

**THE VARIANCES BETWEEN TURKISH
MONOLINGUAL AND KURDISH/TURKISH
BILINGUAL EFL LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF
ENGLISH ARTICLES¹**

Buket DEMİRBÜKEN²

Abstract

Though learners differ in acquisition, all languages have some certain linguistic forms that are accepted as complex and simple. Articles might be regarded as complex to understand as even advanced learners may have trouble in correct use of articles. The complexity is possibly higher for learners who have an article-less (henceforth -ART) native language background. This study investigates the use of articles by Turkish monolinguals and Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals in two different tasks; a fill-in-article task and written-narrative task. Turkish is a (-ART) language while Kurdish is a (+ART) language, so the aim of the study is to examine if there is any variance between Turkish monolinguals (-ART) and Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals (\pm ART) in article use of English (+ART). The findings revealed the superior performance of bilinguals (\pm ART) over monolinguals (-ART). The paper also questioned the metalinguistic knowledge of L2 and L3 learners on choice of article in English. The qualitative data was presented with possible explanations and interpretations.

Keywords: *Definite & indefinite article, bilingualism, monolingual, metalinguistic awareness.*

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² Instructor., Marmara University, e-mail: buk.dbuken@gmail.com

1. Introduction

It is a shared concern that second language learners have difficulty in acquiring English article system (a / an, the, zero). It is very difficult and even impossible in some cases to achieve a native-like choice of article (White, 2009). Ionin, Zubirrarreta and Maldonado (2008) claimed that if learners lack article system in their L1 such as; Turkish, Korean, Japanese, they have the tendency to omit the articles more than the learner whose L1 employ articles such as Spanish (as cited in Dikilitaş & Altay, 2011). Pienemann (1998) claims that the difficulty is determined by the novelty and abstractness of the concept (as cited in Ekiert, 2005), so the learners who do not have article system in their Universal Grammar (henceforth UG) may struggle in internalizing the article concept more than others who already have the knowledge.

Second language studies suggest 'language transfer' within languages that share similar features. Mitchell and Myles (1998) claim that "Theorists today would generally accept once more that cross-linguistic influences play an important role in L2 learning."

(p. 19). However, it was also suggested in SLA studies that "L1 is one of the sources of error in learner language." (Ellis, 1997, p. 57).

Regarding the article acquisition, this study questioned that Turkish monolinguals and Kurdish/ Turkish bilinguals of EFL learners with similar backgrounds have variances in article acquisition at different tasks. Also, it was examined that whether learners are aware of the reason why they select a/ an, the and zero articles to complete a NP or it is an intuitional, random selection. Research questions of the study are as follows; 1) Do Turkish monolinguals and Kurdish bilinguals of EFL learners differ in article acquisition of English? To what extent do Turkish monolinguals and Kurdish bilinguals of English learners show variances in article usage depending on different tasks (written-narrative task and fill-in-article test)? 2) What kinds of metalinguistic knowledge do L2 learners display regarding to their choice of articles? Do Turkish/Kurdish bilinguals and Turkish monolinguals of L2 English learners have any discrepancies in their article selection? As such, the focus of the study is to examine any differences between the Turkish L1 group whose native language is article-less and bilingual group who speak both Turkish and Kurdish as their native language. What makes the difference is Kurdish has an article system as English though it is a bit different while Turkish L1 speakers has no article parameters in their language background that will provide evidences for the positive and negative transfer of background language on article acquisition in L2 and L3.

1.1. Article System in English

In English, words are defined as definite and indefinite and these definiteness/ indefiniteness were represented by articles the, a / an and zero article (0). The refers to (+ definite) and a/ an refers to (- definite). A/ an indefinite articles are used with singular words while definite article 'the' is used in both singular and plural contexts. This definiteness appears when you mention an object for the second time; if the referent is unique and clear to the interlocutor. "Two major approaches to definiteness in the semantic literature are 'uniqueness' and 'familiarity' (Ionin, Ko & Wexler, 2012, p. 70).

