considered in the TİD manual alphabet. The manual alphabet of TİD is given in *Figure 7* below:

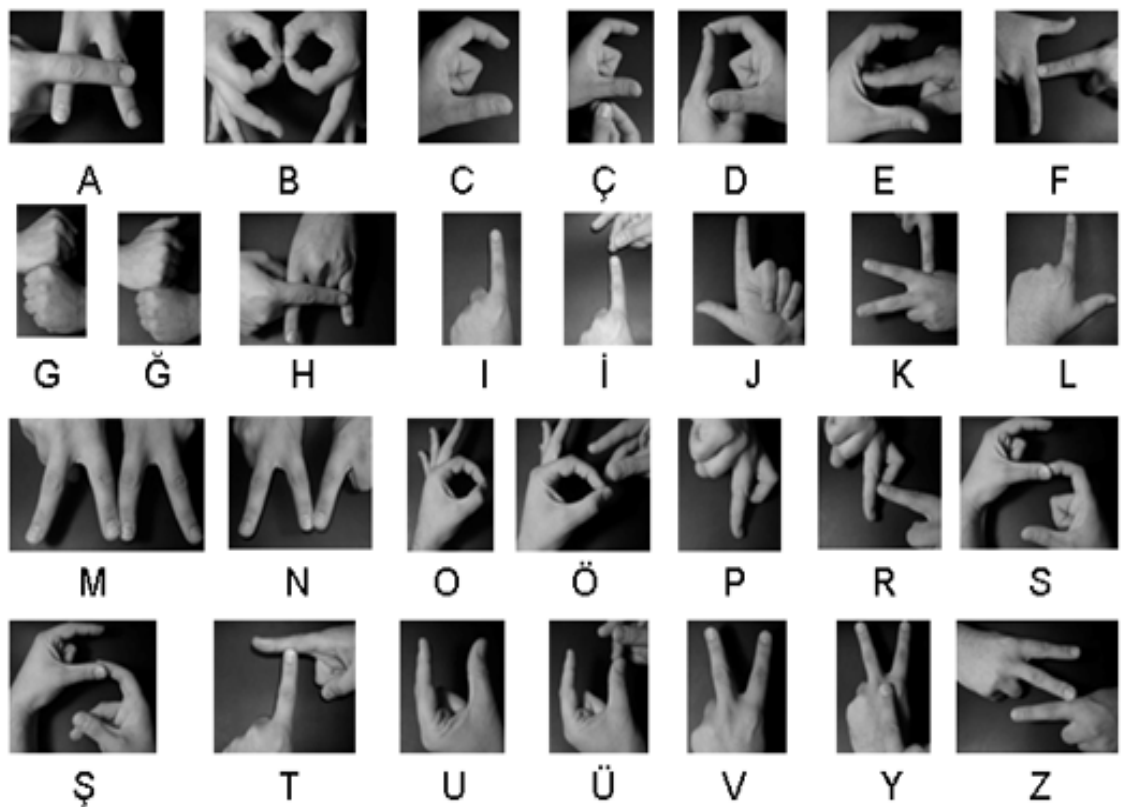


Figure 7. *The Manual Alphabet of TİD* (Kubuş, 2008: 49)

Apart from manual alphabets, there are also handshape inventories in sign languages. The handshape inventory of sign languages such as ASL and DGS (German Sign Language) has many similarities with their own one-handed manual alphabet signs since each handshape is performed with one hand, whereas two-handed alphabets only overlap with their handshape inventory when the alphabet has also one-handed letter signs. Although some letters like C, I, L, O, P, V are one-handed manual alphabet signs and also handshapes in TİD, the other manual alphabet signs which are performed with two hands are not observed in the TİD handshape inventory. Thus, as Kubuş (2008: 50) states, it is arguable whether these two-handed signs in the manual alphabet of TİD contain handshapes or not, for example whether the “A” letter is composed of a ‘V’ and an ‘I’ handshape or not. The handshape inventory of TİD can be accessed in the Appendix 1.

### 2.2.4.1. Sign Structure

Individual signs in TİD and words in Turkish can be thought of as being equivalent to each other in terms of linguistic patterning. Both can be considered as ‘meaningful/functional free forms’ having an internal structure, being composed of smaller units which are combined in rule-governed ways. As Açıkan (2013: 81) examines, TİD signs are made up of three major specific components in terms of their internal structure, namely the ‘*shape (configuration)*’, ‘*movement*’, and the ‘*location*’ of the hand, altogether referred to as ‘parameters’<sup>10</sup>, just as Turkish words consist of ‘phonemes’ -a series of meaning distinguishing speech sounds-. As previously stated in section 2.1.3.2., all of these parameters are limited in number but can be used to create many signs, and this is also true for TİD signs. To exemplify these parameters, a TİD sign ‘BEN’ (1st person singular pronoun ‘I’) has been given in the analysis below:

a. TİD sign ‘**BEN**’

Location: chest

Hand shape: (I-hand shape) index finger extended from closed fist

Movement: movement towards signer (ends up at the location mentioned)

As in words in spoken languages, a change in any of these parameters will result in either meaningless hand gestures or different lexical signs. For instance, a change only in the location parameter of the sign ‘BEN’ and keeping the handshape and movement same, a different sign, namely ‘BEYAZ’ (white), will be created below and the difference in terms of the component between the signs ‘BEN’ and ‘BEYAZ’ is underlined:

b. TİD sign ‘**BEN**’ :

Location: chest

Hand shape: (I-hand shape) index finger extended from closed fist

Movement: movement towards signer (ends up at the location mentioned)

<sup>10</sup> The general definitions of each of these components in sign languages were explained in detail in Section 2.1.3.2. of the present study.



*TİD* sign ‘**BEYAZ**’ :

Location: fore tooth

Hand shape: (I-hand shape) index finger extended from closed fist

Movement: movement towards signer (ends up at the location mentioned)

Judging from the analysis of these signs above, contrasts in terms of any parameters can be said to result in minimal pairs -signs that have different meanings and that differ in terms of only one component-. Therefore, it can be said that each of these components seems to have a meaning-distinguishing function just as phonemes have in spoken languages.

There are also differences among signs in terms of the use of hands. Some signs in TİD require the use of only one hand (one-handed signs) such as in ‘BEN’ and ‘BEYAZ’ above, and some other signs require the use of both hands (two-handed signs). Two handed signs vary in terms of hand dominance and the handshapes of the two hands and are divided into two types (Kubuş, 2008: 45) :

Type 1: Both hands have the same handshape, the same movement and generally either the same location or a symmetric location. (‘FESTİVAL/ FESTIVAL’ in *Figure 8a.*)

Type 2: Hands have the same handshape but one hand is dominant and other is non-dominant. ( ‘DÜĞÜN/WEDDING’ in *Figure 8b.*)

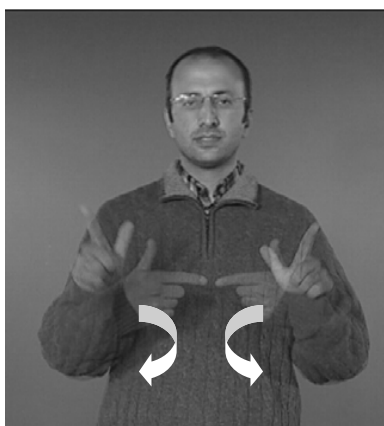


Figure 8a. ‘FESTİVAL / FESTIVAL’



Figure 8b. ‘DÜĞÜN / WEDDING’

In type 1 two-handed signs, the non-dominant hand replicates the movement and shape of the dominant hand and this type of signs seem to display ‘symmetry condition’ (see Deuchar, 1984: 49). According to this constraint, if both hands of a sign move independently during their articulation, then both hands must be specified for the same handshape, the same movement (whether performed simultaneously or in alternation), and the specifications for orientation must be either symmetrical or identical in the opposite.

In addition to the parameters described above, there are two other constraints that should be noted in the analysis of signs: *Sign space* and *hand orientation*<sup>11</sup>. The sign space in TĪD covers vertically the distance from below the waist and up to the top of the head. All signs are performed within this area, except indexing an object nearby instead of using the TĪD sign for it, or pointing the knee for the sign ‘DĪZ’ (knee), for example. This limitation in the use of the signing space seems to provide signers practicality and economy in effort as well as making the signs visible and explicit for the addressee. Hand orientation is mainly related to the position and direction of the palms and fingers during the production of signs. The palms and fingers may be oriented left, right, up, down, towards or away from the signer.

It should be noted that in the identification of the above analyses of TĪD signs in terms of their internal components of location, hand shape and movement; the scope has been limited to deal mainly with the activity of the hands. However, the role of nonmanual activity has been disregarded.

#### 2.2.4.2. Number and Time Reference Incorporation

In sign languages, there are sign formations including spontaneous combination of two signs. Numeral and time references are of this kind. Numeral incorporation means that numbers are directly incorporated into signs referring to countable nouns. As for TĪD, numeral incorporation is widely observed in the expression of certain units of time such as hour, week, month, year, etc, as well as multiples of 10,100, and 1000 within the system of cardinal numbers. For a number to be incorporated into a sign in order to attach it an additional meaning of quantity, certain alterations often take place in terms

<sup>11</sup> These constraints were also defined for their general uses in sign languages overall in Section 2.1.3.2 of the present study.

of the hand shape and movement of the sign in question. To give an example, the sign ‘İKİ AY (two months)’ is performed by changing the hand shape of the sign ‘AY (month)’ simply incorporating into it the hand shape for the number ‘İKİ (two)’ instead of using the number sign ‘İKİ (two)’ and then the sign ‘AY (month)’ separately. For more complex signs that include time showing sign as well as numeral sign, all the signs are incorporated into a single whole sign. For instance, let's take the signs ‘ÜÇ (three)’, ‘HAFTA (week)’ and ‘ÖNCE (ago)’ respectively, in order to create a whole expression ‘ ÜÇ HAFTA ÖNCE (three weeks ago)’. First, the hand shape of the sign ‘HAFTA (week)’ is altered incorporating it with the number sign ‘ÜÇ (three)’ in order to attach the sign dual a numerical value and then the direction of movement in the sign ‘HAFTA (week)’ is reversed in order to incorporate the time that refers to the past. Consequently, with these two operations on the signs, a three-element sign expression is created.

#### 2.2.4.3. Classifiers

In sign languages, by utilizing specific handshapes, some signs indicate the forms of the objects such as a certain class of entities, as well as some characteristics of entities such as shape, size, way of movement and appearance. These kind of signs are called ‘classifiers’ in sign languages. Once an object or a person is indicated, a classifier can be replaced with that object or the person afterwards in order to show how it moves, what it looks like, where it is located, etc. (see; <http://www.jalc.edu/ipp/Classifiers/>).

As given in Kubuş (2008: 90), classifiers are universal: Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT, Zwitserlood, 2003), British Sign Language (BSL, Sutton-Spence and Woll, 1999), Israeli Sign Language (ISL, Aronoff, Meir, and Sandler, 2005), Australian Sign Language (Auslan, Johnston, 1991; Schembri, 1996) and American Sign Language (ASL, Supalla, 1982) and some other sign languages have been identified to have classifiers which generally capitalize on iconicity (Sandler & Lillo-Martin, 2006: 76). When research on classifiers are examined, we see that classifiers have been analyzed as verb stems (Engberg-Pedersen 1993), agreement markers (Glück & Pfau 1998) or aspectual markers (Brentari & Benedicto, 1999).

Classifiers can be grouped into Entity/Class Classifiers, Handle Classifiers, and Size and Shape Classifiers (Sandler and Lillo-Martin, 2006 in Kubuş, 2008: 90). Kubuş (2008: 90) summarizes all of the categories of classifiers as follows:

In class classifiers, the handshape is the classifying morpheme. Handle classifiers represent how an entity is handled or manipulated. Size and shape classifiers express the form of an entity. For instance, the entity classifier for “car” is marked by a particular handshape in sign languages (e.g., 3 spread fingers in ASL).

Indeed, classifiers are hard to define and their functions are varied: nominal, adjectival, subject or object (Hohenberger, 2008). Moreover, whether classifiers are to be seen as linguistic units or non-linguistic units being only iconic / gestural is open to debate with different views<sup>12</sup>. TİD makes use of three kinds of classifiers aforementioned above and each category of classifiers is given below:

#### a) Entity Classifiers in TİD

Extensive use of classifiers in TİD seems to be the classifier for humans. Entity classifiers are mainly used with subject nouns of intransitive verbs (Zwitserslood, 2003). One can either use an index hand shape to indicate the whole body of the person (whole entity classifiers) or can use the leg hand shape (leg-classifiers) to refer only to the legs when indicating humans (see Zeshan, 2002: 264-265). Whole entity classifiers can be either honorific or neutral. In honorifics, the ASL A-bar handshape is generally used and people having higher status in terms of politics or business are referred to. In neutral classifiers, the I-handshape is mostly utilized and this classifier is generally used for human beings. Later, further information about the person’s location and movement or about what he/she is doing to whom can be revealed through the use of person classifiers.

#### b) Handle Classifiers in TİD

The handshapes which are observed in entity classifiers are applied to transitive verbs. For instance, for a handle classifier for picking a cigarette out of the cigarette packet and giving it to someone else; the cigarette is indicated with the I-handshape as entity

<sup>12</sup> For different and competing views on how to treat classifiers, see Supalla, 1982; Cogill-Koez, 2000; and Emmorey and Herzig, 2003.

classifier; however, giving this cigarette to someone else is expressed with the O-handshape as handle classifier.

### c) Size and Shape Classifiers (SASCes) in TİD

These kind of classifiers stand for the physical appearances or properties of objects. Indeed, there are two kinds of size and shape classifiers: Static and Tracing. “Static SASCes are similar to entity classifiers in that the hand configurations represent noun referents.... Tracing SASCes, in contrast, have very different characteristics covering one dimensional (pole), two dimensional (rectangular object) and three dimensional (surfaces) objects.” (Zwitserslood, 2003: 153). In TİD, the C-handshape or U-handshape (nameyle narrowed C-handshape) are commonly observed as static SASCes. As for tracing Classifier, the I-handshape is mostly used to specify different shapes, covering 2-D geometrical shapes, whereas the Claw handshape or Flat Hand are used generally to identify 3-D Shapes in TİD (Kubuş 2008: 97).

The handshapes regarding entity, SASCes, and some handle classifiers can be found in Appendix 2.

