Bibliographic Reference List Mistakes: The Case of Turkish Librarianship

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Abstract
In this paper we studied bibliographic reference mistakes. Bibliographic references are an important part of scholarly publishing and are also crucial for visibility and accessibility of studies in the databases. We have searched how much of the bibliography of the works published in the Turkish Librarianship journal appeared in the Web of Science (WoS) citation database. Between 2015 and 2017, a total of 2959 studies, 2707 (91.4%) of which placed in the WoS, appear in the reference lists of 192 studies in Turkish Librarianship. 96 (38%) out of the 252 remaining non-indexed sources in WoS have been created in accordance with the original APA rules. Therefore, the reason why these sources are not indexed is either due to minor errors made by the authors or to the indexing algorithm of WoS.

Introduction
Bibliographic references are an integral part of scientific publishing in the process of creation and dissemination of information. This is also one of the areas where authors make the most mistakes. This may be due to the inattention of the authors or their lack of knowledge. Besides that, numerous bibliographic reference standards which are used for different scientific areas (Park, Mardis & Ury, 2011) also add to the mistakes. In recent years, the diversity of the resources used in research, with the widespread use of internet and electronic resources, has also made way for more mistakes in reference. Especially in classical, traditional areas (such as history, literature, archeology) these updates are not well known by the authors. Moreover, the fact that different journals in one area request different bibliographic standards is confusing the authors.

In bibliographical mistakes, it is known that there are mistakes caused by the inattention of the author as well as unethical citations (citation from secondary resources) (Bahar et al., 2012; Lok, Chan & Martinson, 2001; Oermann, Cummings & Wilmes, 2001). These mistakes may also arise from the inattention of journal editors (Oermann, Cummings & Wilmes, 2001). It does not offer an example of comprehensive bibliography preparation to many journalists. Again, the use of non-updated standards also increases the mistakes (Onwuegbuzie, Hwang, Combs, and Slate, 2012). Localized standard rules also can increase these mistakes by creating confusion.

The most important problem caused by such mistakes in given situations is the issue of appearance in citation databases of many resources with erroneous reference. When a study that has bibliographical mistakes is indexed in the citation databases, citations that do not comply with the standard or given incorrectly are not in place in the mentioned databases. For example, in a study, 19 references are shown in the database in which the study is indexed; although 20 references were used. This suggests that the missing reference is given incorrectly. It is
necessary that the location and description information of the resource is given in full, so that the cited resource can be easily accessed (Moorthy, 1988).

In this study, we have searched how much of the bibliography of the works published in the Journal of Turkish Librarianship appeared in the Web of Science (WoS) citation database. We discussed the reasons why the resources not included in WoS are not indexed.

**Method**

The Turkish Librarianship was indexed in the ESCI (Emerging Sources Citation Index) of WoS in 2015. For this reason, we have analyzed articles indexed since 2015. In total, 192 articles covering 2015-2017 period were downloaded from WoS. With the data available, we checked from the web page of the journal and compared the relevant bibliography of articles. We were able to evaluate the bibliography of the articles written in Turkish and English, as the language of the article is included in the metadata in WoS (see Figure 1).

**Findings**

Between 2015 and 2017, 192 studies which were published in 12 issues of the Journal of Turkish Librarianship have been indexed in WoS. Eight of these studies are in English. Between 2015 and 2017, a total of 2959 studies, 2707 (91.4%) of which placed in the WoS, appear in the reference lists of 192 studies in Turkish Librarianship. 20% or more of the studies in the reference lists of 16% of 192 studies (N=30) have not been indexed. Keeping in mind that 88 of them (46%) do not have any references, more than 20% of the resources in the reference lists of 32% (N=30) of the resources that have reference have not been indexed. As some studies have not been indexed at all, sometimes extra studies have been indexed. WoS also includes the bibliographic record of the book introduced in the book introductions into the reference list. 25 of the 192 studies in our dataset are in this way.

The indexing rate of the reference list of English sources is 98.6%. 227 of the 230 resources in the reference list of the English source have been indexed. The type of three non-indexed studies are in the website format. In Turkish sources this rate is 91.4%. In our opinion, this difference is closely related to the localization of the APA rules. Due to the syntax differences in languages, the standard structure has been corrupted and the local rules have moved away from being a machine-readable standard.

Figure 1 shows the distribution by type of 252 sources from the studies in the reference list of 192 studies, which are not indexed in WoS for a variety of reasons.
Conclusion

- 96 (38%) out of 252 non-indexed sources in WoS have been created in accordance with the original APA rules. Therefore, the reason why these sources are not indexed is either due to minor errors made by the authors or to the indexing algorithm of WoS.

- The remaining 156 resources (62%) have not been indexed although prepared in accordance with "localized APA rules (Turkish version)".

- Disruptions related to the localized rules mostly arise from the syntax differences in the Turkish and English language rules. For example, according to APA rules, the phrase "Retrieved from" is used before the address is given. On a localized copy, "adresinden erişildi (accessed from address)" or "erişim adresi: (access address:)" phrases are used after the access address is given. Both the presence of the ":" sign and the corresponding pattern given before the access address lead to indexing problems.

- Apart from this, there are also resources not indexed by WoS even if they conform to APA style. Legal entity or organizations are indexed as title instead of author; or as [Anonymous] if the author name does not have a comma. At the entrance of the website, if there is a comma in the section up to the date, the author name is indexed as the journal name.

References