Regarding to the case of plurality, the uniqueness is substituted with "inclusiveness" or "maximality" (as cited in Ionin, Ko & Wexler, 2012, p. 72). Huebner's (1983) study

suggested a classification for article distribution and use in English. The adapted version of Huebner (1983) article model was used in this study.

Table 1. Article System in English Based on Huebner (1983) Categorization

Features	Environment	Articles	Examples
Type 1	Generic nouns	a, the , 0	<i>0 Apple</i> grows on the tree. <i>The earth</i> is round. <i>A paper clip</i> comes in handy.
Type 2	Referential definites (Previously mentioned)	the	Give me <i>the phone</i> . <i>The idea</i> of coming to the US was I found a book. <i>The book</i> was.... <i>The first person</i> to walk on the moon...
Type 3	Referential indefinites (first-mention nouns)	a,0	Yesterday, I bought a new car I need <i>potatoes</i> for the soup.
Type 4	Nonreferential nouns (attributive & nonspecific)	a, 0	She <i>is</i> a teacher. I guess I should buy <i>a new one</i> . <i>0 Students</i> would come up with a better idea.
Type 5	Idioms Other conventional uses	a, the , 0	<i>All of a sudden</i> , he woke up, <i>In the 1980s</i> , the Berlin Wall fell.

Adapted from Ekiert (2007), Goto Butler (2002), Huebner (1985) & Thomas (1989)

1.2. Article System in Turkish

Turkish is a language without definite articles and indefiniteness is granted with one 'Bir'. One (Bir) has two different meanings in sentences; indefinite *Bir* and numerical *Bir*.

3a. Bir kitap al da oku. (indefinite) (*buy a book and read then*)

3b. Kütüphanemiz için bir kitap geldi. (numerical)(*A book came to our library*)

Except for indefiniteness with one (bir), the NPs at subject position in bare form is interpreted as definite while the NP in object position without a case morphine is interpreted as indefinite. (Snape & Gürel, 2012). Öztürk(2005) highlights (as cited in Altay, 2010) that in languages like Turkish case morphology interacts with the referentially interpretation of nouns in the absence of articles so case assignment fulfils the function of articles in other languages (17).

4a. Garson tabakları temizledi (*The waiter cleaned the plates*)

(Göksel and Kerlake, 2005; cited in Atay, 2010; 26)

In the example (4a) the subject NP (garson) is definite as it is in subject position and NP in object position (tabakları) is definite due to accusative case morpheme(-ı). Additionally, Turkish indicates generic reference with plurality, bare nouns and NPs with one (*bir*). Article systems based on Huebner's (1983) categorization was designed for Turkish article system and shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Article System in Turkish (Based on Huebner (1983) Categorization for English)

Features	Environment	Articles	Examples
Type 1	Generic nouns	<i>0/ bir(one)</i>	<i>0 Çocuklar sevimlidir</i> (Children are cute) <i>0 Elma ağaçta olur</i> (Apple grows on the tree) <i>Bir kelebek üç gün yaşar</i> (A butterfly lives in three days)
Type 2	Referential definites (Previously mentioned)	<i>no article for definiteness</i>	
Type 3	Referential indefinites (first-mention nouns)	<i>bir(one)</i>	<i>Bir adam geldi.</i> (A man came)
Type 4 öğretmen	Nonreferential nouns (attributive & nonspecific)	<i>0, bir (one)</i>	<i>0 bir öğretmen/ 0</i> (She is a teacher) <i>0 Öğrenciler geçti.</i> (Students passed)
Type 5 <i>cloak</i>	Idioms Other conventional uses	<i>0, bir(one)</i>	<i>0 Aba altından 0değnek göstermek</i> (To show a stick under the

Adapted from Huebner (1983), Erguvanlı (1984).