## **2.3. PERSONAL NAMING**

Regardless of language, cultural setting, class, ethnicity and even location in the world, all people groups use names as a way to identify an individual from the masses. While names are used throughout the world, names can be expressed and used differently depending on both language and culture. A person's name is associated with several legal and cultural norms. Perceptions vary according to the society, but certain common features are evident, such as choosing the right name, the uniqueness of the name, and the name as an expression of personal identity. Ancient Estonians believed that a mysterious connection existed between people and their names because one's name was seen as an integral part of one's soul, containing certain elements of one's personality (Loorits 1990: 29 in Paales 2010: 319). In addition, personal names reflect a society's

concerns and values, so people often use their language in richly inventive ways to show their cultural, political, and religious values.

Understanding naming practices allows us to understand a community's cultural beliefs, linguistic practices, social structures, and family relationships (Day & Sutton-Spence 2010: 23). Moreover, comprehending the reasons behind naming in various cultures allows us to place current naming practices and enables us to see the wide range of meanings behind the choice of personal names.

### **2.3.1. Personal Naming in Spoken Languages**

Many countries use the personal naming system on the basis of the association of the given names/s and surname in which given name usually precedes the surname. This system was adopted in Turkey after Modern Turkish Republic was founded. Indeed, as Duman(2000:4), who studied personal names in spoken Turkish in terms of linguistic aspects, states “this system is based on Ancient Greek and Roman personal naming conventions” For Ancient Greek and Roman cultures, Room (1992: vi) asserts that only one name had been enough in both cultures, but afterwards they developed a system in which each person had two, and then three personal names respectively.

The first name was called ‘praenomen’ and it was used in the same sense with ‘first name’. They were limited in number that could be written in abbreviated form. The second name was called ‘nomen’ and it referred to the clan or gens. The third name was ‘cognomen’ that is in the same sense with nickname (Duman 2000: 4).

However; there are some exceptions to this custom: Westerners often insert a third or more names between the given name and surnames; Chinese and Hungarian names have the family name preceding the given name; females often retain their maiden names (their family surname) or combine, using a hyphen, their maiden name and the surname of their husband; some East Slavic nations insert the patronym between the given name and the family name; the given name is used with the patronym, or matronym in Iceland and surnames are rarely used (Nomenclature, 2014).

#### **2.3.1.1. The Study of Personal Names**

The term ‘onomastics’, - the scientific study of names and naming-, is of Greek origin. ‘Onoma’(ονομα ) is the word which is the equivalent of ‘name’ in English. The study

of names is a field which touches on linguistics, history, anthropology, psychology, sociology and philology. According to Robins (1969: 26-27), Plato divides the formation of a Greek sentence into two parts in *Cratylus*: one is *onoma* (*nominal component*) and the other is *rhema* (*verbal component*). Afterwards, a distinction between common nouns and proper nouns was made by Stoics and they termed the common nouns as ‘prosegoria’ and proper nouns as ‘onoma’. They defined these categories in semantic terms with regard to individual (proper name) and general (common name) qualities. Later on with the entry of syntactic criterion in the study of names, Bloomfield (1966: 205) states “names (proper nouns) occur only in the singular number, take no determiner and are always definite”. However, as an opposite idea, Lehrer (1994: 3372) remonstrates that such syntactic criteria are language-specific, and do not comprise all kinds of proper names.

In the definition of proper names, Ullmann (1970: 71-79) discusses five criteria (*uniqueness, identification, denotation, distinctive sound, and grammatical criteria*) which were posited by different scholars in different periods of time. According to Ullman (1970:72), ‘identification’ criterion is the most precise one, since common names and proper names function in different ways; “common names are meaningful units, while proper names are identification marks”.

For the identification of proper names, McArthur (1996:609) describes three criteria which can be applied to personal names as well. These criteria are semantic, grammatical and orthographic. In terms of semantic viewpoint, McArthur (1996 in Duman 2000: 6) defines proper names as “...expressions designating a specific entity like person, place, thing, that people agreed to call by that name. It implies no characteristics beyond use of the name to designate its referent.”

In regard to grammatical point of view, McArthur (1996: 729) states that proper names have *a/an indefiniteness* feature and most other determiners are not used with proper nouns. For the last criteria, orthographic viewpoint, McArthur (1996: 653) claims that orthography is not a precise criterion to determine the ‘properness’ of a name, but he adds “most proper names are capitalised”.

Personal names and place names have been mostly studied branches in the study of proper names. The study of place names is called as toponymy and of personal names as anthroponymy (McArthur 1996: 652). However, Crystal (1989:112) asserts that onomastics has come to be used mainly for the study of personal names. The criterion used in the classification of personal names is usually based on the personal naming conventions of civilised societies since the studies dealing with different kinds of names have a narrow scope limited to western traditions (Duman 2000: 6).

Onomastic studies have been institutionalised and carried on in organized way (Rasonyi 1965: 72) in Europe and U.S. For instance, in Belgium, the International Committee of Onomastic Sciences at the International Center of Onomastics is an actively working institution for onomastic studies in Europe. Likewise, in U.S., the American Name Society is engaged in any kind of onomastic studies.

In the creation and selection of names, the impact of society is, of course, a field of interest for researchers. Some significant information regarding the relation between society and personal naming has been given in Hanks and Hodge's (1990) dictionary of personal names. The first section of this dictionary includes comprehensive information about the cultural and social aspects of personal naming. In addition to societal norms, the effect of religion, the royal and aristocratic names, naming practices such as in Belgium, Poland, Germany, Canada etc. are explained shortly in this dictionary. In another study on the relation between personal naming and societal norms, Clark (1995) carried out thorough analysis on British names and itemizes the influences of societal factors on name giving behavior of British people.

### **2.3.2. Functions of Personal Naming**

The term 'name' can be used in various senses and can perform different jobs such as referring to people, addressing them, greeting, signifying respect and etc. Lyons (1981) formalizes these jobs as referential and vocative functions of personal names. The former is related to denoting individuals and it is an utterance-bearing notion because names may be given to more than one person. The latter is performed in order to attract the attention of the person in question, and there is a distinction between terms of reference and terms of address in some languages.



In terms of anthropological view, personal naming exhibits further functions. According to Levi-Strauss (1996: 211), a society possesses a person by naming. Thus, that person becomes a member of that society. To Alford (1987 in Cohen 1994: 2675), personal naming has another function, that is, personal names confer socialness depending on the social organisation. For another viewpoint, Ragussis (1986: 8) put forths that names in most cultures have a primary function of bringing the child inside the cultural system and he adds that the family names of children serve this function.

### **2.3.3. Personal Names in Sign Languages**

Personal names in any culture are a potential gold mine of information about social relationships, identity, history, and linguistic processes. In Deaf communities around the world, undoubtedly, Deaf and hearing impaired people have their own phonetic (official) names as hearing people have. Just like any hearing children; deaf children are also named with a phonetic name by their parents after birth. However, as researchers of name signs from New Zealand have pointed out, phonetic names are not accessible in the signed discourse: it is difficult to teach their social and linguistic significance to Deaf children, as Deaf people perceive and communicate in a visual rather than an aural modality and they cannot hear the pronunciation of their phonetic names (McKee & McKee 2000: 9). Therefore, members in a Deaf community are commonly referred to by sign names given to them by other Deaf people at various stages of life, which are different from the official personal names given by parents at birth and their identities are experienced and coded visually. Thus, there becomes a linguistic need for creating a signed naming system. Culturally and lingually Deaf person assigns a name sign to a new non-native member of the community. In regard to culture, a name sign is a gift, something that is given to one and is not something that a non-native can pick or invent for oneself. Forming a name sign has its complex system of rules. Assigning a name sign is usually not given quickly nor without consideration of its rules. Again, name sign is a part of the distinct identity of the Deaf culture.

The study of name signs provides a window on the relationship between sign language, social interaction, and identity. Name signs are bestowed by other Deaf peers through a period of close acquaintance and, therefore, they both signal and construct a person's identity as a recognized member of a Deaf community, which is often regarded by

members as an extended “family” (Monaghan 1996, 463). By marking a person’s entry to a signing community, a name sign reinforces the bond of shared group history and alternative language use when compared to mainstream society. Thus, the use of name signs is a linguistically efficient means of personal reference and is culturally important for interactions in a signing community since social networks tend to be bound up connections with other Deaf people rather than one’s family of origin unless the family is also Deaf. As Stockdale (2013) asserts “No matter the way of communicating one’s name to others, names are an incredible part of our identity as humans and the concept of name signs is therefore a serious and sacred part of Deaf culture”. In addition, personal identity in the Deaf community is strongly shaped by and reflected in language use and by relationships with peers. Paaes (2011:49) states that if you ask whether a Deaf person “prefers” his/her official (phonetic) name or name sign, then the preference is undoubtedly given to his/her name sign as it is a symbol of his/her own Deaf culture and identity.

The form of name signs and their particular social values vary considerably among different sign languages and Deaf cultures around the world. However, most typically, name signs originate in deaf school settings. Since the concept of name signs is unique to Deaf culture and is shaped by a shared sense of Deaf identity, it is only appropriate for a member within the Deaf community to assign name signs. When a Deaf or hard of hearing child is born, if the parents are part of the Deaf community they will give their child a name sign at birth, while Deaf children with hearing parents might receive their name sign later, during school. Likewise, Meadow (1977:240 in Paaes 2011:50), referring to the American Deaf community, points out three periods when a Deaf person is most likely to obtain a personal name sign: 1) in childhood (Deaf children of Deaf parents); 2) at a special school for Deaf (contemporaries); 3) in high school (Deaf co-students). In addition to this, a single person may have several name signs, each one given by different groups within the community. For instance, if the person is a supervisor at work, the worst player at poker, and a loving father at home, he may have three name signs to reflect these three different characteristics; or he may just have the same name sign in all three (Wilbur, 1979).

Yau & He (1989) did a study at a deaf school in China to find out how deaf children born to hearing parents acquired a name sign. They thought that the teachers gave the children their name signs, but this was not the case. They had 21 children all born to hearing parents and did not already have a name sign. It was the dormitory monitors that gave the children their sign names during the first week of school since the monitors had to call roll three times a day so a shorter way than fingerspelling their name was needed. Most of the name signs they chose were descriptive and not all were flattering. The interesting thing about a name sign is that once they are conferred and made known to the public, it is usually harder to change name signs than to change official personal names. Nonetheless, changes of name sign may occur as individuals and their peers mature and are perhaps prompted by new perceptions of personality traits. Over time, changes in the appearance of physical characteristics (changes in body size and shape at puberty, or unusual body mutations such as the loss of a limb, digit, teeth, etc), a change in the place a person inhabits or a new role in relation to a group of signers such as a job in a Deaf school as a teacher can have effects on changing a name sign. More specifically, if someone moves into town and finds a person living there with an identical name sign then the newcomer would have to change it. If a deaf and hearing person had the same name sign then the hearing person would be expected to change it. It can be done either by modifying it or replacing it with a completely new name sign (Carey, 2003). In this sense, name signs are like nicknames in that they both develop in social groups and mark in-group social statuses and social relationships among the members of the community (Morgan et al. 1979 in McKee & McKee 2000: 24). Moreover, like nicknames in spoken languages, name signs encapsulate the people's entry to socialization in the signing community. On the contrary, Meadow (1977:243) and Mindess (1990: 14) point out that name signs and nicknames have slightly different functions. For the clarity between name signs in sign languages and nicknames entitled in spoken languages, McKee & McKee (2000: 25) states:

However, unlike most nicknames, name signs remain the primary identity symbol for Deaf people throughout life because participation in the "closed" social system of the sign language community is likely to continue and to remain of primary significance in Deaf people's identity.

### 2.3.3.1. Name Sign Systems in Sign Languages

Name sign systems have been described with some variations in Deaf populations including the United States (Meadow 1977; Mindess 1990; Supalla 1990, 1992), France (Mottez 1985; Delaporte 2002), Sweden (Hedberg 1991), Quebec (Desrosiers and Dubuisson 1992), Thailand (Nonaka 1997), China (Yau and He 1987), Argentina (Massone and Johnson 1991), England (Sutton-Spence and Woll 1999; McNamara 2003), Finland (Rainò 2000, 2004, 2005), Greek (Kourbetis & Hoffmeister 2002), Belgium (Van Mulders 2005) and Estonia (Paales 2010). Different sign languages have their own systems of personal name signs and these name signs are formed in certain systematic ways and in recurring circumstances. The following subsection includes information about personal naming categories in sign languages in general and exemplifies name signs with their visual representations based on the examples of name signs from Estonian Sign Language (ESL) and ASL. Name sign samples based on the other sign languages have not been included in the study for the sake of simplicity since apart from ASL and ESL, name sign information obtained about other sign languages does not include visual representations of name signs.

#### 2.3.3.1.1. *Categories of Personal Name Signs in Sign Languages*

In most sign languages, traditionally, name signs can be placed in two general categories: *Arbitrary (initialised) Name Signs* (ANS in short) and *Descriptive Name Signs* (DNS in short). According to Supalla (1990:121), the choice between the two systems for a Deaf child's name sign depends heavily upon whether the child has Deaf or hearing parents. Based on his observation, it seems that Deaf parents do not choose to identify their children on the basis of their physical characteristics or their behaviors. Even though most of these Deaf parents have been born to hearing parents themselves, and may have been given a DNS in their childhood at school, this does not seem to incline them to do the same to their own children and they generally choose the ANS system over the DNS system to name their children.

