

# REGISTER SHIFT: SPOKEN TO WRITTEN TURKISH

by Seda Sürel

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Function

Register shift converts agent-centered, situational speech into durable, institutional text.

The objective is structural: to transform immediate judgments into outcomes that can be recorded, reviewed, and upheld.

Spoken Turkish manages interaction and presence.

Written Turkish produces authority, accountability, and continuity.

### 2. Forms

Register shift is executed through systematic substitutions, not stylistic ornamentation.

#### Core movements:

- speaker reference → institutional voice
- finite action → stabilized process
- elastic wording → precise administrative lexicon
- conversational flow → evaluative framing

The written result is optimized for reuse and governance.

### 3. Morphology

Register shift introduces no new grammar.

It re-distributes existing morphology to relocate perspective.

#### Key redistributions:

- action verbs → process nouns
- personal predicates → impersonal verdicts
- immediacy → assessment orientation

Meaning moves from who speaks to what is established.

### 4. Structural Guide

#### A) Core Transformation Logic

##### Spoken register answers:

Kim konuşuyor ve şu anda ne yapıyor?

— Who is speaking and what are they doing now?

##### Written register answers:

Ne tespit edildi ve nasıl değerlendirildi?

— What has been established and how has it been assessed?

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The transformation removes dependency on the speaker and allows statements to stand independently.

## B) Transformation Mapping (Arrow System)

### Pronouns

- ben / biz → impersonal structures
- — / we → institutional voice

### Verbs

- yapmak / bakmak / söylemek → precise institutional verbs
- — to do / to look / to say → to execute / to examine / to state

### Moods

- yapmalıyız → kurumsal modal (öngörülmektedir / uygun görülmektedir)
- — we must do → it is anticipated / deemed appropriate

### Flow

- ardışık anlatım → çerçevelenmiş değerlendirme
- — sequential narration → framed assessment

## C) Visual Mapping: Spoken → Written (Layered)

### Spoken (Agent-Centered):

Biz bütçe yüzünden bu işi yapamadık.

— We could not carry this out because of the budget.

### Written (Institutional):

[[Bütçe kısıtlılığı]] nedeniyle, [[faaliyetlerin ertelenmesi]] uygun görülmüştür.

— Due to budgetary constraints, the postponement of the activities has been deemed appropriate.

### Layers:

- **Frame:** [[Bütçe kısıtlılığı]] — budgetary constraints
- **Process:** [[faaliyetlerin ertelenmesi]] — postponement of the activities
- **Verdict:** uygun görülmüştür — (The Institutional Decision)

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## D) Lexical Precision Shift (with English)

Spoken placeholders are replaced with bounded institutional terms:

- şey → husus / unsur
- — thing → matter / element
- yapmak → icra etmek / gerçekleştirmek
- — to do → to execute / to carry out
- bakmak → incelemek / tetkik etmek
- — to look → to examine / to scrutinize
- istemek → talep etmek
- — to want → to request
- bilmek → vakıf olmak / bilgisi dahilinde bulunmak
- — to know → to be conversant with / to be within one's knowledge

Precision stabilizes meaning and supports accountability.

## 5. Usage

Register shift is essential when:

- spoken assessments are converted into reports
- informal feedback becomes an official position
- discussions are formalized into decisions
- personal reasoning is reframed as institutional logic

Without register shift, texts remain conversational residues rather than authoritative records.

## Examples

### A) Strategic Misalignment (High Commitment)

#### Before (Spoken):

Bu strateji hedeflerle uyuşmuyor.

— This strategy does not align with the objectives.

#### After (Written):

[[Stratejik hedeflerle uyumsuzluk]] tespit edilmiştir.

— A misalignment with the strategic objectives has been identified.

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## B) Budgetary Constraints (Provisional)

### Before (Spoken):

Bütçe yetmez gibi duruyor.

— It seems the budget will not be sufficient.

### After (Written):

[[Mevcut bütçe olanakları]] itibarıyla, [[kapsamın genişletilmesi]] mümkün olmayabileceği öngörülmektedir.

— In terms of the current budgetary capacity, expanding the scope is anticipated to be infeasible.

## C) Regulatory Compliance (High Commitment)

### Before (Spoken):

Kurallara uymamız lazım.

— We need to comply with the regulations.

### After (Written):

[[İlgili mevzuata uyum]] zorunlu olduğu belirlenmiştir.

— Compliance with the relevant regulations has been determined to be mandatory.

## D) Operational Adjustment (Provisional)

### Before (Spoken):

Süreci biraz değiştirmeyi düşünüyoruz.

— We are considering adjusting the process slightly.

### After (Written):

[[Operasyonel sürecin revize edilmesi]] uygun görülebileceği değerlendirilmektedir.

— Revising the operational process is being assessed as potentially appropriate.

## Notes

- Register shift replaces presence with structure.
- Spoken clarity relies on shared context; written clarity relies on internal architecture.
- Institutional authority is produced by form, not asserted by tone.
- Commitment is calibrated through verdict choice (belirlenmiştir vs. öngörülmektedir).
- Register shift aims for clarity and accountability; it should not lead to intentional obscurity or excessive complexity.