1.3. Article System in Kurdish (Kurmanji)

The Kurdish language has many dialects; however only Kurmanji, one of the dialects, was studied in this paper. Kurdish is a twisted language that allows adding to the beginning, middle and end of the word as similar to English. Kurmanji also has an article system; whereas it is a bit different form English article system. Kurmanji has definite and indefinite articles as well as female and male sensitivity in singular and plural forms. Definite and indefinite article forms in Kurmanji were shown in Table 3.

Table 3. 'Kurmanji' Case Forms of Definite and Indefinite Articles

Gender	Definite Markers	Indefinite Markers
Masculine	-i	-ek
Feminine	-é	
Plural (mas./fem.)	-an	-in

Some examples were given below to investigate the article use in "Kurmanji" with masculine, feminine and plural nouns in complements and sentences.

- 6a. Pirtuk-ek-e bistine u bixwine (a book ; indefinete 'ek')
 Book- a- CM buy and read (Buy a book and read)
- 6b. Pirtuk-é bistine (the book; definite 'é')

Features	Environment	Articles	Examples
Type 1 <i>digihije</i>	Generic nouns	0	<i>0 Sév li dare</i> <i>Apple</i> grows on tree <i>0 Sér ajaleki baş</i> <i>Lion</i> is a strong animal
Type 2 bir giriné kir	Referential definites (Previously mentioned)	i,é	<i>Zilam-i</i> dest The man started crying. <i>Jin-é</i> dest bir giriné kir The woman dest bir giriné kir
Type 3 hate hundir	Referential indefinites (first-mention nouns)	-ek	<i>Zilam-ek</i> A man came in <i>Jin-ek</i> hate hundir A woman came in
Type 4 <i>mamotey-ek</i> e. <i>teacher.</i>	Nonreferential nouns (attributive & nonspecific)	0,ek	<i>Ew</i> mamoste ye./ <i>Ew</i> #S/he is teacher/ S/he is a
Type 5 ket	Idioms Other conventional uses	0, ek, i,é	Di 1980'an de diwara Berliné

Article systems based on Huebner's (1983) categorization was designed for Kurmanji article system and shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Article System in Kurmanji Based on Huebner (1983) Categorization
Adapted from Huebner (1983).

Literature Review

Previous Studies on L2 Article Acquisition

Ekiert (2005) conducted a study with a group of ten adult Polish learners of ESL, ten Polish learners of EFL and a control group. The study aimed to investigate in what order do adult L2 learners who are speakers of (-ART) language acquire the English article system. The results of the study indicated that likewise previous studies on the natural order of L1 acquisition (Cziko, 1986; Zehler & Brewer, 1982; as cited in Ekiert, 2005, p. 17), this study confirmed the dominance of 'a' article at early stages of L2 learners whose native language lack articles.

Another study was conducted by Ionin, Zubizarreta & Maldorada (2008). The study examined three sources of knowledge in the acquisition of English articles; L1 transfer, L2-input and UG. The results of the study confirmed the results of Ionin's (2003) study and Russian speakers were less accurate than Spanish speakers in the article use despite having higher proficiency in L2.

Studies on L2 vs L3 Article Acquisition with Different Tasks

Leung (2005) conducted a comparative study with eight groups of participants. The study's aim is to demonstrate that L3 acquisition is not different from L2 acquisition. Four groups of participants were employed; an L3 French experimental group (L1 Chinese-L2 English); an L2 French experimental group (L1 Vietnamese, with no English background) and two native control groups (L1 French and L1 English, respectively). Five tasks were conducted in total. The results of the study indicated that when L2 and L3 French is concerned, both definite and indefinite correct article use were significantly higher for the L3 group.