The pioneer of name sign researchers Supalla (1992: 9) mentioned that "In order to form an Arbitrary Name Sign (ANS), the handshape must be alphabetic to represent the

initial of one's written first, middle, or last name". As he states, an arbitrary name sign includes the initials of one's given name and/or surname by means of using the initial letters of that person's name/surname with the corresponding letter signs in the manual alphabet of the sign language and does not have any relationship with the descriptions of that person. For instance, an Estonian whose name is Raviu Kurg is attributed a name sign regarding the initials of both first name and surname "R+K" in ESL as shown in *Figure 9* below:

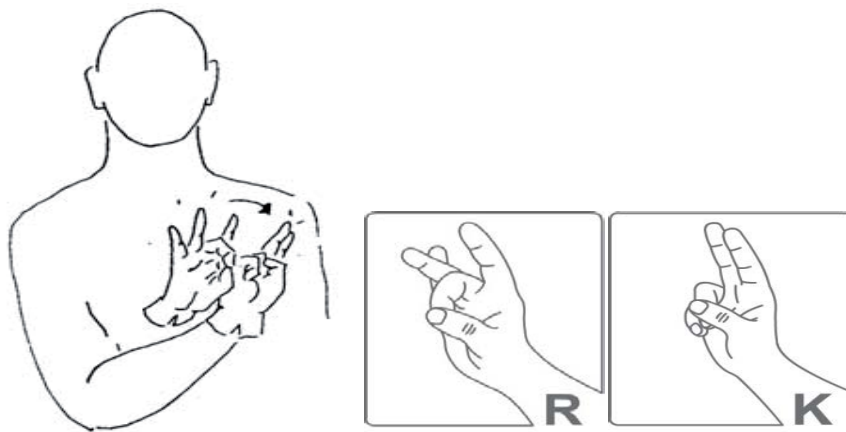


Figure 9. *Arbitrary name sign illustration of Raviu Kurg in ESL* (Paales 2004: 73)

Next, the formation of a descriptive name sign is based on the reference person's appearance, behaviour, clothing, peculiarity, special characteristic, etc. and does not relate to the person's phonetic name. Such descriptive name signs employ both the principle of metonymy – using a part instead of the whole – and the principle behind metaphor, i.e. comparison. In contrast to ANSs which use letters in manual alphabets, DNSs use handshapes found in sign languages. To give an example, a person who has large protruding ears may get an descriptive ASL name sign as demonstrated in *Figure 10* below:

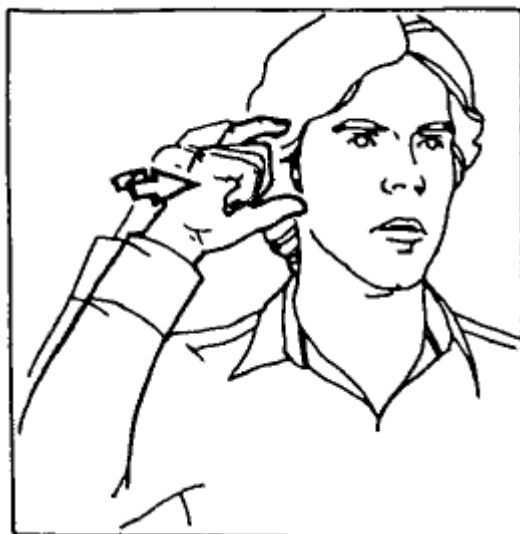


Figure 10. *Descriptive ASL name sign illustration of a person having protruding ears* (Supalla 1990: 101)

Apart from these two main kinds of personal name signs, there are, in some sign languages like ESL, also *initialised-descriptive* name signs and *loan/borrowed* name signs. In initialised-descriptive personal name signs, the hand shape corresponding to the initial of the name and/or surname is associated with some attributes of the reference person, such as hairstyle. In other words, these personal name signs combine both initials and description. Several name sign researchers consider these third group name signs to be untraditional, hybrid, and a result of cultural contact between hearing people and Deaf people (Delaporte 2002: 214; Mindess 1990: 14–15). To give an example, in American Sign Language, the current President Barack Obama is referred to by using a personal name sign which combines both the initials of his surname and first name as well as indication to his logo dating back to his election campaign (O+B+flag logo), which depicts the American flag and the initial of the surname *Obama*. The letter B (which is both the initial of his first name and the second letter in his surname) has undergone a morphological change and American B-hand shape denotes a flag in the name sign (Grigg-Langton 2009) as demonstrated in *Figure 11* below:



Figure 11. *The visual representation of formation of the initialised-descriptive name sign for Obama in ASL (Paaes 2011: 52)*

Name signs of this type are relatively infrequent in the Estonian name sign system. However, this type of personal name signs are found in American Sign Language. According to Anna Mindess (1990: 14-15) :

A descriptive and initialised name sign that refers to a hobby, haircut, behavior, or other feature of a particular person has recently been introduced. Several decades ago, Deaf people in the United States used either one type of name sign or the other (ANS or DNS). Nowadays there is a tendency toward combining the arbitrary and the descriptive systems: When describing a person, name signs may also incorporate an initial.

The fourth type, which reflects loan/borrowed name signs, is formed on the basis of the meaning of the reference person's official personal (phonetic) name. Such name signs are either total or partial homonyms in terms of written form of personal name (Paaes 2010: 324). Name signs in this category are created by translating the meaning of a word that is related to the reference person's phonetic name/surname in spoken language into the sign language of that corresponding spoken language. For instance, the surname of a reference person is *Kuusk* (English meaning [*spruce*]) in Estonian and it is translated into Estonian Sign Language (total homonym). Then, KUUSK [SPRUCE] becomes the personal name sign of that person (see *Figure 12* ).



Figure 12. *Loan/borrowed name sign representation for KUUSK [SPRUCE]* (Paales 2004:73)

It is also possible to derive a name sign from the meaning of the word similar to personal name (partial homonym). For example, the first name of the reference person is *Linda*. The members of the Deaf community associates it with Estonian word *lind* (English meaning [*bird*]) and the person named Linda is given a name sign LIND [BIRD] (see *Figure 13* ).



Figure 13. *Loan/borrowed name sign representation for LIND [BIRD]* (Paales 2004:73)



## **CHAPTER III: LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS**

This section demonstrates the findings regarding the present analysis of personal name signs in TĪD. Their results have been presented statistically and the personal name signs have been described on the basis of signing parameters (*location, handshape, movement and orientation*). In addition, different categories of personal name signs in TĪD have been demonstrated based on statistically significant results.

### **3.1. THE CATEGORIES OF PERSONAL NAME SIGNS IN TĪD**

Twenty-five Deaf participants were recruited for the analysis of personal name signs in this study. All of the participants in this research reported to have attended to Deaf schools in their childhood. Of these, only two participants have reported having two name signs each, and the rest have one name sign per individual. So, a total of 27 name signs were obtained for the Deaf members in the study. In our dataset, none of the participants had deaf parents. However, 7 out of 25 participants (28 percent) expressed that they have deaf siblings. As understood from the results of the questionnaire they were involved, none of the participants got their name signs from their parents. 23 out of 25 participants (92 percent) stated they got their name signs from their Deaf peers at Deaf schools. Out of the rest, one participant stated that he got his name sign from Deaf members in a Deaf association. The other one expressed that her Deaf students attributed a name sign for her at the school for the Deaf. Apart from the name signs for Deaf participants gathered from a Deaf association, there are also 16 name signs for public and well-known figures in the data of the present study and the name signs for these people were gathered by interviewing with the same Deaf participants and by asking them to perform name signs for those well-known figures. So, taking into consideration name signs of Deaf participants and name signs for well-known figures together, a total of 43 name signs were analyzed.

Our sample of 43 name signs yielded four different categories in which personal name signs are formed by the Deaf participants in TĪD. These categories are: a) Descriptive name signs, b) Arbitrary name signs, c) Initialised-descriptive name signs and d) Loan/borrowed name signs. In the study, the most frequently occurring category was *descriptive name signs* (n=35; 81,39% out of n=43). *Arbitrary(initialised) name signs*

(n=3; 6,97% out of n=43) and *initialised-descriptive name signs* (n=3; 6,97% out of n=43) were counted as the second most frequently occurring categories and they share the second place with the same percentages in this study. *Loan/borrowed name signs* (n=2; 4,65% out of n=43), however, were placed in the last category. Table 1 shows the relevant figures gathered for each category in this study.

Table 1. *The frequency and rate of each category for personal name signs (n=43)*

<b>Categories of name signs</b>	<b>Count(n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Descriptive	35	81,39%
Arbitrary	3	6,97%
Initialised-descriptive	3	6,97%
Loan/borrowed	2	4,65%

As what Table 1 shows, it is not wrong to claim that personal name signs are mostly created on the basis of personal description of Deaf people in the community in one way or another. This finding shares similarity with the results obtained in European Deaf communities in that “In European Deaf communities, name signs are predominantly formed on the basis of descriptive systems” (Paaes 2010: 323). In addition, Hedberg has documented 311 name signs from 267 persons in Sweden (some of whom had several name signs), and only three were arbitrary (Hedberg 1994: 442). Similarly, researchers in New Zealand also report the dominant use of descriptive systems in Deaf communities there (McKee & McKee 2000). An example for a descriptive name sign in TĪD from the data of the present study is given in *Figure 14* below:



Figure 14. *A descriptive name sign in TİD*

The person in *Figure 14* above shows the wrinkles on his forehead with repetitive movement by using the I/1 handshape. Wrinkles on the forehead is a feature of the *physical appearance* of that person. Thus, this name sign is of *descriptive category*.

However, there was one extraordinary situation in the present study: While it would be expected that Tansu Çiller, a former prime minister of Turkey and a party leader, was recognized via a descriptive name sign like the other public figures in the study; Deaf participants used arbitrary name sign for this public figure (initial of her surname ‘Ç’) instead as given in *Figure 15* below:



Figure 15. *Arbitrary name sign for Tansu Çiller in TİD*

It is also possible to give details of 35 descriptive name signs by mentioning some sub-categories of description. Table 2 shows the findings that highlight the parts of descriptive name signs found in the present study.

Table 2. *Sub-groupings of descriptive name signs (n=35)*

Sub-groups of Description	Count(n=)	Percentage
Appearance	19	54,28%
Personal characteristics	9	25,71%
Status	4	11,42%
Behaviour	2	5,71%
Inherited	1	2,85%

Judging from the figures given in Table 2, it is seen that personal name signs are mostly based on people's physical appearance (n=19, 54,28%). This can be a scar on face, a striking difference on a part of the body, the hairstyle and etc. Following physical appearance, some other descriptive name signs are mainly produced with regard to the characteristics of Deaf people (n=9, 25,71%). This comes as no surprise when taking into consideration that the majority, if not all, of participants were given sign names after starting school rather than at birth, by which time they had begun to develop both their appearance and their personality. A descriptive name sign based on the personal characteristics is illustrated in *Figure 16*:

Figure 16. *A descriptive name sign based on personal characteristics in TID*

The person uses ‘9’ handshape while pointing to her cheek in *Figure 16* and this signing represents that she usually laughs a lot. Thus, this name sign includes a *characteristic* of that person and is of *descriptive category*.

Descriptive personal name signs based on the status (n=4, 11,42%) of people were stated by Deaf participants for the prominent politicians (such as Bülent Ecevit, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Atatürk and Adolf Hitler) since the political status of these politicians are generally a symbol of public recognition. A related example of a name sign for the political status showing public recognition is shown in *Figures 17a* and *17b* below:



Figure 17a. *First part of the name sign based on the political status*



Figure 17b. *Second part of the name sign based on the political status*

The name sign in *Figures 17a* and *17b* together includes a symbol of the ‘lamp’ representing the political party ‘AKP’ in Turkey. The use of that symbol can be regarded as a description of the political status of the party leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (previous leader of the party, present president of the Republic of Turkey but he is known among Deaf via the symbol of ‘lamp’ related to AKP). Therefore, this name sign includes a *status* property and it is of *descriptive category*.

Name signs resulting from personal behaviours (like ‘sniffing’) and inherited features (such as transmitted from family) are very rare as seen in Table 2. However, for these two subcategories, name signs from the data of the study are given in *Figure 18* and in *Figure 19* respectively:



Figure 18. *A descriptive name sign based on a behavioral feature*



Figure 19. *A descriptive name sign based on an inherited feature*

The person in *Figure 18* points to his nose by using 7 / V-closed handshape in order to show his behavior related to ‘sniffing’. Therefore, this name sign includes a description related to a *behavior* of that person and is of *descriptive category*. The name sign in *Figure 19* includes a pointing to the nose of the person in question by using the I/1 handshape in order to show that there is something related to the inherited physical shape of the nose of that person. The use of a description related to the *inherited* feature of the appearance of that person means that this name sign belongs to *descriptive category*

When compared, name signs for Deaf community members and name signs attributed to public figures as hearing community members show similarity both in the frequent use of categories of name signs and in the sub-groupings of descriptive name signs as shown in Table 3a - Table 3b and Table 4a - Table 4b below:

Table 3a. *Categories for personal name signs of Deaf participants (n=27)*

<b>Categories of name signs</b>	<b>Count(n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Descriptive	21	77,77%
Arbitrary	2	7,40%
Initialised-descriptive	2	7,40%
Loan/borrowed	2	7,40%

It is clear from Table 3a that name signs obtained from Deaf participants in the study are predominantly descriptive with 21 reported instances (77,77%) out of 27 name signs. The other three categories, which are arbitrary; initialised-descriptive; and loan/borrowed, follow descriptive name signs with 2 reported instances per category (7,40% each) out of 27 instances.

Table 3b. *Categories for personal name signs of public figures (n=16)*

<b>Categories of name signs</b>	<b>Count(n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Descriptive	14	87,50%
Arbitrary	1	6,25%
Initialised-descriptive	1	6,25%
Loan/borrowed	0	0%

Name signs attributed to public figures by the Deaf participants in the study show that they are generally descriptive (n=14, 87,50% out of n=16). However, participants rarely attributed arbitrary and initialised-descriptive name signs to public figures (n=1, 6,25% each, out of n=16) and there is no instance of the use of loan/borrowed name signs for the public figures in the present study.

Apart from descriptive name signs and arbitrary name signs, some examples of name signs for the initialised-descriptive and loan/borrowed categories can be illustrated from the data of the present study. *Figure 20a* and *Figure 20b* together include an example of an initialised-descriptive name sign attributed to Obama in TĪD:



Figure 20a. *First part of an initialised-descriptive name sign for Obama*



Figure 20b. *Second part of an initialised-descriptive name sign for Obama*

With the use of two handshapes, namely ‘ASL 3’ in *Figure 20a* and ‘O’ handshapes in *Figure 20b* respectively, Barack Obama is known, among Deaf members of TĪD, for the sign of the description of U.S. Flag (*Figure 20a*) and his surname initial letter ‘O’ (*Figure 20b*) in TĪD. Since, this name sign includes both the *initial letter* and *some kind of description*, it is of *initialised-descriptive category*.

As for the loan/borrowed name signs in TĪD, there are two types: 1) loan/borrowed name signs with partial homonym and 2) loan/borrowed name signs with total homonym. *Figure 21* illustrates an example of the loan//borrowed name signs with partial homonym in TĪD and *Figure 22a* and *Figure 22b* show a loan//borrowed name signs with total homonym in TĪD:

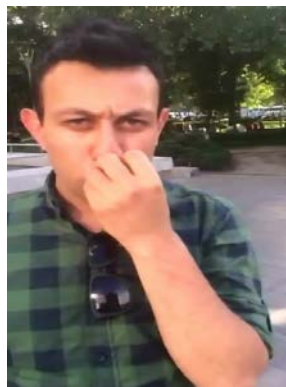


Figure 21. *A loan/borrowed name sign with partial homonym in TĪD*



The name sign in *Figure 21* includes a behaviour of smelling a rose in order to represent a partial homonymy of ‘gül’ with a part of the name of that person ‘Songül’. The use of homonymy shows that this name sign is of loan/borrowed category.



