

Story 1729 (1994 Tape 1)

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Location: Taşkale village,
Karaman (provincial
capital but
formerly kaza
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Province

Date: May 1994

The Arabicized Vegetable

In the old days it was very popular to have an Arabic accent, especially if you were studying the Koran.¹ Once back in that time a man who was studying the Koran went to a greengrocer and said, "Give me a kâlo kâ'aabak [kilo kabak in Turkish--a kilo of squash]." The seller of fruits and vegetables could not understand what the man said, and so the customer repeated his request, struggling hard to maintain the Arabic pronunciation of the words.

With much difficulty the greengrocer finally understood what the customer wanted, but he was somewhat an-

¹The Koran is, of course, written in Arabic, and many maintain that it cannot be adequately translated into any other language. Therefore, faithful Moslems (of whatever linguistic background) study hard to pronounce the Arabic--even though they do not always understand it literally!

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noyed. He asked the customer, "Why didn't you say kabak?"

"Oh, I didn't want to damage my pronunciation of the kî'raat² [kî'raat for Turkish kıraat] for just a mere kâlo kâ'aabak!"

²Kıraat means reading or reciting the Koran in a proper way.