Previous studies conducted show that L2 plays a dominant role in L3 acquisition and the ones who has a similar parameter in their native L1 with the target language seems privileged and they are likely to outperform. The studies indicated that different tasks may have different results and there are a few studies conducted with Turkish monolinguals and Turkish / Kurdish bilinguals in English article acquisition; however there is still a gap and the present study aims to fill in the gap in the literature by providing either data on L1 and L2 transfer on L3 article acquisition with different tasks.

Metalinguistic Awareness

The present study also analysed metalinguistic knowledge of participants. As such, a study conducted by Butler (2002) provided background information on L2 learners' metalinguistic knowledge regarding to use of articles. Japanese learners were chosen on purpose as it lacks article system. In general, the study results showed that learner did not make their choices randomly, but their explanations were based on a systematicity.

Hypotheses; 1) Based on previous studies (ex: Ekiert, 2005; Thomas, 1986), omission of articles or overgeneralization of zero articles are expected to be more frequent in both groups of learners. 2) Kurdish speakers of English learners are expected to outperform Turkish speakers of English learners in terms of accurate use of articles. The hypothesis

is based on L1 positive transfer within the theory of contrastive analysis. 3) Based on previous studies (ex; Kharma, 1981; Mizuna, 1985), participants are expected to make more mistakes in fill-in-article test than written-narrative task which is based on production.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

There are 30 participants who are attending English preparatory school of a public university, who are all intermediate (B1) students. Their age range is between 18-20 and had similar educational background. They differ in their L1; 15 of them are Turkish speakers of EFL learners while the other 15 are bilinguals who speak both Turkish and Kurdish.

Data Collection & Instruments

Language background questionnaire

Participants were asked to fill a questionnaire to provide biographical data regarding their language background. The questionnaire consisted of two parts; first part included general questions and the second part had an open ended question on participants' language background. (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire included a question regarding bilinguals' Kurdish dialect and only the ones who speak 'Kurmanji', a dialect of Kurdish, were employed to provide homogeneity.

Fill-in-Article Test Instrument

Participants were given a cloze text with thirty seven (37) sentences that was adapted from Ekiert (2007) and Butler (2002), Gleason (2002) and Master (1994) (as cited in Ekiert, 2007). The instrument has 55 omitted articles that learners are expected to insert one. All five article usage types (type 1, type 2, type 3, type 4 and type 5), that were adapted from Butler (2002), Huebner (1985) and Thomas (1989), were included and the instrument had 11 for each type. (See Appendix 2). To answer second research question relating to the metalinguistic knowledge, section II of the instrument included seven (7) sentences with correct and incorrect articles. Students were asked to decide whether the use of article is correct and give an explanation about why it is correct or incorrect.

Written-Narrative Task

Participants watched a silent movie (Requirio) that lasts 4.50 mins. After having watched the movie, they were asked to narrate the story. The story was easy to follow and it was chosen on purpose as the plot made it possible to use definite and indefinite articles.

Data Analysis

The fill-in-article test was analysed with the help of SPSS. The correct answers were counted and the percentages for each type were specified. The responds that explain the reason of using each article were interpreted. The written-narrative task was analysed by counting the correct and incorrect use of articles. They were categorized as *omission of indefinite, definite articles; overuse of definite and indefinite articles; substitution of indefinite with definite article, substitution of definite with indefinite article* out of total

incorrect articles. While analysing narrations, only article usage was taken into consideration, other mistakes were neglected.

5. Results

Analysis of Language background questionnaire

The learners' answers for the open ended questions in language background questionnaire confirmed that all participants learned Turkish and Kurdish in their families by exposing to language. They study English for about 8-10 years and it was concluded that all students learned English at school, in formal instructed classroom environment. Also, all participants (30) have been speaking Turkish since they were born.

Analysis of Fill-in-Article Test

The results of fill-in-article tests were analysed with the help of SPSS (version 15) and evaluated under the categorization of 5 Types of articles explained in Table 1. The accuracy percentages for each type of article usage were calculated for both Turkish monolinguals and Kurdish/ Turkish bilinguals', which were included in Table 5.