Figure 22a. *First part of a loan/borrowed name sign in TİD*

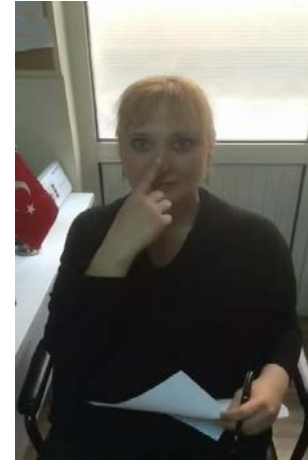


Figure 22b. *Second part of a loan/borrowed name sign in TİD*

This name sign includes a total homonymy with the name of the person ‘Sultan’. The use of 7/V-closed handshape pointing to chin and then the use of I/1 handshape pointing to the nose of the person represents being a ‘sultan/queen’ and the name of that person is Sultan as well. Therefore, *the use of homonymy* shows that this name sign is of *loan/borrowed category*.

For the details of the sub-categories of descriptive name signs in this study, Table 4a and Table 4b give the figures related to the use of description with subcategories and their frequency percentage among Deaf participants and among public figures respectively.

Table 4a. *Sub-groupings of descriptive name signs for Deaf participants (n=21)*

<b>Sub-groups of Description</b>	<b>Count(n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Appearance	14	66,66%
Personal characteristics	4	19,04%
Status	0	0%
Behaviour	2	9,52%
Inherited	1	4,76%

Appearance, as Table 4a demonstrates, is by far the most frequently observed sub-category of description (n=14, 66,66% out of n=21) in the name signs of Deaf participants. Name signs based on the personal characteristics of Deaf participants have 4 instances (19,04% out of n=21) and name signs attributed with behavioural patterns of the participants (n=2, 9,52% out of n=21) and name signs inherited from the shared history of participants (n=1, 4,76% out of n=21) have been observed infrequent

Table 4b. *Sub-groupings of descriptive name signs for public figures (n=14)*

<b>Sub-groups of Description</b>	<b>Count(n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Appearance	5	35,71%
Personal characteristics	5	35,71%
Status	4	28,57%
Behaviour	0	0%
Inherited	0	0%

The ranking of the instances of uses in sub-groups shown in Table 4a and Table 4b is similar. However, a striking difference must be pointed out for other sub-groupings between two: Since Deaf participants are not well-known individuals, i.e, they are not celebrities, there was no instance of attributing a name sign based on status of Deaf participants. On the contrary, as public figures can become prominent with their status, Deaf people attributed them some name signs on the basis of their status. Nonetheless,

no instance of attributing name signs to public figures with regard to behavioural or inherited patterns was observed.

### 3.2. PERSONAL NAMING IN TID IN TERMS OF THE PARAMETERS OF SIGN STRUCTURE

In this study, the relevant parameters of sign structure for the evaluation of personal name signs in TID are: *location*, *handshape*, *movement* and *orientation*. Table 5a shows the distribution of locations of hand in personal name signs for Deaf participants and public figures together. Table 5b and Table 5c show the distribution of locations used in the name signs for the those Deaf participants and public figures separately.

Table 5a. *The frequency and percentage of the use of locations in personal name signs (n=43)*

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
lower face	11	25,58%
mid face	9	20,93%
upper face	9	20,93%
upper trunk	6	13,95%
side face	5	11,62%
lower face to mid face	2	4,65%
above the head	1	2,32%

The data showed that personal name signs are mainly performed in TID at the signing locations given in Table 5a and that the most common location for TID name signs within the scope of the present study is the lower face (chin, mouth), used in 11 of reported instances (25,58% out of n=43). It is followed by the mid face (eyes and nose) and upper face (forehead, eyebrow) with the 9 of instances for each (20,93% for each, out of n=43). Then upper trunk (shoulders, chest) follows them with 6 of instances (13,95% out of n=43) found in the study. The other locations (side face, lower face to

mid face and above the head) at which name signs were produced occurred in our data to a lesser degree as the relevant figures in Table 5a tell.

Table 5b. *Locations in personal name signs of Deaf participants (n=27)*

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
mid face	7	25,92%
lower face	7	25,92%
upper face	6	22,22%
upper trunk	4	14,81%
side face	3	11,11%
lower face to mid face	0	0%
above the head	0	0%

As what Table 5b shows, mid face and lower face are the most frequently used locations (n=7, 25,92% each, out of n=27) for the name signs among the Deaf participants in our study. They are followed by upper face (n=6, 22,22% out of n=27) and upper trunk (n=4, 14,81% out of n=27). The other locations (side face, lower face to mid face and above the head) at which personal name signs are attributed to Deaf participants occurred to a lesser extent in the present study.

Table 5c. *Locations in personal name signs for public figures (n=16)*

<b>Locations</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
lower face	4	25%
upper face	3	18,75%
mid face	2	12,50%
upper trunk	2	12,50%
side face	2	12,50%
lower face to mid face	2	12,50%
above the head	1	6,25%

Deaf participants performed name signs for public figures mostly at around lower face (n=4, 25% out of n=16) and upper face (n=3, 18,75% out of n=16) in the study. Name signs performed at mid face, upper trunk, side of the face and lower face to mid face are less in number (n=2, 12,50% for each out of n=16) as opposed to those performed at lower face and upper face. When compared to findings for Deaf participants in Table 5b, it is seen that the order of the frequently used locations for name signs is slightly different between public figures and Deaf participants. While mid face, lower face and upper face is the order showing frequent uses in the description of name signs of Deaf participants, the most frequent order in that of public figures turns into lower face, upper face and mid face.

For the handshape frequency, Table 6a includes all of the handshapes observed in personal name signs of both Deaf participants and public figures together, and Table 6b and 6c display them separately for Deaf participants and public figures.

Table 6a. *Handshape frequency in personal name signs (overall) (n=43)*

<b>Handshapes</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I/1 handshape	9	20,93%
7/V-closed	6	13,95%
9 handshape	3	6,97%
V/2 handshape	3	6,97%
Asl A handshape	3	6,97%
Asl 3	2	4,65%
narrowed O	2	4,65%
C-handshape	2	4,65%
L-handshape	2	4,65%
flat hand	2	4,65%
hooked flat extended	2	4,65%
baby O	1	2,32%
bent flat bar	1	2,32%
others <sup>13</sup>	5	11,62%

<sup>13</sup> This group includes handshapes occurred with fingerspelled letters, three of which are fingersnapped, and with some description of people.

Various handshapes are used when performing name signs. Table 6a shows there are various handshapes used for a total of 43 name signs gathered in this study. According to this table, the most frequently used handshapes are I/1 handshape (n=9, 20,93%) and 7/V-closed handshape (n=6, 13,95%). 9 handshape, V/2 handshape and Asl A handshape follows these two handshapes with fewer instances of use (n=3, 6,97% for each). Apart from these, there are some other handshapes used when performing name signs, but as seen in the Table 6a, their frequencies are much fewer.

Table 6b. *Handshape frequency in personal name signs of Deaf participants (n=27)*

<b>Handshapes</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I/1 handshape	7	25,92%
7/V-closed	4	14,81%
9 handshape	2	7,40%
V/2 handshape	2	7,40%
Asl A handshape	2	7,40%
hooked flat extended	2	7,40%
Asl 3	1	3,70%
narrowed O	1	3,70%
C-handshape	1	3,70%
L-handshape	1	3,70%
flat hand	1	3,70%
baby O	1	3,70%
others	1	3,70%
I/1 handshape with fingersnapping	1	3,70%

As we see in Table 6b, Deaf participants attribute name signs among themselves mainly through the use of I/1 handshape (n=7, 25,92%) and 7/V-closed handshape ( n= 4, 14,81%). In addition to these frequently used handshapes, some of the name signs were performed through some other handshapes like 9 handshape (n=2, 7,40%) and V/2

handshape (n=2, 7,40%) with fewer instances. Moreover, there are, as seen in Table 6b, handshapes that are not used more than once in the attribution of name signs for Deaf participants (Asl 3, narrowed O, C-handshape, L-handshape, flat hand, baby O and others), thus, they cannot be regarded as frequent.

Table 6c. *Handshape frequency in personal name signs of public figures (n=16)*

<b>Handshapes</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I/1 handshape	2	12,50%
7/V-closed	2	12,50%
I/1 handshape with fingersnapping	2	12,50%
9 handshape	1	6,25%
V/2 handshape	1	6,25%
Asl A handshape	1	6,25%
Asl 3	1	6,25%
narrowed O	1	6,25%
C-handshape	1	6,25%
L-handshape	1	6,25%
flat hand	1	6,25%
bent flat bar	1	6,25%
narrowed O to L	1	6,25%
baby O	-	

As the numbers in Table 6c above shows, participants attributed name signs for public figures mainly through I/1 handshape (n=2, 12,50%) and 7/V-closed (n=2, 12,50%) and through other handshapes such as 9 handshape, V/2 handshape and flat hand but these ones are not as frequent as I/1 handshape and 7/V-closed handshapes are. Similar to the

findings in Table 6b, there are also some handshapes used only once, as seen in Table 6c, for the attribution of name signs for public figures.

For the analysis of movement parameter in the personal name signs, Table 7a, 7b and 7c display the relevant information regarding the main and sub-categories of movement items:

Table 7a. *Movement analysis in personal name signs for Deaf participants and public figures (n=27)*

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Count (n=27)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Path movement</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>51,85%</b>
-straight movement	(13)	(92,85%)
-arc movement	(1)	(7,14%)
-circle movement	(0)	(0%)
<b>Secondary movement</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>29,62%</b>
<b>Handshape change</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18,51%</b>

Three main types of movements regarding personal name signs in TID have been found in the data of the present study. As seen in Table 7a, these movements are: *Path movements* (n=14, 51,85% out of n=27), *Secondary movements* (n=8, 29,62% out of n=27) and finally *Handshape change* (n=5, 18,51% out of n=27). There are also sub-patterns of path movements observed in the study. These are *straight path movements* (n=13, 92,85% out of n=14) and *arc path movements* (n=1, 7,14% out of n=14). However, as Sandler and Lillo-Martin (2006:197) asserts, while circle path movement is a subcategory of path movements in the relevant literature, no instance of circle movement has been observed in the present study.



Table 7b demonstrates findings regarding the same movement patterns for the Deaf participants alone below.

Table 7b. *Movement analysis in personal name signs for Deaf participants (n=12)*

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Count (n=12)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Path movement</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>41,66%</b>
-straight movement	(5)	(100%)
-arc movement	(0)	(0%)
-circle movement	(0)	(0%)
<b>Secondary movement</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33,33%</b>
<b>Handshape change</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25%</b>

When looked at the Table 7b, it is clear that movement patterns found in the name signs for the Deaf participants follow the overall figures with similar percentages. Path movements have 5 instances (41,66% out of n=12), secondary movements have 4 instances (33,33% out of n=12) and handshape changes have 3 instances (25% out of n=12) in the analysis of the study.

Table 7c. *Movement analysis in personal name signs for public figures (n=15)*

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Count (n=15)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Path movement</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>60%</b>
-straight movement	(8)	(88,88%)
-arc movement	(1)	(11,11%)
-circle movement	(0)	(0%)
<b>Secondary movement</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26,66%</b>
<b>Handshape change</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13,33%</b>

Movement patterns observed in the analysis of name signs for public figures show similarities to the findings regarding Deaf participants in Table 7b. In other words, the order of the movement types observed are the same: path movements have 9 instances (60% out of n=15) of use, secondary movements have 4 instances (26,66% out of n=15) and handshape changes have only 2 instances (13,33% out of n=15) as seen in Table 7c above.

As for the analysis of orientation parameter, Table 8a shows relevant statistics below in general and then Table 8b and Table 8c present results for Deaf participants and public figures separately.

Table 8a. *Orientation frequency in personal name signs for Deaf participants and public figures (n=43)*

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Palm twisted toward signer	28	65,11%
Palm forward	7	16,27%
Palm half twisted toward signer	5	11,62%
Palm down	3	6,97%

Out of 43 name signs, most of them include the palm of the hand in twisted orientation (n=28, 65,11%). This means that most of the name signs point to the signer. In 7 instances (16,27%), palm is in outward direction from the signer. Nevertheless, half-twisted palms (n=5, 11,62%) and palm downs (n=3, 6,97%) are fewer in number.

Table 8b. *Orientation frequency in personal name signs for Deaf participants (n=27)*

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Palm twisted toward signer	18	66,66%
Palm half twisted toward signer	4	14,81%
Palm forward	3	11,11%
Palm down	2	7,40%

Most of the name signs attributed to Deaf participants in the present study include twisted palm orientations (n=18, 66,66% out of n=27) and half-twisted palms (n=4, 14,81% out of n=27). On the contrary, palm forward orientations (n=3, 11,11%) and palm downs (n=2, 7,40%) have been observed in very few instances as shown in Table 8b.

Table 8c. *Orientation frequency in personal name signs for public figures (n=16)*

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Palm twisted toward signer	10	62,50%
Palm forward	4	25%
Palm half twisted toward signer	1	6,25%
Palm down	1	6,25%

Similar to the findings observed for Deaf participants in Table 8b, findings regarding the name signs attributed to public figures dominantly show twisted palm orientations (n=10, 62,50%) and palm forwards (n=4, 25%) as seen in Table 8c. On the other hand, half-twisted palms (n=1, 6,25%) and palm downs (n=1, 6,25%) have been rarely observed.

## CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION

This section comprises the discussion and comments on the findings regarding the categories of personal name signs and regarding the signing parameters examined in this study.

### 4.1. THE CATEGORIES OF PERSONAL NAME SIGNS IN TĪD

Based on the findings of the analysis in this study, it is not unsound that there are four different categories of personal name signs in TĪD. As seen in Chart 1 below, these categories are *Descriptive Name Signs* (n=35; 81,39% out of n=43), *Arbitrary (Initialised) Name Signs* (n=3; 6,97% out of n=43), *Initialised-Descriptive Name Signs* (n=3; 6,97% out of n=43) and finally *Loan/borrowed Name Signs* (n=2; 4,65% out of n=43).

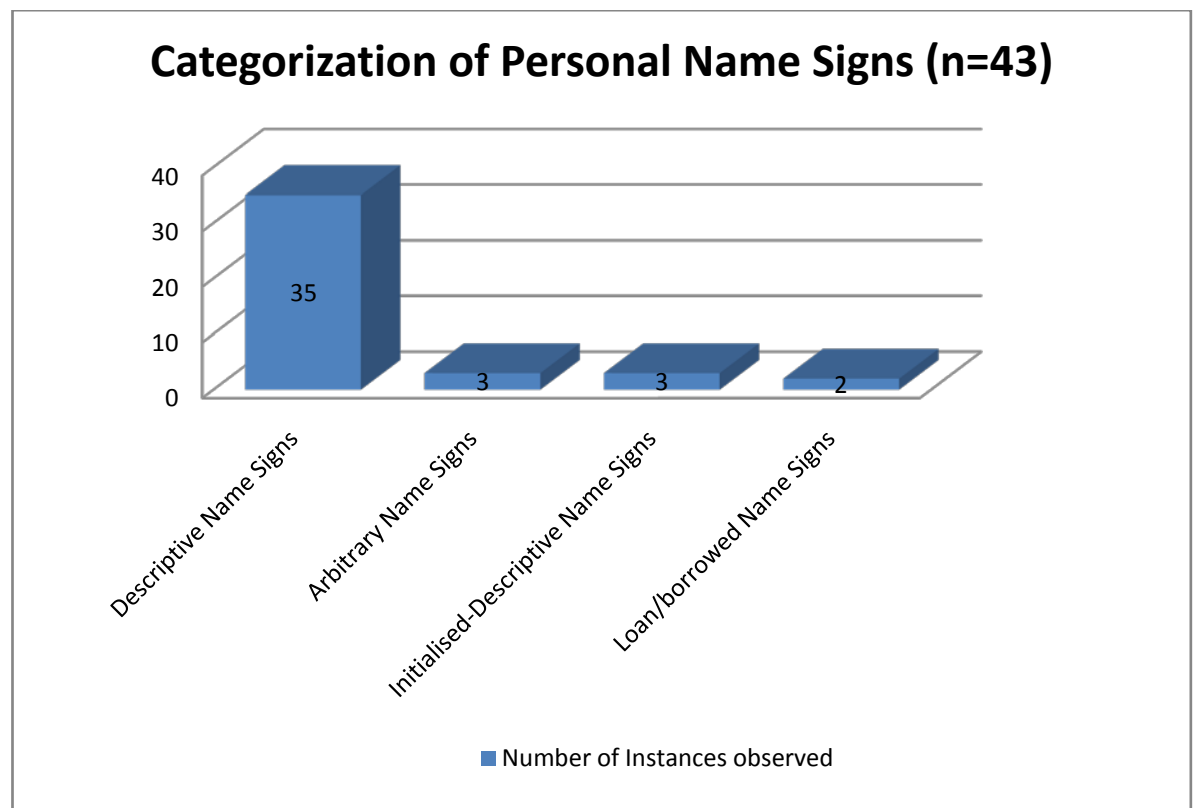


Chart 1. *The Categorization of Personal Name Signs in TĪD*

Judging from the figures related to each category in Chart 1, descriptive name signs have been observed as, by a long way, the most marked category in the assignment of personal name signs in the present study. The remaining three categories were relatively much lower in number of instances in this study. Thus, it is not wrong to claim that personal name signs in TİD are mostly created on the basis of personal description of Deaf people in the Deaf community in one way or another rather than on the basis of phonetic name of the signers or any other factor. Likewise, in European Deaf communities, name signs are mainly formed on the basis of descriptive systems. For instance, Hedberg (1994: 442) has documented 311 name signs from 267 persons in Sweden (some of whom had several name signs), and only three were initialised or arbitrary. Similarly, researchers in New Zealand also report the dominant use of descriptive systems in Deaf communities there (McKee & McKee 2000). However, there was one extraordinary situation in the present study: While it would be expected that Tansu Çiller, a former prime minister of Turkey and a party leader, was recognized via a descriptive name sign like other public figures in the study; Deaf participants used arbitrary name sign for this public figure ( with initial of her surname ‘Ç’ ) instead.

It is also possible to give details of 35 descriptive name signs by mentioning some sub-categories of description. Chart 2 below shows summary of the findings that highlights the parts of descriptive name signs found in the present study.

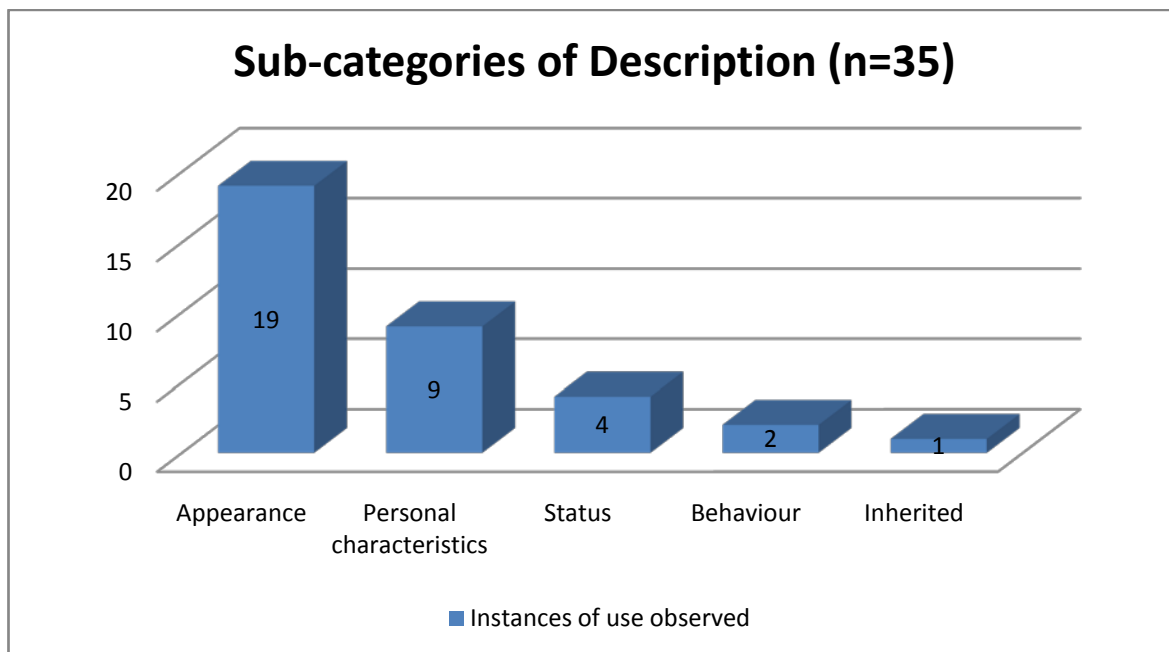


Chart 2. *Sub-categories of Descriptive Name Signs in TID*

The figures given in Chart 2, demonstrate that personal name signs in TID are mostly based on people's physical appearance (n=19, 54,28% out of n=35). This can be a scar on face, a striking difference on a part of the body, the haircut, and etc. Apart from the appearance, some other descriptive name signs are mainly produced with regard to the characteristics of Deaf people (n=9, 25,71% out of n=35). This comes as no surprise when taking into consideration that the majority of participants, who have hearing parents, were not given sign names until starting deaf primary school, by which time their appearance and personality had begun to develop. This implies that almost no deaf children are given a sign name from the TID lexicon at birth since, as Day and Sutton-Spence (2010: 46) tells, hearing parents usually have no knowledge of Deaf customs and school is the first place where the children participate in Deaf community life. Even when Deaf children have Deaf parents, they generally use fingerspelled initials of their Deaf children, rather than attributing them a descriptive one and in many countries Deaf parents do the same for their children's sign names (see, for example, Supalla 1992 for ASL; Desrosiers and Dubuisson 1994 for LSQ; and McKee and McKee 2000 for NZSL). Eventhough the frequency of status is not as high as that of appearance and characteristics, some other descriptive name signs are attributed based on the status of a

person. In the present study, only four instances of name signs were performed on the basis of the status of the person referred. Deaf participants in the study attributed these four name signs to the prominent politicians (Atatürk, Bülent Ecevit, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Adolf Hitler) since the status of these politicians are generally a symbol of public recognition for them and this implies that they are known among Deaf people, as much as among hearing people, with their status. Apart from the frequently observed descriptive name signs, there are also some others that are rarely used: Descriptive name signs resulting from personal behaviours (like ‘sniffing’) and inherited features (such as transmitted from family) are very rare as seen in Chart 2 and this may be commented as that name signs are attributed to Deaf individuals over time, not immediately, and that more striking traits of a Deaf person are recognized by the Deaf members instead of behavioural or inherited patterns. It should also be noted that it is not surprising to see that Deaf participants did not attribute any name sign to public figures on the basis of behavioural or inherited patterns in this study, because one must have some background knowledge of the referent person’s behavioral or inherited patterns beforehand in order to assign a name sign with regard to his / her behaviors or inheritance and our participants did not have such kind of knowledge about public figures included within the framework of this study. Likewise, since Deaf participants involved in the study are not well-known individuals, i.e, they are not celebrities, there was no instance of attributing a name sign to Deaf members based on status category in the present study.

Apart from descriptive name signs, there are no subcategories for arbitrary, initialised-descriptive, and loan/borrowed name signs in general, so no such sub-groups have been determined for those categories of name signs in the present study.

#### **4.2. PERSONAL NAMING IN TİD IN TERMS OF PARAMETERS OF SIGN STRUCTURE**

The parameters of *location*, *handshape* and *movement* were put forth by Stokoe and Battison developed *orientation* as the fourth member of signing parameters, as previously stated. Apart from these, there are non-manual markers when signing but they were not taken into account during the attribution of personal name signs and not

included in the scope of analysis of the study. Chart 3a shows the distribution of frequently used hand locations in a total of 43 personal name signs observed in the study.

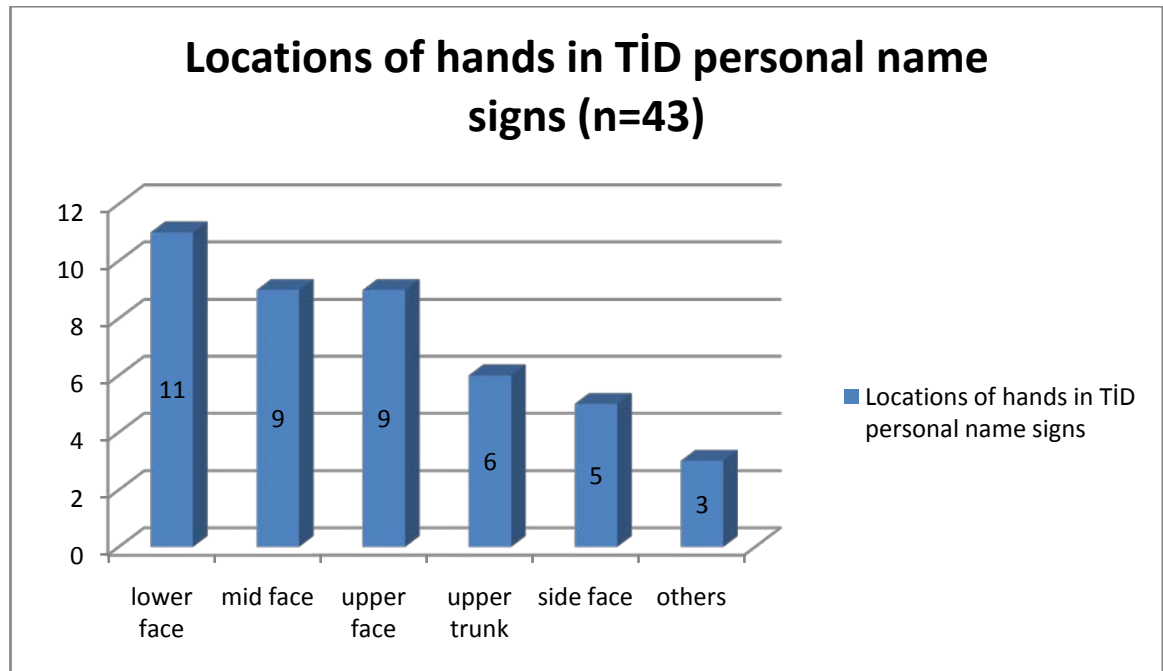


Chart 3a. *Instances of the use of hand locations in TID personal name signs*

As seen on Chart 3, the most common location for TID name signs is the lower face (chin, mouth), used in 11 of reported instances (25,58% out of n=43). It is followed by the mid face (eyes and nose) and upper face (forehead, eyebrow) with 9 of instances for each (20,93% out of n=43 for each). Then upper trunk (shoulders, chest) follows them with 6 of instances (13,95%) found in the study. The instances of the use of side face follow with n=5 (11,62% out of n=43). The other parts (including lower face to mid face and above the head), with which name signs were produced, occurred in our data to a lesser degree (n=3, 6,97% out of n=43). Recall from Table 5b and 5c, while mid face, lower face and upper face is the order showing frequent uses in the description of name signs of Deaf participants, the most frequent order in that of public figures turns into lower face, upper face and mid face.



Although gender was not directly projected to investigate in the research scope of this study, the data have enabled to comment on the locations of name signs in terms of gender distribution. Chart 3b demonstrates the use of locations in terms of gender distribution.