Table 5. Accuracy in Article Use of EFL Participants (N=30)

	Type 1 : Generics	Type 2 : Referential Definites	Type 3 : Referential Indefiniteness	Type 4 : Nonreferential	Type 5 : Idioms
Turkish L1 speakers of EFL	%51,27	% 53,81	% 65,54	% 56,45	% 33,09
Turkish & Kurdish L1 speakers of EFL	% 74,54	% 72,72	% 69,45	% 62,72	% 51, 45

The mean results of two groups' fill-in instrument's results were compared with the help of Mann Whitney-U test (SPSS Version 15). Mann Whitney-U test was preferred as the number of participants were less than thirty ($N < 30$) and the groups were independent. The results were included in Table 5.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney-U Test Post-tests of Experiment Groups (Accuracy)

Results	Variables	N	\bar{x}	SS	t Testi		
					t	Sd	p
Posttest	TurkishL1	15	19	3,80	,52	12.74	,046
	Bilingual	15	36	7,20			

Table 6 indicated that bilingual (Kurdish and Turkish L1) participants' result ($\bar{x} = 36$) outperformed Turkish L1 participants ($\bar{x} = 19$). The difference between two groups was found significant ($p < ,05$). The results confirmed second hypothesis of the study that is

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'Kurdish bilinguals of English learners are predicted to outperform Turkish speakers of English learners in terms of accurate use of articles.' Mann-Whitney U tests were also conducted for each type of article separately to examine whether there was a significant difference among categorized article types.

Table 7. Mann- Whitney –U Test Results for Each Article Type Usage

Variables(Bilinguals)	Type 1	Type2	Type3	Type4	Type5
(Turkish L1)					
Type1 18,5	$\bar{x}_{sra} = 9,0;$				
Type2	p < ,05	$\bar{x}_{sra} = 10,6; 17,1$ p < ,05	$\bar{x}_{sra} = 13,7; 14,2$ p > ,05		
Type3					
Type4				$\bar{x}_{sra} = 10,7; 17,0$ p < ,05	
Type5					$\bar{x}_{sra} = 10,3; 17,3$ p < ,05

Table 7 shows that post-test results revealed significant difference for type 1, type 2, type 4 and type 5 between two experiment groups ($p < ,05$). Type 3 indicated a difference between the results of two groups; however the result was not found significant.

Analysis of Written Data

Participants' written-narrative stories after watching the silent movie were collected. They had articles as the plot of the silent story forced learners use articles. These articles were analysed and the percentage for incorrect use of articles were calculated out of total number of incorrect articles that appeared in written data. The results were included in

Table 8.

Table 8. Percentage and Frequency of Incorrect Use of Articles in Written Task (N=30) Participants

Type	Turkish (L1) Group			Bilinguals (Turkish& Kurdish) Group		
	Frequency <i>f</i>	Percentage % (among incorrect)	Cumulative Percent % (among all articles)	Frequency <i>f</i>	Percentage % (among incorrect)	Cumulative Percent % (among all articles)
Omission of						

indefinite article	12	% 3,6	% 10,08	8	% 1,68	%7,36
Omission of definite article	13	% 3,9	% 10,92	10	% 2,1	%9,2
Overuse of definite article	1	% 0,3	% 0,84	3	% 0,63	%2,76
Overuse of indefinite article	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substitution of definite article with indefinite article	1	% 0,3	% 0,84	-	-	-
Substitution of indefinite with definite article	3	% 0,9	% 2,52	-	-	-
		Total:		Total:		%19,32
	%25,20					