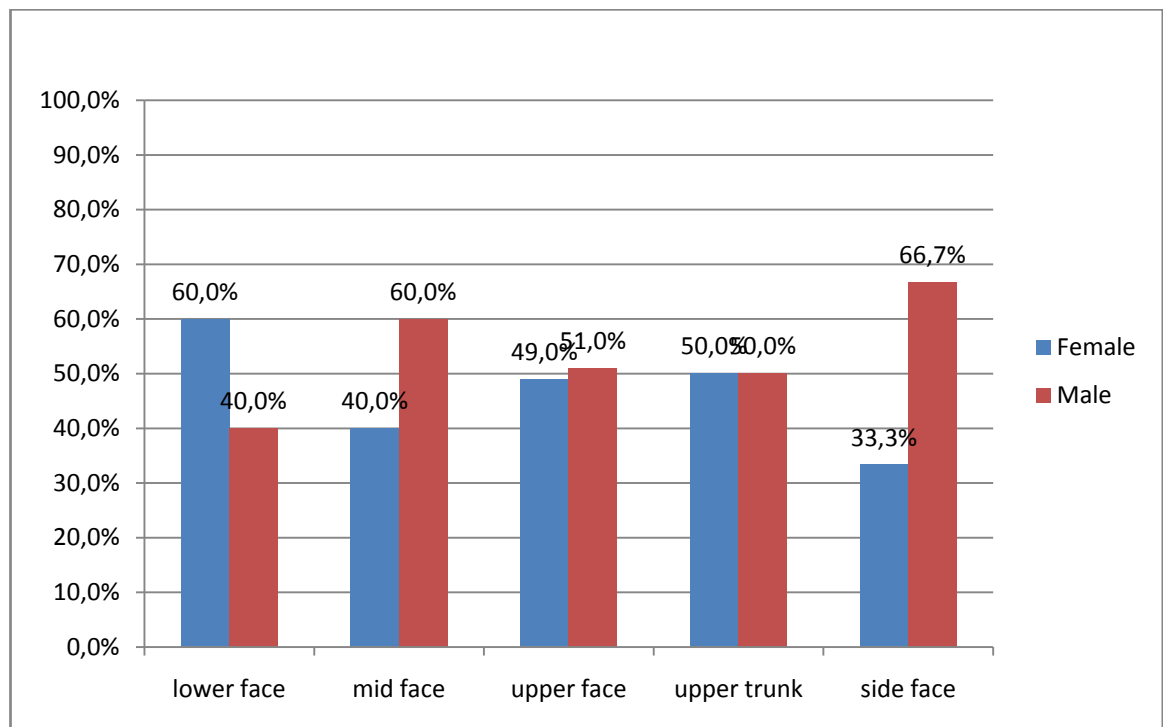


Chart 3b. *Gender distribution on the use of locations of hand in TID personal name signs*

As the percentages tell us on Chart 3b, in some of the locations, there is not much significant difference between male and female participants in the use of hand locations when performing name signs. Their distribution of each kind of location is close to each other in terms of gender-based analysis. However, Supalla (1990) mentions that some locations are associated more with persons of one sex or the other. Some ideas offered were: (1) male signs on upper face and head, female below; (2) male signs on the body, female signs on the face; (3) female signs on the body, male signs on the head; and (4) female signs with a brushing or wiggling movement, male signs with a firmer

movement. In the present study, of course, there is some differences of gender distribution but with minor percentages in general. A major difference is seen on the use of hand locations regarding side face. The majority of uses on side face have been mostly associated with the descriptive name signs of male participants (66,7%). In addition, some assumptions put forward by Supalla regarding gender distribution seem to be valid for the name signs in TID. As seen on Chart 3b above, name signs on upper face (51%) and mid face (60%) seem a little more male-specific. On the contrary, like what Supalla asserts, the name signs attributed at the location of lower face belong more to the female participants (60%). All of these observations of gender distribution on the use of name signs seem to be consistent with what Supalla asserts. Nonetheless, more work needs to be done on more signs before gender marking for name signs in TID can be stated with confidence.

For the handshape frequency, a recap of Table 6a below includes all of the handshapes observed in personal name signs of both Deaf participants and public figures.

Table 6a. *Handshape frequency in personal name signs (overall) (n=43)*

<b>Handshapes</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I/1 handshape	9	20,93%
7/V-closed	6	13,95%
9 handshape	3	6,97%
V/2 handshape	3	6,97%
Asl A handshape	3	6,97%
Asl 3	2	4,65%
narrowed O	2	4,65%
C-handshape	2	4,65%
L-handshape	2	4,65%
flat hand	2	4,65%
hooked flat extended	2	4,65%
baby O	1	2,32%
bent flat bar	1	2,32%

others <sup>14</sup>	5	11,62%
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Chart 4 below gives a visual order of the figures regarding the handshape analysis of personal name signs in the present study.

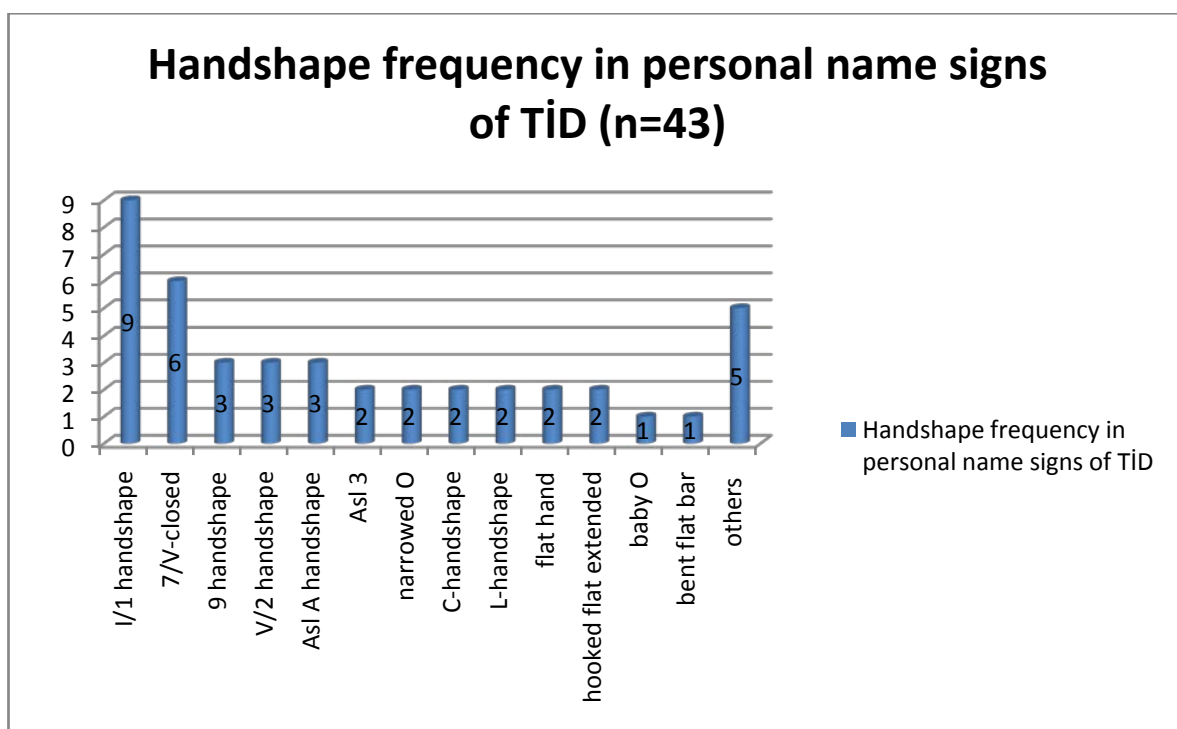


Chart 4. *Summary of the handshape frequency in personal name signs in TID*

According to the statistics on Table 6a above, the most frequently used handshapes are I/1 handshape (n=9, 20,93%) and 7/V-closed handshape (n=6, 13,95%). 9 handshape, V/2 handshape and Asl A handshape follows these two handshapes with fewer instances of use (n=3, 6,97% for each). Apart from these, there are some other handshapes used when performing name signs, but as seen in the Table 6a, their frequencies are much

<sup>14</sup> This group includes handshapes occurred with fingerspelled letters, three of which are fingersnapped, and with some description of people.

fewer. The frequent uses of I/1 handshape and 7/V-closed handshape point that these handshapes are the markers in the description of people especially at the face level.

As for the analysis of movement patterning, out of 43 name signs obtained both for Deaf participants and for public figures, 27 of them (62,79 % of overall) include some movement during the signing of personal names and most of these name signs are performed with some *movement of path* (n=14, 51,85% out of n=27), *secondary movements* (n=8, 29,62% out of n=27) and finally *handshape change* (n=5, 18,51% out of n=27). There are also sub-patterns of path movements observed in the study. These are *straight path movements* (n=13, 92,85% out of n=14) and *arc path movements* (n=1, 7,14% out of n=14). However, as Sandler and Lillo-Martin (2006:197) asserts, while circle path movement is a subcategory of path movements in the relevant literature, no instance of circle movement has been observed in the present study.

Table 7a. *Movement analysis in personal name signs for Deaf participants and public figures (n=27)*

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Count (n=27)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Path movement</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>51,85%</b>
-straight movement	(13)	(92,85%)
-arc movement	(1)	(7,14%)
-circle movement	(0)	(0%)
<b>Secondary movement</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>29,62%</b>
<b>Handshape change</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18,51%</b>

As the results from Table 7a show, these movement patterns are generalizable since there are similarities in the use and in the order of the directions of movement for personal name signs of both Deaf people (Deaf participants in our study) and of hearing people (namely, public figures in our study).

For the analysis of orientation, a recap of Table 8a shows relevant statistics below in general.

Table 8a *Orientation frequency in personal name signs for Deaf participants and public figures (n=43)*

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Count (n=)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Palm twisted toward signer	28	65,11%
Palm forward	7	16,27%
Palm half twisted toward signer	5	11,62%
Palm down	3	6,97%

Out of 43 name signs, most of them include the palm of the hand in twisted shape (n=28, 65,11%). This means that most of the name signs point to the signer. In 7 instances (16,27%), palm is in outward direction from the signer. Nevertheless, half-twisted palms (n=5, 11,62%) and palm downs (n=3, 6,97%) are fewer in number and this finding shows that name signs generally demonstrate personal descriptions via pointing toward or forward from the signer more than half-twisted palms and palm downs. When looked back at Table 8c on page 61, comparable to the frequent use of twisted palms in performing name signs for Deaf participants, frequently used palms in twisted orientation for the name signs assigned to public figures indicate that public figures have also been attributed descriptive name signs mainly on the basis of a location on the signer as much as seen in those obtained for Deaf participants in this study.

### **4.3. PERSONAL NAME SIGNS ATTRIBUTED TO HEARING AND DEAF COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

First of all, name signs for Deaf community members and name signs attributed to public figures as hearing community members show similarity both in the frequent use of categories of name signs and in the sub-groupings of descriptive name signs as shown in Table 3a - Table 3b and Table 4a - Table 4b on pages 50-52. However, a striking difference must be pointed out for other sub-groupings between two: Since Deaf participants are not well-known individuals, i.e, they are not celebrities, there was no instance of attributing a name sign based on status of Deaf participants. On the contrary, as public figures can become prominent with their status, Deaf people attributed them some name signs on the basis of their status. Nonetheless, no instance of attributing name signs to public figures with regard to behavioural or inherited patterns was observed.

As for the analysis of signing parameters, when the findings in Table 5b and 5c regarding location parameter for the name signs of Deaf participants and of public figures are compared, it is seen that the order of the frequently used locations for name signs is slightly different between public figures and Deaf participants. While mid face, lower face and upper face is the order showing frequent uses in the description of name signs of Deaf participants, the most frequent order in that of public figures turns into lower face, upper face and mid face. In the same vein, there is also similarity between two groups in regard to the use and frequency of handshapes. For both groups of people, I/1 handshape and 7/V-closed handshapes are the most frequently used ones in the attribution of personal name signs to these people. For the analysis of movement parameter, movement patterns observed in the analysis of name signs for public figures in Table 7c show similarities to the findings regarding Deaf participants in Table 7b. In other words, the order of the movement types observed in both groups are the same: path movements are the most frequent type; secondary movements follow path movements, and handshape changes come in the last place. In regard to the orientation parameter, findings regarding the name signs attributed to public figures dominantly show twisted palm orientations (n=10, 62,50%) and palm forwards (n=4, 25%) as seen in Table 8c, similar to the findings observed for Deaf participants in Table 8b. On the

other hand, half-twisted palms (n=1, 6,25%) and palm downs (n=1, 6,25%) have been rarely observed in the name signs attributed to public figures.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Language plays a central part in every domains of human beings, and whatever its definition be, it also provides us with identities such that we usually appraise people for the language they speak. While language is generally regarded as being an oral medium, by virtue of the sign language studies (Deuchar 1984; Yule 1985; Isenhath 1990; Valli and Lucas 1992; Asher and Simpson 1994; Kyle and Woll 1998; Liddell 2003), it has become prominent that sign languages bear some kind of systematic and conventional rules similar to those of spoken human languages and this shows that language is not necessarily an oral medium, it can also be a visual-gestural medium.

From the part of the hearing majority, Deaf community has often been identified with the lack of the ability to ‘speak’, and ‘deafness’ is perceived merely as a ‘disability’ which must be treated. In fact, when deafness is perceived as a cultural and socio-linguistic variable, as a determiner of one’s “identity” rather than one’s “hearing loss”, it is obvious that “the status of a deaf community is quite comparable to the status of any minority culture, and the status of any sign language is comparable to the status of any minority language” (Zeshan, 2002: 235). It is for this reason that here in this paper, following the recent worldwide convention in the literature, the term ‘Deaf’ with a capital D indicating a distinct cultural/speech community is distinguished from ‘deaf’ with a small d, referring merely to physiological hearing loss.

As previously stated, sign language is truly a means of communication consisting of rules similar to natural human languages, deserving its place within the framework of linguistics. Nonetheless, sign languages have recently been investigated with a linguistic perspective and this recency is a result from the fact that sign languages has, until recently, been treated as improper and primitive ways of communication which can hardly be regarded as language and not worthy of any scientific consideration. In the same vein, in earlier times, the data required for studies on sign languages were not as easy and practical to elicit technologically as in today. Keeping all of these in mind, it can be stated that no scientific attention has been paid to Deaf culture and the language of the Deaf speech community until late 60s. However, with the support of developing technology in data collection, gained progress after 70s, and thanks to some scholars, such as Crystal (1987: 7) who advocates “all languages that meet the social and



psychological needs of their speakers, are equally deserving of scientific study and can provide us with valuable information about human nature and society”, linguistic studies on sign languages began to emerge. Today, it is not surprising to see the studies on sign languages that are being carried out in almost all levels of linguistics, with an increasing interdisciplinary attention.

The study undertaken at present has aimed to provide information about the formation and categorisation of personal name signs in TĪD and to give brief descriptions of those categories by mentioning linguistic accounts of them and with reference to signing parameters. This study has also aimed to contribute to the further studies on TĪD by being the first attempt on the linguistic analysis of personal name signs in TĪD.

Moreover, overview information about sign languages in general with reference to certain historical, social and linguistic aspects such as sign structure, number and time reference, classifiers, sign space and body orientation has been provided. As far as the data has made it possible, this study has brought in some general findings concerning relevant grammatical and social phenomena of personal naming in TĪD. The relevant information is given in the following sections.

### **5.1. LINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF NAME SIGNS IN TĪD**

In this section, conclusions have been presented with respect to research questions set forth in the introduction of the study.

Taking into consideration the research questions set forth in the study, some judgements can be made. Assuming the naming behaviour is a culture- and language-specific practice, the first question that has been researched through this study has addressed the general pattern of personal naming system in TĪD and a sub-question has investigated in what categories personal name signs are formed in TĪD:

*“ In what categories personal name signs are formed in TĪD ?”*

The simple answer to this question is: there are four categories. Although the data of the study is not huge, the findings, on the basis of statistically meaningful results, seem to

support that TĪD has four categories of personal name signs and in this respect, it can be deduced that the personal naming categories developed from similar studies in ASL and ESL are valid also for TĪD. As seen in Table 1 in the study, these categories are *Descriptive Name Signs*, *Arbitrary (Initialised) Name Signs*, *Initialised-Descriptive Name Signs*, and finally *Loan/borrowed Name Signs*.

In addition, as can be read from the figures in Table 1 in this study, the most frequent category is *Descriptive Name Signs* (n=35; 81,39% out of n=43). It is followed by *Arbitrary (Initialised) Name Signs* (n=3; 6,97% out of n=43), *Initialised-Descriptive Name Signs* (n=3; 6,97% out of n=43) and finally *Loan/borrowed Name Signs* (n=2; 4,65% out of n=43). So, it can be commented that Deaf participants dominantly use personal descriptions when assigning name sign(s) to one another and rarely use the other three categories stated above. This finding shares similarity with the results obtained in European Deaf communities in that “In European Deaf communities, name signs are predominantly formed on the basis of descriptive systems” (Paaes 2010: 323). In the same vein, Hedberg (1994:442) has documented 311 name signs from 267 persons in Sweden (some of whom had several name signs), and only three were arbitrary. Similarly, researchers in New Zealand also report the dominant use of descriptive systems in Deaf communities there (McKee & McKee 2000). However, this may imply that, most of the Deaf children are born to hearing parents and as previously mentioned that hearing parents do not attempt to attribute a name sign, regardless of any category, to their children since they generally have no knowledge of Deaf lives. So, children first come in contact with Deaf environment with their Deaf peers at the school for Deaf and later the chance of getting a name sign sharply rises during the school years. On the contrary, Deaf children having Deaf parents usually get arbitrary name signs from their parents. In our study, none of the participants have had Deaf parents, and if the majority of participants had had Deaf parents, then, it becomes intriguing and open to question that whether arbitrary name signs would have been the dominant category of name signs. In addition, when compared, name signs for Deaf participants and name signs attributed to public figures have shown similarity in the frequent use of categories of name signs in TĪD. The high frequency of descriptive name signs may reflect gestural and classifier-based sources of lexical creation in TĪD, whereas the range of other types derived from spoken names reflects a relatively high degree of

contact and codemixing between spoken Turkish and TİD. Moreover, oral education methods put into effect in 1960s after the use of TİD had been banned in the schools may have left clear traces in the structure of name signs in the form of lip pattern incorporation and the transliteration of Turkish names. These linguistic factors may have reduced the development of a more arbitrary name sign system in TİD such as found in ASL, which relies on fingerspelling and the transmission of adult name sign conventions to younger generations through regular contact with Deaf adults.

It is also possible to give details of descriptive name signs by mentioning some sub-categories of description. It is seen, within the frame of this study, that personal name signs are mostly based on people's *physical appearance* (n=19, 54,28%). This can be a scar on face, a striking difference on a part of the body, the hairstyle and etc. Following physical appearance, some other descriptive name signs are mainly produced with regard to the *characteristics* of Deaf people (n=9, 25,71%). This comes as no surprise when taking into consideration that the majority, if not all, of participants were given sign names after starting school rather than at birth, by which time they had begun to develop both their appearance and their personality. Descriptive personal name signs based on the *status* (n=4, 11,42%) of people were stated by Deaf participants for the prominent politicians (such as Bülent Ecevit, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Atatürk and Adolf Hitler) since the status of these politicians are generally a symbol of public recognition. Name signs resulting from personal *behaviours* (like 'sniffing') and *inherited features* (such as transmitted from family) are very rare, and this may be due to the fact that name signs are attributed to Deaf individuals over time, not immediately, and that more striking traits of a Deaf person are recognized by the Deaf members instead of behavioural or inherited patterns.

The next research question was interested in systematic patterns in name signs. The question is as follows:

*“Does the personal naming behaviour in TİD have systematic patterns in terms of the parameters of sign structure ?”*

To answer this question, signing parameters *location, handshape, movement and orientation* have been utilized in the analysis of personal name signs. As seen in the

tables from Table 5a to Table 8c, in general, there are systematic occurrences of locations, handshapes, movements and orientations during the production of name signs. Moreover, the patterns show systematic similarities when the production of name signs for Deaf participants and for public figures are compared. In regard to the movement parameter, the movement frequency is also similar in both groups. In general, most frequently observed movements are: *movement of path* (n=14, 51,85% out of n=27), *secondary movements* (n=8, 29,62% out of n=27) and finally *handshape change* (n=5, 18,51% out of n=27).

Based on the analysis in the study, the most common location for TID name signs has been the lower face (chin, mouth), used in 11 of reported instances (25,58% out of n=43). It is followed by the mid face (eyes and nose) and upper face (forehead, eyebrow) with 9 of instances for each (20,93% out of n=43 for each). Then upper trunk (shoulders, chest) follows them with 6 of instances (13,95%) found in the study. The instances of the use of side face follow with n=5 (11,62% out of n=43). The other parts (including lower to mid and above the head), with which name signs were produced, occurred in our data to a lesser degree (n=3, 6,97% out of n=43).

Although it is not directly in the scope of the present study, it is possible to comment on the locations observed in the signing process of personal names in TID in terms of gender distribution. As the percentages tell us on Chart 3b in the study, there is not much significant difference between male and female participants in the use of hand locations when performing name signs. Their distribution of each kind of location is close to each other in terms of gender-based analysis. However, Supalla (1990) mentions that some locations are associated more with persons of one sex or the other. Some ideas offered by him were: (1) male signs on upper face and head, female below; (2) male signs on the body, female signs on the face; (3) female signs on the body, male signs on the head; and (4) female signs with a brushing or wiggling movement, male signs with a firmer movement. In the present study, of course, there is some differences of gender distribution but with minor percentages in general. More specifically, a major difference is seen on the use of hand locations regarding side face. The majority of uses on side face have been mostly associated with the descriptive name signs of male participants (66,7%). In addition, some assumptions put forward by Supalla regarding

gender distribution seem to be a bit valid for the name signs in TĪD. As seen on Chart 3b, name signs on upper face (51%) and mid face (60%) seem a little more male-specific. On the contrary, like what Supalla asserts, the name signs attributed at the location of lower face belong more to the female participants (60%). All of these observations of gender distribution on the use of descriptive name signs seem to be consistent with what Supalla asserts. Nonetheless, more work needs to be done on more name signs before gender marking for name signs in TĪD can be stated with confidence.

In terms of the orientation of hands, out of 43 name signs, most of hand orientations include the palm of the hand in twisted shape (n=28, 65,11%). This means that most of the name signs point to the signer. In 7 instances (16,27%), palm is in outward direction from the signer. Nevertheless, half-twisted palms (n=5, 11,62%) and palm downs (n=3, 6,97%) are fewer in number and this finding shows that name signs generally demonstrate personal descriptions via pointing toward or forward from the signer more than half-twisted palms and palm downs.

For the final question which is interested in the hearing versus Deaf status of the participants, the question was:

*“Are there any similarities and/or differences in the formation of personal name signs attributed to the hearing vs Deaf community members ?”*

As previously stated, name signs for Deaf community members and name signs attributed to public figures as being a part of hearing community members show similarity both in the frequency of the use of categories and sub-categories of descriptive name signs. However, a striking contrast must be pointed out for other subgroupings between two: Since Deaf participants are not celebrities, there was no instance of attributing a name sign based on status of Deaf participants. On the contrary, as public figures can become prominent with their status, Deaf people attributed them some name signs on the basis of their status. Nonetheless, no instance of attributing name signs to public figures with regard to behavioural or inherited patterns was observed. In addition, when the findings regarding location parameter for the name signs of Deaf participants and of public figures are compared, it is seen that the order of the frequently used locations for name signs is slightly different between public figures

and Deaf participants. While mid face, lower face and upper face is in the order showing frequent uses in the description of name signs of Deaf participants, the order representing the most frequent locations in that of public figures turns into lower face, upper face and mid face. There is also similarity between two groups in regard to the use and frequency of handshapes. For both groups of people, I/1 handshape and 7/V-closed handshapes are the most frequently used ones in the attribution of personal name signs to these people. For the analysis of movement parameter, movement patterns observed in the analysis of name signs for public figures show similarities to the findings regarding Deaf participants. In regard to the orientation parameter, findings regarding the name signs attributed to public figures dominantly show twisted palm orientations (n=10, 62,50%) and palm forwards (n=4, 25%) as seen in Table 8c, similar to the findings observed for Deaf participants in Table 8b. On the other hand, half-twisted palms (n=1, 6,25%) and palm downs (n=1, 6,25%) have been rarely observed in the name signs attributed to public figures.

## **5.2. SOCIAL ASPECTS OF NAME SIGNS IN TĪD**

Name sign practices in the present study illuminate certain important cultural values, especially deaf identity and connection with the group. The deaf community has, as in any other cultural group, basic values and customs that most members follow, but that leave room for diversity. The diversity of opinion about certain name sign customs accurately reflects this aspect of Deaf culture. It is also clear from the present study that the name sign system observed in TĪD shares many features with naming systems in other cultures: picking the right name, uniqueness of names, names as identity, changing one's name, a series of names reflecting life's circumstances. The naming system in TĪD is informative for cultural and social reasons since, like nicknames in other cultures, name signs encapsulate the entry to socialization in the signing community. However, unlike nicknames, name signs have a primary linguistic function of enabling Deaf people to refer to others in TĪD. It should be noted that name signs are used only to refer to others in the third person, rather than as a form of address during the conversation. Instead of using a name sign, an interlocutor's attention is attracted by

visual or tactile means such as a small tap on the shoulder or waving slightly in peripheral vision. This convention appears to be common to many sign languages.

Personal name signs contain information about the way a person is perceived by others and how they are related to others in the group through shared history. The use and choice of name signs in discourse may be influenced by contextual factors such as the audience (e.g., whether the named person is present) and the historical relationship between the name-giver and the named person. As a social value, there should be no duplication; no two people in a group should have the same name sign. What happens when two people in a Deaf group have the same name sign ? At least one person will have to change or have changed his or her name sign. This makes perfect sense when it is understood that one of the chief functions of name signs is identification. In the present study, no two participants had the same name sign, for instance.

A significant point for the use of name signs is that descriptive sign names are bestowed only when community members have identified a trait that truly identifies a person's character. We saw earlier that sign names are valued for symbolizing community membership. People who are not members of the Deaf community do not have sign names, and if signers need to refer to them, they do so by using their written Turkish name via the manual alphabet. For instance, Deaf people may use fingerspellings of the letters in my name since I am new to this community. In this case, the use of fingerspelling is an indication of non-membership in the Deaf community.

In addition, the formational similarity between the name signs attributed to the members of the Deaf community and to the public figures as the members of the hearing community shows that in-group membership creates strong ties among Deaf members not only for their shared background knowledge in the Deaf community but also for the understanding and attribution of name signs for hearing people who are not in-group members of the Deaf community.

In a nutshell, for a member of a Deaf community, having a name sign is linguistically necessary and socially indicative of identity; its form is determined by the linguistic and cultural preferences of a particular sign language community.

### **5.3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS**

The present study examined the name giving behavior among Turkish Deaf participants inhabiting in Ankara. The results of the study may be more effective if some future research will be carried out in different cities to cover more generalizable results in Turkey. Moreover, the sociolinguistic variables such as age, sex, socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds of the participants, and etc. were not included in the central scope of this study. Such a prospective study covering such social factors may help understand, if any, the sociolinguistic patterns behind personal naming behaviour in TİD.

In addition to the studies on personal name signs, further grammatical analyses and studies on some other macro levels including information about the Deaf culture or the Deaf speech community in Turkey would no doubt be of great significance for a complementary understanding of TİD as a natural language.



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Tabla Appendix 1. TİD Handshape Inventory

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
	<b>C-handshape:</b> AY – MOON / KAHVE – COFFEE / TÜRKİYE – TURKEY / ŞEYTAN – DEVIL
	<b>L-handshape:</b> FESTİVAL – FESTIVAL / BAĞIRMAK – SHOUT / ÇARŞAMBA – WEDNESDAY / PERŞEMBE-THURSDAY
	<b>O-handshape:</b> YEŞİL – GREEN / GÜMÜŞ – SILVER / LÜTFEN – PLEASE
	<b>P-handshape:</b> ALDANMAK – BE MISTAKEN / DOLANDIRICI – FRAUD / BOŞ – EMPTY / KANDIRMAK – CHEAT / KAVGA – FIGHT
	<b>U-handshape:</b> BOĞAZ – THROAT (OR BOSPHORUS)
	<b>ASL A-handshape:</b> SIKILMAK – TO GET BORED / KIZMAK – TO BE ANGRY
	<b>ASL A-bar:</b> BAŞKAN – PRESIDENT / BABA – FATHER / SPOR – SPORT / YARIŞMA – COMPETITION
	<b>ASL B-handshape:</b> İSTANBUL / FARE - MOUSE CAM/ AYNA – GLASS/ MIRROR / EŞİT -EQUAL
	<b>Flat Hand:</b> DUR – STOP / YARDIM – HELP / DÖVMEK – HIT / ARKADAŞ – FRIEND
	<b>Hooked Flat Extended:</b> KENDİ – SELF / ANNE – MOTHER / SAHİP – OWN / DELİ – MAD



Table 6 TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)















Figures	Hand shape name and examples
	<b>Bent Flat:</b> DESTEK –SUPPORT / KOMİK – FUNNY / ANNEANNE – GRANNY / PEYNİR – CHEESE
	<b>ASL C-handshape:</b> SERVIS – BUS / DURBUN – FIELD GLASSES / BARDAK-GLASS
	<b>Bent Flat Bar:</b> YUMUŞAK – SOFT / VIDEO / OY – TO VOTE / DOSYA – FILE
	<b>ASL Q-handshape:</b> ŞÜPHE – SUSPICION / DÜDÜK – WHISTLE / İNCE-THIN
	<b>Middle selected ASL (open 8):</b> CEZA – PUNISHMENT / GOL – GOAL / VICDAN – CONSCIENCE / AF – FORGIVE
	<b>ASL O-handshape:</b> classifiers (PIPE, CYLINDRIC OBJECTS)
	<b>Narrowed O:</b> KİBRİT – MATCHES / İZİN – PERMISSION / AVERAJ – AVERAGE / AZ – FEW / İP – STRING
	<b>Baby-O handshape:</b> ÇOCUK – CHILD / YEMEK – EAT / PROBLEM / SUÇ – GUILT / YUMURTA – EGG
	<b>ASL 8-handshape:</b> ÇIKARMAK / KOVMAK – TAKE OUT/ FIRE –SOMEONE / REJİM – DIET
	<b>12-handshape /ASL R-handshape:</b> RAPOR – REPORT / SAAT12 – TIME: 12:00