The results of analysis indicated that both experiment groups made mistakes by omission of definite and indefinite articles at most. No mistakes were recorded due to overuse of definite article in both groups' written data. Omission of indefinite article is 12 (% 10, 08) for Turkish L1 group while it was calculated as 8 (%7, 36) for bilingual (Turkish& Kurdish L1) group. Turkish L1 group had slightly more mistakes in omission definite article as well. Turkish L1 group had 13 errors (% 10, 9) and bilingual experiment group had 10 (% 9, 2) omission of definite article. Bilingual experiment group had no mistakes regarding substitution of definite with indefinite article and substitution of indefinite with definite article. Turkish L1 group had one incorrect use of article due to substitution of definite article with indefinite one (% 0, 84) and 3 with the category of substitution of indefinite with definite article (% 2, 52). In total, Turkish L1 group had 25, 20 % incorrect use of articles among all articles in written data while bilingual group had 19, 32 % incorrect use of articles.

Analysis of Metalinguistic Awareness

Reasons for article choice that were stated by the participants were analysed and classified for each type of article. Some participants did not explain the reason though they made the corrections, which limited the study. Turkish L1 group and bilingual groups' reasons for article choice were evaluated and interpreted separately.

Reasons stated by Turkish monolingual participants;

Regarding metalinguistic awareness, almost 7 or 8 learners could explain the reason for their choice of articles. Type 1 (generic nouns) could be explained at most in both groups. 3 students from both Turkish L1 and bilingual group could refer to the rule about generic

nouns properly. Regarding Type 2 (referential nouns) bilinguals outperformed in use of articles; however no learners from bilinguals could explain the reason of their choice. 1 student from Turkish L1 group explained the rule correctly. 4 learners from Turkish L1 group and 3 learners from bilinguals group could give a proper explanation for Type 3 (referential indefinites) use of article. There was no explanation for Type 4 among bilinguals at all while 1 student from Turkish L1 group made a correct reasoning. Type 5 (idioms) was the least achieved category for both groups and 3 students could explain their choice of article for Type 5 .1 student from Turkish L1 group and 2 students form bilinguals explained the reason and confirmed their awareness about the rules.

6. Discussion

Discussion of Post-test Results

In general, consistent with previous studies (Ionin, et al., 2008) the results of this study indicated that L3 learners with both an (-ART) and (+ART) in their native language background performed better than L2 learners with an article-less native language. As the study did not have a native group, it is not possible to say whether it is a full or partial transfer; however, the results revealed that L3 learner do not behave similar to L2 learners (\bar{x} = 19; 36, $p < .05$).

The results of post-test revealed the overall superior performance of Kurdish/ Turkish bilinguals over Turkish monolinguals in terms of accurate use of articles in EFL. In each type of articles, Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals outperformed. The most outstanding difference was observed in type 1 (generics) and type 2 (referential definite). The results about generics contradict with Thomas (1989) hypothesis, which claims generics is the most difficult type of article to acquire. Generics differ in Turkish and English (see 5a and 5b), that is Turkish speaker of L2 learners might have a tendency to omit article 'the' or use 'the' in singular form (see Table 4, type 2). In Turkish there is no generic reference to generic with a definite article in plural form. In Kurmanji, generic sentences do not include definite article, as well. However, Kurmanji employs (-ART) singular form of the noun to refer generics likewise English (see example Table 4, type 1). That is, it is possible to mention a positive transfer from Kurdish language background for bilingual group of participants. The results for Type 2 might have been explained by positive transfer, as well (\bar{x} = 53, 81; 72, 72, $p < .05$). As such, Kurdish language has an article system that specify the definiteness of nouns likewise "the". These results are consistent with Leung (2008) that indicated a general tendency to transfer L2 than a L1 in L3 acquisition.

Regarding type 3 results (referential indefiniteness), no significant results were found among two experiment groups; however, Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals performed slightly better (\bar{x} = 65, 54; 69, 45, $p > .05$). The similar results for both group confirmed the transfer effect and the dominant effect of L2 in L3 as Kurdish language indicates an indefinite noun with 'ek' and 'in' as English does with 'a' and 'an' while Turkish also indicates indefiniteness with 'one (bir)'. In type 4 (nonreferential) article group, Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals' superior performance might have been due to the fact that both Turkish and Kurdish follow a similar system for nonreferential articles likewise English (\bar{x} = 56, 45; 62, 72; $p < .05$). In Turkish, there is no reference to definiteness so indefiniteness does not make sense. In Kurmanji, 'i' and 'e' are definite articles so non-referential nouns are also defined by indefinite articles. The superior performance of bilinguals has been interpreted as L2 positive effect on L3 acquisition.