Table 6 TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
	<b>Covered T:</b> YAPMAK – TO DO / TO MAKE / ZOR – DIFFICULT-HARD / TEKLİF – OFFER
	<b>Horn / Combined ASL I and H:</b> GEZMEK – TO WANDER / YATAK – BED
	<b>Little finger / ASL (I-handshape):</b> MİSAFİR – GUEST / KÖTÜ – BAD/ TORPİL – BACKER/SUPPORTER / SALI – TUESDAY
	<b>Little + Thumb / ASL (Y-handshape):</b> AYNI – SAME / AĞIR – HEAVY / OYUN – GAME / UÇAK - AIRPLANE
	<b>ASL 3-handshape:</b> ALEVİ – (partisan of the caliph Ali.)/ ZİRAAT – AGRICULTURE
	<b>4-flexed:</b> AİLE – FAMILY / HAPIS -PRISON
	<b>I/1-handshape:</b> EMİR – ORDER / KIRMIZI – RED / HAYIR – NO / ŞANS – LUCK / PAZAR – SUNDAY
	<b>V/2-handshape:</b> MODA – FASHION / TİYATRO – THEATRE / NORMAL – NORMAL / BAKMAK – LOOK/ SEE / POLİS - POLICE
	<b>5-handshape:</b> VAR – TO EXIST / İSTEMEK – WANT / SİYAH – BLACK /BİLMEK – KNOW

## TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
	<b>7-handshape / V-closed:</b> KIZ – GIRL / CUMA - FRIDAY / YILDIZ – STAR / ÇABUK – QUICK-HASTY
	<b>8-handshape / V-hooked:</b> OTURMAK – SIT / MAVİ – BLUE / AŞK - LOVE
	<b>9-handshape / ASL X-handshape:</b> YIL – YEAR / YANLIŞ – WRONG / DAYI – UNCLE / KRAL – KING / DEDİKODU - GOSSIP
	<b>Finger Snapping:</b> UNUTMAK – FORGET / OYUN OYNAMAK – DANCE / KAÇMAK – RUN AWAY / HIZLI (ARABA) – FAST (CAR)

### 3.4 Allophones

Allophones are the phonetic variants of phonemes in spoken languages e.g. dental /t/ vs. Retroflex [ʈ]/ [ʈʈ], which is not distinctive in English but in Hindi (Werker & Tees, 1984). Such allophones can also be found among TİD phonemes. For example, even though the F-handshape (TİD O-handshape) and different types of the O-handshape observed in TİD are distinctive handshapes in some sign languages (DGS and ASL), it seems to be indistinctive in TİD (see Figure-27).

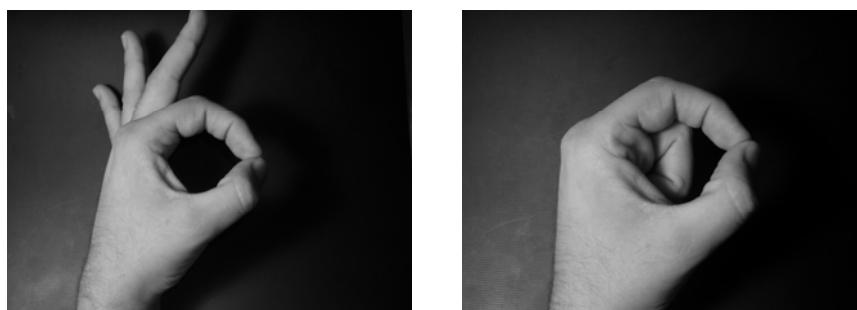


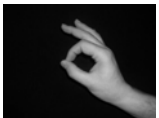












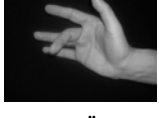
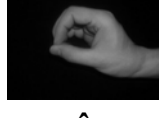
Figure -27 Allophones: ASL F, various forms of O/O

### Definitions of handshapes in TID handshape inventory










TID Handshape Inventory (Modelled from Sutton-Spence and Woll, 1999 pp. xiv – xvii and cited in Kubuş 2008)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
	<p><b>C-handshape:</b> Thumb and index fingers are open, making a half open circle.</p>
C	
	<p><b>L-handshape:</b> Index and thumb fingers are open and extended. Both fingers are perpendicular to each other.</p>
L	
	<p><b>O-handshape:</b> Thumb and index finger form circle and the other fingers are non-selected. Non-selected fingers can be either open or closed.</p>
O	
	<p><b>P-handshape:</b> Index finger is on the middle of the middle finger, forming “P” shape.</p>
P	
	<p><b>U-handshape:</b> The narrower shape of C-handshape. Orientation is upwards.</p>
U	
	<p><b>ASL A-bar:</b> Fist with thumb extended.</p>
Å	









## TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
 □	<b>ASL B-handshape:</b> fingers are extended and closed jointly, however thumb is opposed and closed.
 B	<b>Flat Hand:</b> fingers are extended and aperture is closed.
 5̄	<b>Hooked Flat Extended:</b> All fingers are extended, and curved.
 B̄	<b>Bent Flat:</b> Curved hand and thumb is open.
 Ĉ	<b>ASL C-handshape:</b> Thumb and other fingers shaping "C", the fingers except for thumb are curved and aperture is closed.
 B̂	<b>Bent Flat Bar:</b> Curved hand and thumb is open. the fingers except for thumb are bent and aperture is closed.
 Q	<b>ASL Q-handshape:</b> Narrower shape of U-handshape. Only index and thumb are selected.
 8̄	<b>Middle selected ASL (open 8):</b> Middle finger is bent, others are open and extended.
 Ô	<b>ASL O-handshape:</b> Fingers circle with thumbs and finger tips are touching to the thumb.

## TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
 <b>ö</b>	<b>Narrowed O:</b> Index finger is bent and makes a narrower circle with thumb.
 <b>o</b>	<b>Baby-O handshape:</b> All fingertips are joined.
 <b>8</b>	<b>ASL 8-handshape:</b> Thumb and ring finger make a circle form, the others are extended and open.
 <b>R</b>	<b>12 handshape / ASL R-handshape:</b> Index and middle fingers are crossed.
 <b>Â</b>	<b>Covered T-handshape:</b> Fist shape with hat on the thumb.
 <b>H</b>	<b>Horn / Combined ASL I and H:</b> Index and little finger are open while the others make a fist (closed).
 <b>i</b>	<b>Little finger / ASL I-handshape:</b> Only little finger is open, others make a fist.
 <b>Y</b>	<b>Little + Thumb / ASL (Y-handshape):</b> Little finger and thumb are open, others make a fist.
 <b>3</b>	<b>ASL 3-handshape:</b> Thumb, middle and index fingers are open, others are closed.

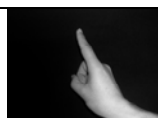
## TID Handshape Inventory (cont.)

Figures	Hand shape name and examples
 <p data-bbox="368 591 389 622">4</p>	<b>4-claw:</b> Thumb is open and others are flexed, aperture closed.
 <p data-bbox="373 779 389 810">2</p>	<b>V/2-handshape:</b> Index and middle fingers are open and extended, also aperture open.
 <p data-bbox="373 954 389 985">5</p>	<b>5-handshape:</b> All fingers are extended and spread.
 <p data-bbox="373 1131 389 1162">7</p>	<b>7-handshape / V-closed:</b> Index and middle fingers are open but aperture closed.
 <p data-bbox="373 1308 389 1339">8</p>	<b>8-handshape / V-hooked:</b> Index and middle fingers are bent and aperture is open.
 <p data-bbox="373 1485 389 1516">9</p>	<b>9-handshape / ASL X-handshape:</b> Index finger is open but bent.
 <p data-bbox="368 1653 389 1684">A</p>	<b>ASL A-handshape:</b> Fist, All fingers are closed. Note that: ASL-S and ASL-A are not phonologically differed in TID.
 <p data-bbox="373 1861 389 1892">*</p>	<b>Finger Snapping</b>

## Appendix- 2 List of Classifiers in TID

Combined List for entity, SASS and some Handle Classifiers in TID

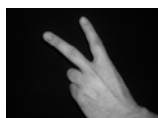
### Handshapes



**I-HANDSHAPE** Long-thin objects, Human-being (non-honorific, Zeshan,2002)



**FLAT-HAND** Flat Objects, surfaces, vehicles (cars, minibuses, bicycles)



**V/2-HANDSHAPE** Standing or walking human being



**ASL A-BAR** Honorific human-being (Zeshan,2002) and bottle or alcohol, drinks



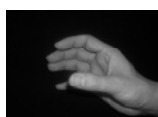
**5-HANDSHAPE** Plural non-honorific human-beings



**ASL O-HANDSHAPE** Cylindrical objects (i.e. telescope)



**HORN-HANDSHAPE** Square objects (mainly used with I-handshape) e.g. HAVUZ (SWIMMING-POOL)



**HOOKED FLAT EXTENDED** Small spherical objects

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**Handshapes**

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**O-HANDSHAPE** Small round objects (coins)



**ASL S-HANDSHAPE** Handling objects ( bags, buckets, baggage)  
Vehicles (i.e. drive)



**ASL Y-HANDSHAPE** Airplanes

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### Appendix 3. The Questionnaire

#### Anket Soruları

##### *Birinci Bölüm Soruları*

1. Adınız – soyadınız nedir ?

Yaşınız:

2. Ne iş yapıyorsunuz ?

3. Adınızı kim koydu ?

4. Ailenizde sağır birey(ler) var mı? Varsa kimler ?

##### *İkinci Bölüm Soruları*

1. İşaret dili ad(larınız) var mı? Varsa bu ad(larınızı) kim(ler) koydu ?

2. İşaret dili ad(lar)ınızın anlamı nedir? Size neden bu ad verildi ?


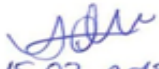

3. Size İşaret dili ad(lar)ınızı veren kişi(ler) sağır mı ?

Arş. Gör. Abdullah Topraksoy




Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

İngiliz Dilbilimi Anabilim Dalı



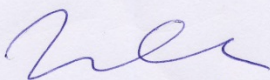
## Appendix 4. Thesis/Dissertation Originality Report

 <p><b>HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES THESIS/DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT</b></p>
<p><b>HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS</b></p>
Date: 15/07/2015
Thesis Title / Topic: A Linguistic Study on the System of Personal Name Signs in Turkish Sign Language (TİD)
According to the originality report obtained by myself/my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options stated below on 15/07/2015 for the total of 142 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 14. %.
<p>Filtering options applied:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approval and Declaration sections excluded</li> <li>2. Bibliography/Works Cited excluded</li> <li>3. Quotes excluded</li> <li>4. Match size up to 5 words excluded</li> </ol>
I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.
I respectfully submit this for approval.
 15.07.2015 Date and Signature
<p><b>Name Surname:</b> Abdullah Topraksoy</p> <p><b>Student No:</b> N11228286</p> <p><b>Department:</b> English Linguistics</p> <p><b>Program:</b> Master of Arts in Linguistics in English-MA</p> <p><b>Status:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Ph.D.</p>
<p><b>ADVISOR APPROVAL</b></p> <p>APPROVED.</p>  Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Acan Aydın

## Ek 4. Orijinallik Raporu



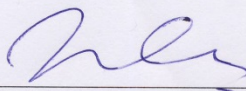
 <p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ</b> <b>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ</b> <b>YÜKSEK LİSANS/DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU</b></p>
<p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ</b> <b>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ</b> <b>İNGİLİZ DİL BİLİMİ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Tarih: 15/07/2015</p> <p>Tez Başlığı / Konusu: Türk İşaret Dili(TİD)'nde Kişi Özel Adları Üzerine Dilbilimsel bir Çalışma</p> <p>Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam <u>162</u> sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, <u>14.07.2015</u> tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezin benzerlik oranı % <u>14</u>'tür.</p> <p>Uygulanan filtrelemeler:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç,</li> <li>2- Kaynakça hariç</li> <li>3- Alıntılar hariç/dâhil</li> <li>4- 5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç</li> </ol> <p>Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.</p> <p>Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">   <u>15.07.2015</u>  Tarih ve İmza </p> <p> <b>Adı Soyadı:</b> Abdullah Topraksoy  <b>Öğrenci No:</b> N11228286  <b>Anabilim Dalı:</b> İngiliz Dilbilimi  <b>Programı:</b> Tezli Yüksek Lisans  <b>Statüsü:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y.Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/> Bütünleşik Dr. </p>
<p><b>DANIŞMAN ONAYI</b></p> <p>UYGUNDUR.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">   (Yrd. Doç. Dr. Zeynep Açıan Aydın) </p>

## Appendix 5. Ethics Board Waiver Form For Thesis Work

 <p><b>HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM FOR THESIS WORK</b></p>
<p><b>HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES ENGLISH LINGUISTICS TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date: 09/07/2015</p> <p>Thesis Title / Topic: A Linguistic Study on the System of Personal Name Signs in Turkish Sign Language (TİD)</p> <p>My thesis work related to the title/topic above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.</li> <li>2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).</li> <li>3. Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity.</li> <li>4. Is not based on observational and descriptive research (survey, measures/scales, data scanning, system-model development).</li> </ol> <p>I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.</p> <p>I respectfully submit this for approval.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date and Signature </p> <p><b>Name Surname:</b> Abdullah Topraksoy</p> <p><b>Student No:</b> N11228286</p> <p><b>Department:</b> English Linguistics</p> <p><b>Program:</b> Master of Arts in Linguistics in English-MA</p> <p><b>Status:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Ph.D.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">09/07/2015</p>
<p><b><u>ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Aan Aydın)</p>



## Ek 5. Tez Çalışması Etik Kurul İzin Muafiyeti Formu

 <p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ</b> <b>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ</b> <b>TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU</b></p>
<p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ</b> <b>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ</b> <b>İNGİLİZ DİLBİLİMİ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA</b></p>
Tarih: 09/07/2015
<p>Tez Başlığı / Konusu: Türk İşaret Dili(TİD)'nde Kişi Özel Adları Üzerine Dilbilimsel bir Çalışma</p> <p>Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmam:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,</li> <li>2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.</li> <li>3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.</li> <li>4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.</li> </ol> <p>Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kuruldan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.</p> <p>Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.</p>
<p>Tarih ve İmza  09/07/2015</p>
<p><b>Adı Soyadı:</b> Abdullah Topraksoy</p> <p><b>Öğrenci No:</b> N11228286</p> <p><b>Anabilim Dalı:</b> İngiliz Dilbilimi</p> <p><b>Programı:</b> Tezli Yüksek Lisans</p> <p><b>Statüsü:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y.Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/> Bütünleşik Dr.</p>
<p><b><u>DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> (Yrd. Doç. Dr. Zeynep Açıan Aydın)</p>
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