The data revealed that type 5 (idioms) article group was the most difficult to get acquired in the system. Learners' performance was at the lowest in this group. They might be attributed to bilinguals' general language skills and knowledge as it is more developed and comprehensive in L3 learners when compared to L2 learners. It might have had a positive effect on their perception of idioms.

Discussion of Written Data Results

The written data suggested that Turkish native speakers of L2 learners had more omission of definite and indefinite articles when compared to bilingual participant group. These results are consistent with Çabuk (2011). The written data confirmed the results of fill-in task in terms of superior effect of L2 on L3 more than L1. As, having an (+ART) native language in their linguistic background bilingual participants made less mistakes in terms of omission. Whereas, omission mistakes outweighed among overall mistakes. Participants showed a tendency to omit articles; it may be because of the tendency to avoid using the articles with the fear of making mistakes. On the other hand, both groups did not make any mistakes in overuse of indefinite article as it was discussed before, learners showed a tendency to omit articles rather than overusing.

When the overall inaccuracy percentages were analysed, the data revealed that Turkish L1 group outweighed with more mistakes in total ($\bar{x} = 25, 20; 19, 32$). As it was suggested in fill-in-article test results, bilinguals with both (-ART) and (+ART) linguistic background were more successful in terms of accuracy. In this study, Turkish monolinguals' frequent use of zero article might be explained by L1 transfer; however bilingual group might have omitted article as they overgeneralized indefiniteness or refrained from using article with a fear of making mistakes.

Discussion of Metalinguistic Awareness Results

The results regarding metalinguistic knowledge of learners indicated that learners mostly gave the correct reasons for generic norms. The reasons might be that the generic meaning of the sentence is clear to all participants and it is easy for them to name the sentence as generic so learners easily thought that general nouns should indicate indefiniteness and no need for article. Secondly, referential indefiniteness was explained by three (3) participants in both experiment groups, which meant that participants in both groups had the knowledge that indefinite article is used for referential and first-mention nouns. The system is the same in Kurmanji; however, Turkish participants are highly aware of this knowledge, as well. Nonreferential nouns and idioms were the most difficult ones for participants to answer. Learners must have looked for a different explanation from indefinite nouns for type 4, so they might have chosen not to give an explanation. Type 5 idioms are even difficult to explain in our native language and mostly they are out of rule so learners made explanations based on feelings or they did not give any explanations.

7. Implementations

Pedagogically, both (-ART) L2 and (-ART/+ART) L3 EFL learners can acquire articles while the process is easier for L3 EFL learners with an article system in their language background. On that point, learners should be encouraged to acquire more languages and it was confirmed that L2 with a similar language system had a positive effect on L3 acquisition. The study can also contribute to learners and instructors as it provided data for common mistakes in categories with interpretation and possible reasons. Based on

collected data, the instructors might focus on overgeneralization and omission inaccuracy while studying articles. Additionally, learners' explanations on their choice of articles provided data to instructors in terms of learners' way of thinking that may help to determine problems and identify confused parts to provide efficient explanations to learners.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to see the discrepancies between Turkish monolinguals and Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals EFL learner's article acquisition in English as Turkish is (-ART) and Kurdish is a (+ART) language likewise English. Also, the study examined learners' metalinguistic knowledge on their choice of articles. The results have confirmed; 1) Turkish monolinguals and Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals differed in their article use in both fill-in article task and written data significantly 2) Turkish/ Kurdish bilinguals outperformed Turkish monolinguals in terms of accuracy in both fill-in task article and written data 3) Learner's metalinguistic knowledge on their choice of article did not differ from each other significantly and it revealed that they are aware of the rules for generic nouns, referential and first-mention nouns more than other rules regarding article choice.

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APPENDIX 1. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect biographical data from participants for the study to examine variances in the use of article. All information will be kept strictly confidential. I would be grateful if you could give sincere responses for all questions.

Thank you for your contribution in advance

Buket Demirbüken,

Marmara University, İstanbul

MA. Student

1. Please write down

Age :

.....

Your native language(s)

.....

Other languages you speak

.....

(If you speak Kurdish)Dialect

.....

Number of years you have studied English

.....

2. If you speak any other language, at what proficiency level are you in this language?

3. If you speak Kurdish, how and where did you learn it ?

4. At what age did you start speaking Kurdish?

5. How did you learn English (at school, or/ abroad) ?

APPENDIX 2. FILL-IN GAPS TEST INSTRUMENT

The aim of this study is to examine the variances between Turkish and Kurdish L1 speakers of English learners' acquisition of English articles depending on different tasks & metalinguistic knowledge. Thank you for your participation.

Test Instrument

Section I.

Write appropriate articles *the, a/ an or 0 (zero article)*. Explain the reason why you chose *the, a / an or 0 zero article* for the ones with asterisk (*)

1. Fred bought ___car on Monday. On Wednesday, he crashed ___car.
2. What is ___sex of your baby? It's ___boy!
3. ___Language is___ great invention of___ humankind.
4. There are ___nine planets travelling around ___sun.
5. In ___1960s, there were lots of protests against ___Vietnam War.
6. ___Cat likes___ mice.
7. I am going to buy ___new bicycle.
8. He has been thrown out of_____ work, and his family is now living ___hand to ___mouth.

9. We rented ___boat last summer at the lake. Unfortunately, ___boat hit another boat and sank.
10. I keep sending ___messages to him.
11. I like to read ___books about___ philosophy.
12. ___Love and___ hate are ___two extremes.
13. Your claim flies in___ face of all___ evidence.
14. ___Tiger is___ fierce animal.
15. My computer has ___ new sound card.
16. I don't have ___car.
17. ___French are against ___war in Iraq.
18. Last month, we went to___ wedding. ___Bride was beautiful.
19. I look after ___ little girl and little boy on Saturdays.
20. ___Horse I bet on is still in ___front .
21. Washington says that Saddam Hussein is playing another game of ___cat and ___mouse.
22. Jane bought ___ ring and necklace for her mother's birthday. Her mother loved ___ring but hated ___necklace.
23. Steve's wedding is in___ two weeks and he is getting___ cold feet.
24. There is___ orange in that bowl.
25. This room has ___ length of 12 meters.
26. Sally Ride was ___ first American woman in space.
27. Writing___ letters is___ pain in ___neck for me.
28. I would like___ cup of coffee, please.
29. ___Paper clip comes in handy.
30. Is it true that___ owl cannot see well in___ daylight?
31. I ordered ___ bottle of wine for us.
32. ___Telephone is very___ useful invention.
33. We do not know who invented ___wheel.
34. I'm in mood to eat___ hamburger.
35. He is as poor as___ mouse.
36. Do you have ___pen?
37. I saw___ man in car across___ street.

Section II.

Some articles in the sentences below are grammatically incorrect. Put a tick for the correct ones and a cross for incorrect ones and explain the reason why it is correct or / incorrect.

1. The Favourite food of a jaguar is wild pig.
Reason:
2. The book was tiring and a waste of time.
Reason:
3. I saw the strange man standing at the gate.
Reason:
4. All of sudden, he woke up from his coma.
Reason:
5. She bought a new house by the sea.
Reason:
6. A Shade on this lamp is really ugly.
Reason:
7. He used to be lawyer.
Reason: