TESTING THE INTERFACE HYPOTHESIS: L2 ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH
SUBJECTS AND ARTICLES BY TURKISH LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims to expand the testing grounds of the Interface Hypothesis (IH) by investigating the acquisition of English subjects operating with pure syntax and article uses of (in)definiteness and genericity in English governed with external and internal interfaces respectively by L1-Turkish learners. Fifty-eight sophomore students who have been studying in the Department of Foreign Language Education of a state university in central Turkey were asked to complete a Grammaticality Judgement, a Discourse Completion and a Forced-Choice Elicitation Task subsequently. By doing so, the aim was to understand whether proficient Turkish learners of English interpret and use subjects and articles accurately in English and whether the IH can account for the results. To this end, upon analyzing the data, the relationship between the participants' performances were discussed in relation to the IH. The findings highlighted that narrow syntactic properties are acquired with the least difficulty. The properties at an interface domain, on the other hand, present more difficulty regardless of the type of the interface. Additionally, the IH was found partially accountable for the participants' performances. It could explain

why the participants have done significantly better in subject realization than the articles, whereas it could not account for the lack of statistically significant difference between the (in)definite and generic uses of articles. To build upon the present study, adding tasks measuring language processing might be of great value to gain a better understanding into the reason why more errors are committed when interface structures are involved.

ÖZ

ARAYÜZ HİPOTEZİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: ANADİLİ TÜRKÇE OLAN İNGİLİZCE KONUŞUCULARININ ÖZNE VE TANIM EDATI EDİNİMİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı yabancı dili İngilizce olan Türk öğrencilerin İngilizcede salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre kullanılan özne ve sırasıyla dış ve iç arayüz kurallarına göre kullanılan belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve kapsamlı tanım edatı edinimini araştırmaktır. Çalışmanın temel amacı ise bulguları Arayüz Hipotezi (AH) çerçevesinde açıklayarak bu hipotezin test alanını genişletmektir. Veriler Türkiye'nin merkezindeki bir devlet üniversitesinin Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümünde ikinci sınıf olan 58 öğrenciden toplanmıştır. İkinci dil konuşucularının bu iki yapıyı edinimini ölçmek amacıyla sırasıyla Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi, Söylem Tamamlama Testi ve Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testi kullanılmıştır. Özne kullanımına yönelik bulgular Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi ve Söylem Tamamlama Testinden, belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve kapsamlı tanım edatı kullanımı ile ilgili bulgular ise aynı Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi ve bunun yanı sıra Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testinden elde edilmiştir. Veri analizi yapıldıktan sonra ortaya çıkan sonuçların AH ile açıklanıp açıklanamayacağı tartışılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları katılımcıların özne kullanımını çoğunlukla doğru bir şekilde edindiğini göstermesine rağmen, iki farklı

arayüz alanında kullanılan edat yapılarında katılımcılar aynı performansı gösterememiş ve iki tip edat kullanımında benzer oranda zorluk çektikleri anlaşılmıştır. AH çıkan sonuçların kısmi bir bölümünü açıklayabilmektedir. Salt sözdizimi ile oluşturulan bir yapının arayüz alanında kullanılan yapılara göre daha kolay edinilebilmesi AH'ye atfedilebilmektedir. İç ve dış arayüz kurallarına göre yapısallaştırılan edat tipleri arasında önemli bir performans farklılığı çıkmaması sonucu ise AH ile açıklanamamıştır. Arayüz yapılarında neden daha hatalı kullanımlar olduğunun daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi için ileriki çalışmalarda dil işleme ölçümü yapan deneyler yapılması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Salt Sözdizimi, İç Arayüz, Dış Arayüz

To a string of people who have inspired me

to look ahead

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3pl	Third Person Plural
1sg	First Person Singular
2sg	Second Person Singular
3sg	Third Person Singular
ABL	Ablative Case
ACC	Accusative Case
ACP	Article Choice Parameter
ANOVA	Analysis of Varience
AOR	Aorist
DAT	Dative Case
DCT	Discourse Completion Task
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FCET	Forced Choice Elicitation Task
FUT	Future Tense
GJT	Grammaticality Judgement Task
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IH	Interface Hypothesis
INF	Infinitive
IPFV	Imperfective Aspect
L1	Native Language
L2	Second Language
LOC	Locative Case
M	Mean
NEG	Negation
NNS	Non-native Speaker

NP	Noun Phrase
PAST	Past Tense
PFV	Perfective Aspect
PL	Plural
PMT	Picture Matching Task
Q	Question
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TP	Tense Phrase
UG	Universal Grammar

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of three major sections. In the first section, background to the study is provided. It includes background information regarding the framework of the study, which is the Interface Hypothesis (IH), and the link between the domains investigated in the present study and the hypothesis. In the second section, the significance of the present study is discussed by referring to the missing aspects in this area superficially. The final section includes the research questions with the statistical hypotheses and predictions made based on the hypothesis under investigation in this thesis.

1.1 Background to the Study

Due to the prevalence of second language learning and/or bilingualism, research is worth being conducted in this field to shed light on the foundations of language learning. However, this process is not error-free or without challenges. Therefore, plausible difficulties and errors made as a result of these difficulties should be seen as evidence of learners' development in the target language but not as an unwanted problem to be eradicated. If we want to perceive L2 learners as unique speaker-hearers (Grosjean, 1985), we should not consider them as imperfect language producers. To put it in other words, language learners cannot avoid making errors, so the analysis of the possible deviations from monolingual norms must be one of the central aspects in language acquisition studies to pave the way to appropriate and feasible remedies.

When we consider adult second language learners, their ultimate L2 attainment comes with some limitations. It is a valid consideration not only for adults' language acquisition but also for sequential bilingual children, who start to attain the second language after the

age of three (Meisel, 2011, p. 2). Bilingual children who are learning two languages simultaneously, on the other hand, could differentiate the two separate systems of the languages that they are exposed to even from the very early on. This means the later a person starts to learn another language, the more burdens they might have while differentiating between the two different systems of their first and second languages.

The contact between the languages can enable important insights about the emergence of default interlanguage whose linguistic features may exist in neither of the languages in contact. However, it is not possible to attribute the non-target-like language norms to coincidence, but they all have a source. In this sense, coexistence of multiple layers of information while learning a language has been found as an important factor for having difficulties by many people conducting studies in second language acquisition (SLA). Aiming at formulating what it means to be L2 learner/bilingual, the focus of research in this field must be to search for the sources of difficulty of L2 learners while building their interlanguage. Difficulties encountered in the target language will be more apparent when different domains of a second language come into play, which is called interface between the two modules of a language.

According to this prominent interface phenomenon, when a language domain, such as syntax interacts with an external factor like discourse-pragmatics, it may cause an incomplete acquisition or fossilized mistakes (Sorace & Filiaci, 2006). As a result of the interaction between a language structure and context may also lead to cross-linguistic influence in a bilingual context (Hulk & Mueller, 2000). In other words, when a second language learner has to learn the rule of a structure and also its (in)appropriateness under a certain context, then the learner may need to transfer from the mother tongue. Consequently, structures interacting with interface domains are likely to deviate from the monolingual norms. The reason for such a deviation at external interfaces was also attributed to different processing strategies monolinguals and bilinguals used (Sorace, 2011). To further clarify it, bilinguals are expected to have more processing difficulties while mapping the discursive information on syntax compared to monolinguals.

SLA research has focused on the interface between the syntax, the descriptive modules of grammar, and pragmatics, morphology or semantics. Of all the interfaces, however, the vulnerability to deficient L2 acquisition has been particularly analyzed as the result of the syntax being interacted with the discourse. In other words, acquiring the core syntax is more likely to be problem-free (Sorace, 2005; Sorace and Filiaci, 2006; Belletti, Bennati and Sorace, 2007), while its interaction with the context is more prone to inconsistencies between learners and more problems in their ultimate attainment.

While the IH initially claimed that interface syntax leads to more difficulty than narrow syntactic requirements, its later accounts focused on different challenge levels posed by interfaces between modules of grammar, such as syntax, semantics and phonology, and interaction between language sub-domains and grammar-external factors, such as pragmatics and discourse. Within this refined accounts, interaction of syntax with grammar-external domains (external interface) was believed to be more problematic than interaction between any two modules of grammar (internal interface) (Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006; Sorace, 2011). However, this thriving version of the hypothesis has been criticized by some scholars, such as White (2009b) and Montrul (2011) saying that all external interfaces are not equally problematic for L2 users and/or not all structures represented at internal interfaces are equally unproblematic. It further suggests that linguistic phenomena represented at the same external or internal interface might not behave in identical ways in learners' default interlanguage.

The studies conducted to validate or reject the IH so far have inconsistent results. Several studies proved that with the inclusion of external interface, the language performance of L2 users from different L1 backgrounds deviated from monolingual norms, lending support to the IH. (e.g. Tsimpli and Sorace, 2006; Iverson et al., 2008; Slabakova et al., 2012; Massery & Fuentes, 2014; Antonova-Ünlü, 2015). Some other researchers, on the other hand, argued that L2 users with different L1 backgrounds could acquire external interfaces like monolinguals and/or they could have certain difficulties at internal interfaces, both of which reject the newest accounts of the IH (e.g. Ivanov, 2012; Park,

2013; Özçelik, 2018). This thesis is to contribute to this debate on the vulnerability accounts of the IH. With the purpose of confirming or rejecting the IH, it was essential to investigate the ultimate L2 attainments of L2 English users at both external and internal domains and at pure syntax. Thus, we focused on the acquisition of articles with (in)definite and generic interpretations and the acquisition of subject realization by the proficient L1 Turkish speakers of English. To this end, we aimed to compare their use of (in)definite article and generic articles, which are governed with external (syntax-discourse) and internal (syntax-semantics) interfaces respectively. In addition, we aimed to compare the use of (in)definite articles at external interface and the use of subjects governed with pure syntax. The reasons why these three domains are reasonable to be examined for the purpose of this study are further explained in the rest of the section.

Different linguistic phenomena which have different realizations in the first and the second languages of learners have been predominantly investigated. Among those studies in relation to the IH, there has been a tendency to focus on the production and interpretation of subject realization in the acquisition of L2 which has the value of the pro-drop parameter (Belletti, Bennatti, & Sorace, 2007). The cross-linguistic effects at the interface have been found in the previous studies reporting the overuse of overt subject pronouns, which is the overlapping surface structure of the languages in contact, in various pro-drop languages acquired with a non-pro-drop language; mostly English. Regarding this, numerous studies have been conducted on children's language acquisition (e.g. Paradis & Navarro, 2003 for Spanish; Serratrice, 2007, and Serratrice et al., 2004 for Italian; Hacohen & Schaeffer, 2007 for Hebrew; Argyri & Sorace, 2007 for Greek; Haznedar, 2010 for Turkish). Besides children's language acquisition, adult learners have also been investigated in different bilingual domains. Similar to children, adult language learners have also been found to overuse overt subject in a target language with the pro-drop parametric value (e.g. Belletti, Bennati, & Sorace, 2007; Lozano, 2009; Pérez-Leroux & Glass, 1999; Rothman, 2009; Sorace & Filiaci, 2006; Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006).

However, it is rather difficult to find studies investigating the subject realization in a second language which does not have the positive value of the pro-drop parameter in relation to the IH. To fill this gap, one of the structures being investigated in this particular study is the use of subject in English, which is a non-pro-drop language, of Turkish speakers, whose native language is a pro-drop one. It is hypothesized that the lack of pro-drop value in English should be target-like as positioning the subject would be motivated by narrow syntactic requirements, while there may be continued non-target pro-drop signifying transfer. However, the former assumption is more likely to happen than the latter one from the framework of IH. This is because the learners are moving from a more complex structure where the syntax interfaces with the pragmatics domain to a language which is solely depending on the narrow syntactic computations, which makes it easier to perceive and produce.

In order to understand whether learners transfer their null-subject parametric values to a language with overt-subject parametric values, the most common languages studied are Japanese, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Turkish. However, among those, research conducted on Turkish learners of any overt-subject languages seems to be limited compared to the other languages given. This study aims to fill this gap, as well.

In order to give a solid discussion of the IH, we felt the requirement of including a language feature structured with the interaction of the syntax and another domain of the target language. Considering English being a syntactically controlled and rule-based language, it was hard to find such a language structure. In order to expand the discussion grounds of the IH, the article structure in English was also added to the study based on the assumption that the article system of English includes properties represented at both external and internal interfaces. (In)definiteness features are represented at external interface because the context actually leads us to use the definite or indefinite article accurately in English. To put it in other words, the activation of syntax-pragmatics interface is required while using the correct article. The genericity feature of the article system, on the other hand, is represented at syntax-semantics interaction, which is an

internal interface. Considering the lack of such an article system in Turkish, Turkish learners of English always have difficulty interpreting and producing the articles in English. Thus, it has been a focus in SLA domain for a long time. However, there seems to be no study conducted with those learners in their use of articles from the framework of the IH. In this regard, the English article system is an ideal domain in order to investigate the expected difficulties in relation to the IH. In other words, this study aims to provide meaningful data to demonstrate the plausible difficulties Turkish learners of English may face and whether the IH could be a valid explanation for these difficulties.

What is more, although the (in)definiteness feature has been widely studied in different language pairs, genericity feature in the English article system has been understudied (Ionin and Montrul, 2010) and this study also fills this gap in the literature. In this respect, results regarding the learners' performance on the generic use of articles in English will significantly contribute to the field of SLA research. In addition, in the studies investigating the acquisition of English generic articles there are different discussion points. For example, one of the far-reaching studies conducted by Ionin et al. (2011) investigated whether two different types of genericity, which are NP-level and sentence-level generics, can be distinguished by Korean learners of English by using UG accessibility hypothesis. The current study, on the other hand, aims to examine the acquisition of multifaceted aspects of articles in English in a broader way by including two features of the article system working with different mechanisms as well as examining the learner difficulties with a comprehensive hypothesis. This examination is aimed to be beyond the explanation regarding the absence of an article system in Turkish. This is because ongoing difficulties in the use of articles are observed even at advanced stages of language acquisition, which requires a more comprehensive explanation regarding the source of difficulties.

In the light of the explanations abovementioned, this study follows the IH framework while identifying the characteristics of competent Turkish learners of English by investigating the acquisition of two language domains, which are subject realization and

the article use. The subject realization depends on the constraints of pragmatics in Turkish while it is solely based on the narrow syntax in English. Showing (in)definiteness and genericity, on the other hand, is the case of the syntax-pragmatics and syntax-semantics interfaces respectively in both of the languages although Turkish does not have an article system like English. The properties of these structures are further discussed under theoretical background information. All in all, the aim of this study is to understand whether Turkish students of English can interpret and produce subjects in that clauses and articles in English accurately. Based on their performance, it will also be discussed whether the IH could explain the results.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The first significance of this study is that within the framework of the IH, research with L1 and or L2 Turkish learners have been understudied. There have been only three recent studies conducted in this context with an attempt to validate the IH. Antonova-Ünlü (2015) investigated the use of case markers in Turkish by highly proficient Turkish speakers of L1-Russian. Özçelik (2018) conducted a bidirectional study with L1-English speakers of Turkish and L1-Turkish speakers of English to test their performance on quantificational scope. In the former study, the findings could validate the IH, whereas the results in the latter one were found to be contrastive with it. In addition to these studies conducted with adult learners, another recent study, whose results were in line with the IH, was conducted with one Turkish-English bilingual and one Turkish-monolingual child to investigate their use of subjects (Haznedar, 2010).

Other than these, various studies have been carried out with learners from a diversity of L1 backgrounds and the findings have been discussed with different points of views regarding Universal Grammar (UG) and L2 input related hypotheses. The IH, on the other hand, is quite new compared to the other theories postulated on second language learning. However, since this hypothesis was posited, various language pairs have been

investigated, whereas the case in a Turkish context with Turkish NNSs of English needs to be further undertaken.

Another significance of this study is that in most of the studies investigating the validity of the IH only two domains were examined to be compared (e.g. pure-syntax vs. external interface or external interface vs. internal interface). However, with this study the ground of the IH is aimed to be expanded by including two language structures, one of which is syntax-governed and the other is involving two features based on syntax-pragmatics and syntax-semantics interaction in the second language of the participants. If the subjects show a higher difficulty in acquiring the (in)definiteness feature than the genericity of the article system in English, which are determined by pragmatic and semantic constraints besides syntax respectively, and if they show higher accuracy in subject realization, which is only syntax-governed in the target language, then this study will prove strong evidence for the IH.

More specific to the acquisition of articles, it has always been supported that Turkish learners of English have difficulty in it. It is interesting that although Turkish is a rather complex language whose structures always depend on context, Turkish-speaking learners make errors in English when interface comes into play and makes this structure puzzling. Thus, rather than discussing whether Turkish learners of English transfer from their L1 while acquiring the article system or not, a discussion regarding why they make errors in this particular structure is of great importance. In this respect, the IH is believed to be a valid framework in terms of explaining the reason accounting for this difficulty contrary to the easiness of subject acquisition in English.

Likewise, testing grounds of this hypothesis have been extended to a variety of linguistic properties determined by internal or external domains. The earlier research on the acquisition of articles by Turkish learners of English, on the other hand, has not been conducted in relation to the IH, despite the abundant research investigating the difficulty of article acquisition by those learners from different proficiency levels. Overall, previous

researchers have mostly conducted experimental research about the effects of interface in L2 acquisition in different linguistic structures (White, 2011) except for an article system. This study is also of great importance in terms of investigating one of the least studied structures in relation to the IH.

The IH has been mainly discussed in three different contexts, which are bilingual acquisition, second language acquisition and first language attrition contexts (Sorace & Filiaci, 2006). Although this hypothesis has been broadly examined including both low level and high level of learners, there is a further need to test the validity of this hypothesis with advanced or near-native speakers. This is because it is quite normal for lower level learners to have difficulties while learning target language structures working with or without interfaces. The IH could only be legitimate when it is investigated with learners at advanced stages because the difficulty in interface conditions are expected to be ongoing even at advanced stages. Therefore, the difficulty found at advanced stages can prove its usefulness in explaining the source of difficulty for second language learners. This study is able to give a legitimate discussion of the IH by involving competent Turkish learners of English.

Finally, as mentioned before, the learners are expected to have more difficulty in the interpretation and the choice of (in)definite articles in English considering the processing load of acquiring syntax interacting with grammar-external domains of the second language. If the findings are found in line with this prediction, it will provide an enduring importance for contributing to learner problems by proposing some suggestions regarding how to teach articles to adult learners of English. This study will help instructors who are adapting or developing their own teaching materials to predict the potential errors their learners might commit. Upon the identifications of the types of errors, they can employ diverse techniques to have a more effective instruction.

1.3 Research Questions and Predictions

In order to fill in the above-mentioned gaps in the literature, this study aims to respond the following questions;

1. a. Do proficient Turkish learners of English interpret and use subjects, which are governed by narrow syntax, accurately in English?

  b. If yes, does the Interface Hypothesis account for the result?

2. a. Do proficient Turkish learners of English interpret and use articles, which are bound to both syntax-pragmatics and syntax-semantics constraints, accurately in English?

  b. If yes, does the Interface Hypothesis account for the result?

In the light of the research questions, the following hypotheses were made:

H_0: There will be no significant mean difference between the performances of the participants on subject, (in)definite article and generic article uses.

H_1: There will be a significant mean difference between the performances of the participants on subject, (in)definite article and generic article uses.

To start with subject realization, the studies reporting non-target-like performance of bilinguals or language learners have found such a performance especially with the use of overt pronouns in the languages in which the use of subject is determined with pragmatic intentions. The deviation is even reported on the part of learners having a high level of proficiency in the target language. To put it in other words, they seem to overgeneralize overt pronouns even in discourse where it is required to use null subjects.

If the presence and the extent of deviations on subject realization are modulated by proficiency and interface, then target-like performance concerning this parametric property in English is expected. This is because the language learners in this study are proficient in English and the particular property is not modulated with the interface of

language domains but with narrow syntax in the target language. Therefore, it must be easy for the Turkish learners of English to perceive and use the rules regarding subject realization from the framework of IH.

This assumption is also based on the idea that if the difference between the mother tongue and the second languages is easily perceivable, then it makes the target language acquisition easier (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008, p. 11). The pragmatic conditions which determine having a null or overt subject in their L1 Turkish makes this language less rigid and more complex compared to English which always requires an overt subject regardless of the pragmatic conditions taking place. Considering the rigidity of the target language in the use of subjects, it must be easier for Turkish learners to acquire the overt subject rule in English and to keep in mind that they should always have an overt subject in their sentences as opposed to their mother tongue.

As opposed to the easiness of acquisition of subject realization in English, we expect to find difficulty of Turkish learners of English in the acquisition of (in)definite articles even if learners have a high proficiency in the target language. This has also been the common result in the studies conducted on the use of articles in English by Turkish learners so far. One of the reasons for this is the lack of article system in Turkish. To clarify, properties like word order or case marking determine (in)definiteness in Turkish, whereas articles (a/an/the) make a noun definite or indefinite in English. However, in both of the languages, definiteness is determined with the activation of the interaction between syntax and pragmatics. Following the IH, it can be conjectured that the interpretation and production of the discourse-based article system in English could be relatively challenging due to the involvement of a grammar-external domain. This means the complexity of the definiteness parameter will not decrease while shifting from the first language to the target language, which may result in transfer from the first language in the form of underproduction of articles considering the nonexistence of articles in their mother tongue.

As for the generic use of articles, the extent of easiness must be similar to the one in subject realization, but at a higher extent than the (in)definiteness feature of the article system. According to the accounts of the IH, internal interfaces like genericity are easily acquired like core-syntax. As Sorace and Serratrice (2009) proposed, not all interfaces lead to the same level of difficulty for competent second language learners. Grammar structures in the external interface conditions are expected to create a greater difficulty for learners than the structures involving an internal interface. Considering the assumption that the syntax-semantics interaction determines the generic meaning in English, this must be less problematic for the learners than acquiring the (in)definiteness feature governed at an external interface, that is, the interaction between syntax and pragmatics. In this regard, the level of difficulty is expected to be higher in the acquisition of discourse-based articles and less in the acquisition of generic articles similar to the acquisition of subject realization depending on what the IH predicts.

Another solid basis of the assumption relevant to the instability of articles' acquisition in English lies in the fact that learners have a tendency to transfer when their first language offers a more economical setting compared to the target language. As Sorace (2011) put it, this may cause the underspecification of the interpretable feature regarding the interface property, which is the use of articles in this particular study. Although both of the languages require the syntax to be interacted with the discourse or another sub-domain of the language, English seems to offer a less economical setting for Turkish learners considering the lack of article system in Turkish. What Turkish learners who are acquiring a language with an article system must learn is not only whether the target language allows articles but they also have to learn when and how the definiteness article, the indefiniteness article or the zero article are supposed to be used.

In contrast to this, in the case of subject expression, English offers a more economical setting by not allowing a subject to drop at all than Turkish, which requires an overt or null subject depending on the discourse. The former condition actually requires a less

processing account; accordingly, there is no need for English language learners to resort to their mother tongue to transfer.

All in all, based on what the IH predicts, it is assumed that Turkish learners of English may have difficulty in acquiring the article system, even more in acquiring the discourse-based features, whereas they can easily perceive and use the overt subjects in the target language. The investigations regarding the difficulty of these two structures are believed to gain solidity with the IH framework. The rationale behind explaining the relationship between the interface phenomenon and difficulty of structures is that differences between the mother tongue and the target language may not always lead to acquisition problems. It must actually be depending on whether the structure is solely syntax-governed or involving the other domains of the language.

CHAPTER 2

THEORATICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter consists of four main sections. The first section reflects the details of the framework of the current study with the earlier and later accounts of the interface phenomenon. The second section outlines the previous research on this hypothesis. In the third main section, the article system and subject realization in English are explained in relation to the IH and further syntactic background about the relevant structures is provided. The last two sections introduce the pioneering studies on the acquisition of the article system and the pro-drop parameter respectively.

2.1 Interface Hypothesis

The effects of linguistic interfaces in second language acquistion has recently been a research interest. According to the earlier accounts of the interface phenomenon, when a language domain such as syntax interacts with an external factor like discourse-pragmatics, it may cause an incomplete acquisition or fossilized mistakes and such difficulties in language acquisition may persist even among advanced learners (Sorace & Filiaci, 2006). In other words, the hypothesis initially claimed that narrow syntax alone is less problematic for second language learners than its interaction with other cognitive areas (Sorace, 2005; Sorace & Filiaci 2006).

SLA research has focused on the interface between syntax, the descriptive modules of grammar, and pragmatics, morphology or semantics so far. More recently, however, the hypothesis has been refined to claim different challenge levels between external and internal interfaces. It has lately been argued that not all interfaces are vulnerable equally and this vulnerability to incomplete acquisition holds true especially at external interface

structures in a target language (Tsimpli & Sorace 2006; Sorace 2011). With this newly thriving version of the hypothesis, it has also been argued that when the grammar of a language is in an interaction with another sub-domain such as semantics, it is more attainable than acquiring syntax-pragmatics interface.

Different challenge levels posed by these interfaces are based on the evidence given through some studies in the literature proposing the distinction between syntax-semantics interface counted as internal interface and the syntax-pragmatics interface defined as external interface. Tsimpli and Sorace (2006), for example, proposed three different features which are in favor of the differences between these two types of interfaces. Firstly, deviating from syntax-semantics interface poses ungrammaticality, whereas the one from syntax-pragmatics may result in inappropriateness despite its being grammatical. Secondly, to comprehend and produce a structure under the constraints of a context may require a more processing load in comparison to the one with internal interface. Finally, and most probably in relation to the second point, internal interface makes the second language more attainable while structures in the external interface conditions are less likely to be completely acquired (Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006). On the other hand, there are also some who have criticized this suggesting that not only external interfaces but also internal interfaces could be problematic in L2 end-states. White (2009b), for example, challenges the IH by questioning whether all different structures represented at the same interface would be equally problematic for L2 learners. It has also been questioned if structures represented at external interfaces were vulnerable to incomplete acquisition, whether the ones with internal interfaces would necessarily be unproblematic. This has intrigued her to think whether this hypothesis is too broad to explain such unanswered questions (White, 2009b).

The basis of why external interface is more perplexing to gain than internal interface has been a seldom-voiced point. However, it is essential to give the foundations which an approach is based on in order for it to be valid and supported. Then it would be possible to understand precisely how this approach works and how it affects SLA. In the case of

the IH, there could be different factors affecting the source of its vulnerability in SLA. Sorace (2011) has explored two prominent factors contributing to the acquisition of the interface phenomena in a second language, which are cross-linguistic influence and processing factors.

A further assumption that has usually accounted for the IH is the continued transfer from L1 even at advanced stages when a second language structure is at an interface with an external domain of the second language. As Sorace (2011) puts it, one grammatical system affects the other in bilingual contexts according to the representational accounts. Even if second language learners can master at core syntax level, transfer from the first language may continue at syntax-discourse interface. This, in the end, leads to more variability in terms of comprehension and production in the ultimate L2 attainment even at the advanced stages compared to the monolinguals of that particular language.

According to Mueller and Hulk (2001), two conditions need to be met for cross-linguistic influence to happen. Firstly, there must be an interaction between syntax and discourse as discussed above. Secondly, the first and the second language must have an overlap at the surface structure. This cross-linguistic influence will give rise to delay in the acquisition of the structure being learned (Mueller & Hulk, 2001). This account has been proven in competent L2 adults by Sorace (2011) providing evidence for syntax-pragmatics interface to be vulnerable to incomplete acquisition. The cause of this vulnerability, on the other hand, has been explained differently by Hulk and Mueller (2000) and Sorace (2011). While Hulk and Mueller (2000) attribute the vulnerability to the level of knowledge regarding the L2 structure, Sorace (2011) suggested that the interface had caused a processing constraint while comprehending and producing interface structures.

As for the processing resources accounts, it is not enough for learners to acquire syntactic and discourse knowledge; it also requires them to gain the ability to coordinate these two, which makes language processing too demanding for learners (Sorace & Filiaci, 2006). Attributing the interface vulnerability to only cross-linguistic influence is not enough. The

integration of different sources of information, rather than the combination of the particular languages, is the underlying cause of the difficulty in language learning (Sorace, 2011). However, the course of the current study does not allow us to have a conclusive discussion regarding these two factors, so no in-depth analysis regarding cross-linguistic influence and processing factors is shown throughout the paper.

2.2 Earlier Research on the Interface Hypothesis

There are a myriad of studies addressing interfaces in SLA with learners from different L1 backgrounds, especially in proficient learner context in order to examine their end-state grammar influenced from an interface condition. However, the research in this field revealed inconsistent results. Some of these studies were in line with the hypothesis accounts (e.g. Tsimpli and Sorace, 2006; Iverson et al., 2008; Slabakova et al., 2012; Massery & Fuentes, 2014; Antonova-Ünlü, 2015), whereas some others could not prove strong evidence for the IH (e.g. Ivanov, 2012; Park, 2013; Özçelik, 2018).

One of the initial studies was conducted by Tsimpli and Sorace (2006) who aimed to examine the IH by comparing the use of overt subjects associated with syntax-discourse phenomena and focusing represented at syntax-semantics interface in L2 Greek. The data were collected from advanced L1 Russian speakers of Greek through 10-20 minute-long oral production. The findings regarding both interfaces could not be attributed to developmental patterns. It was yielded that focusing was used target-like, whereas the syntax-pragmatics interface was found to be vulnerable to incomplete acquisition due to the overuse of subjects by all the groups, which could be attributed to the IH.

Another study in line with the IH claims was done by Iverson et al. (2008) with the investigation of the acquisition of two classes of subjunctive complement clauses in L2 Spanish governed with pure syntax and external interface. These classes consist of subjunctive complements of volitional predicates associated with narrow syntactic requirements and subjunctive vs. indicative complements with negated epistemic matrix predicates, where syntax intersects with discourse. The latter case was found to be more

difficult, whereas the former case turned out to be problem-free for L2 Spanish learners. Thus, the researchers found supportive findings for what the IH predicts.

In a more recent study, Slabakova et al. (2012) tested the IH by teasing apart the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic knowledge of L1 English speakers in clitics of L2 Spanish. To achieve this aim, there was a focus on their syntactic knowledge of clitics, semantic knowledge regarding the relationship between the discourse anaphor and the antecedent in clitic left dislocation, and discursive knowledge of clitic left dislocation and fronted focus. All the learners were found to be sensitive to the semantic constraints in their L2. As for the discursive knowledge, the higher the proficiency was, the more knowledge the participants could display. In this regard, the overall findings appeared to be both providing evidence for the IH and challenging it.

More recently, Massery and Fuentes (2014) further contributed to this line of research by investigating L2 acquisition at syntax-discourse interface. In order to test the plausible vulnerability to such an interface, the participants' use of deontic modality (indicative mood) at narrow syntactic requirements and epistemic modality (subjunctive mood) which requires both structural and discursive knowledge was analyzed. The results were in line with the IH in the sense that the learners even at advanced stages of acquisition performed poorly in epistemic environments, whereas they performed better in syntax-driven deontic modality.

In one of the latest studies supporting the IH, Antonova-Ünlü (2015) investigated the use of case markers by highly proficient L1 Russian speakers of Turkish residing in Turkey for a long time. The case system in Turkish provides a multiple-interface phenomenon (morpho-syntax, semantics and discourse). Through the fictional narratives used as the data collection tool, the uses of case markers associated with external interface and the ones that do not involve external interface were analyzed. The findings revealed a piece of evidence in favor of the IH in the sense that the target-like use of case markers not

involving external interface was displayed, whereas the use of case markers of direct objects governed with external interface was found to be problematic.

Some other studies, on the other hand, reported a target-like acquisition of external interface challenging what the IH claims. Ivanov's (2012) study is one such study, which examined clitic doubling in L2 Bulgarian. A pragmatic felicity task was administered in order to see how much advanced and intermediate L1-English learners could acquire the pragmatic constraints of clitic doubling in L2 Bulgarian. Although the intermediate learners could not display a target-like performance in opting for the felicitous and the infelicitous ones correctly, the advanced learners of Bulgarian could exhibit a successful manner in the pragmatic meaning of clitic doubling. This result demonstrated that syntax-discourse intersections do not have to pose challenges for learners in their ultimate L2 attainment, which is the opposite of what the IH accounts claim.

Another recent study challenging the IH was conducted by Park (2013) to see the role of interfaces in the acquisition of articles on Korean learners of English at advanced level. In order to examine the IH, the researcher included both genericity and (in)definiteness features of the English article system through a GJT in which the participants were expected to judge the grammaticality of the second sentences based on the first sentences. The results of this study were not in line with that particular hypothesis because of the relative difficulties that the participants had while using the generic articles (syntax-semantics interface) in the task. On the other hand, they performed quite well while using the discourse-based articles (syntax-discourse interface) suggesting that the learners were more familiar with the uses of articles in (in)definite contexts than the generic use. To this end, the researcher claimed that the involvement of the knowledge on discourse does not necessarily pose a greater difficulty in processing it than a structure involving internal interface. Thus, it is not the IH that could explain the learners' non target-like performance, but actually, the subtle semantic differences on the choice of articles are the locus of difficulty for Korean adult learners of English.

To the best of our knowledge, the latest research which did not prove evidence in favor of the IH was conducted by Özçelik (2018). In his bidirectional study with Turkish-speaking learners of English and English-speaking learners of Turkish, the aim was to involve the quantificational scope construction represented at both internal and external interfaces. The findings yielded that Turkish-speaking learners of English did not have difficulty in the interface of syntax and pragmatics and the one of semantics and pragmatics. This showed that external interfaces do not have equally persistent difficulties for learners. Another piece of evidence rejecting the account of the IH derived from the problem that English-speaking learners of Turkish had while using semantics-syntax interface. This result, contra the IH, showed that not all internal interfaces are equally unproblematic.

The above-mentioned studies showed inconsistent results. While some researchers reported difficulties in external interfaces and/or easiness in internal interfaces, others reported contrastive results to the claims of the IH in the sense that target-like L2 end-state is possible at external interfaces and/or not all the internal interfaces are equally unproblematic even among advanced learners. Secondly, some of the studies attributed the results to the developmental patterns, while some others failed to record any developmental pattern in the acquisition of external interfaces. Considering the contradicting results in this field of research, we see the need to contribute to this line of research by expanding the testing ground of the IH. In an attempt to validate or reject the IH, the investigation of one structure at external interface, one at internal interface and a purely syntactic one were necessary.

2.3 Article System and Subject Realization in Relation to the Interface Hypothesis

The (in)definite use of articles is regarded as external interface concerning domains which are external to the computational modules of a linguistic system. In other words, when there is no presupposition that a subject or an object exists, the indefiniteness article "a" precedes this noun phrase. However, when the existence of a certain entity is known by the hearer, the definite article "the" is used. The discussion on the use of definite or

indefinite article demonstrates that learners' discourse knowledge, which is external to linguistic systems, is involved in the employment of an accurate article.

Let us now explain why generic article use is assumed to be involving an internal interface concerning the interaction between the two sub-linguistics modules which are syntax and semantics. In order to prove the realization of this interface it is noteworthy to show evidence for both NP-level and sentence-level genericity.

(1) a. A dog barks. [generic reading]

   b. Dogs bark. [generic reading]

   c. Gold is expensive. [generic reading]

Adapted from Krifka et al. (1995)

The sentences above are showing the characteristic features of the preceding subjects. In all of them, genericity lies in the sentences themselves with the help of the characterizing predicates. Since genericity lies in the sentence itself, a range of NPs in the subject position are allowed in characterizing sentences. As a result, the semantics of sentences actually determines the preceding nouns and which syntactic configurations can be applied on these nouns. Specific to characterizing sentences, indefinite singular, bare plural and indefinite mass nouns are all allowed, which shows us the interaction between semantics and syntax, meaning an internal interface.

Evidence for genericity at internal interface can also be found at NP-level generics. Since genericity is tied to NPs rather than sentence structures, there are more restricted NP structures compared to characterizing sentences. The definite article, for example, is felicitous as long as noun phrases are well-established, while there is not such a semantic restriction in the use of bare plurals in NP-level generics (Park, 2013).

(2) a. The coke bottle has a narrow neck. [generic reading]

   b. Coke bottles have a narrow neck. [generic reading]

   c. The yellow bottle has a narrow neck. [specific reading]

   d. Yellow bottles have a narrow neck. [generic reading]

Park (2013)

As can be seen in the sentence (2a), the noun phrase preceded by the definite article "the" gives a generic reading since it is well-established as the bottle of coke, whereas the sentence (2c) provides a specific reading due to the lack of a well-established noun. With bare plurals, on the other hand, genericity is maintained even without a well-established noun as shown by the sentence (2d). Consequently, it can be argued that semantics of nouns have an effect on the use of the definite article "the", whereas they do not have an influence on the use of bare plural generic forms.

The final structure investigated in this study is subject realization in English governed with pure syntax. In other words, the use of overt subject in English is a syntactic requirement rather than a pragmatically determined one. In principle the subject position, which is the position of the specifier of TP, cannot be empty in English sentences regardless of discursive conditions.

2.3.1 (In)definiteness in English and Turkish

English has an article system in order to mark definiteness, whereas in Turkish it is indicated with different mechanisms such as word order, case marking, stress and tense-aspect-modality (Dede, 1986).

Definiteness in English is indicated with a separate morphological expression "the". It is clearly known that if there is a reference to a previously mentioned entity, then the definite

article "the" is necessarily used. However, when the feature of definiteness is not met, a noun phrase is preceded with the indefinite article "a".

(3) I met a girl at the party. I danced with the girl.

In the first mention of the noun "girl" the indefinite article "a" is assigned because the girl mentioned is ambiguous to the hearer at this point. After the first introduction of this noun phrase, in the second mention, the noun is accompanied with the definite article "the" since the knowledge of the referent has already been shared in the previous discourse with the hearer. As Irwin, Bock and Stanovich (1982) put it, the definite article indicates given or presupposed information, whereas the indefinite article shows new or asserted information. This shows us that pragmatically unique nouns are identifiable by the hearer and so the speaker's reference to such nouns is accompanied with the definite article (Trenkic, 2009, p. 117).

According to Liu and Gleason (2002), when the referent is located with the definite article "the", it shows that the referent is assumed to be culturally, situationally, structurally or textually known information. The following four categories of the non-generic use of "the" can be explored with some examples below.

Cultural use: If a noun phrase is a unique or well-known referent in a certain community, this means it is a definite noun for them, so it is used with the non-generic "the".

(4) "President of the United States lives in **the** White House" (Liu and Gleason, 2002, p. 24).

Situational use: If a noun phrase is already known and unambiguous to the interlocutors, then this noun phrase is preceded by the non-generic "the".

(5) We are going to **the** restaurant tonight. Are you coming with us?

Structural use: "the" is used in the first-mention of a noun phrase as long as it is modified later.

(6) **The** tools that we are using at school need to be checked.

Textual use: When a noun phrase is mentioned after it is introduced, then it is used with "the".

(7) I saw a girl in the park. **The** girl asked me to help her.

Although Turkish does not mark definiteness, indefiniteness is grammaticalized with the indefinite determiner "bir" corresponding to "a" in English (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005, p. 324). However, "bir" is interpreted in two ways in Turkish; in the meaning of numeral "one" and the indefinite article "a". The interpretation of it depends on its place in a sentence.

(8) Uzun bir adam oda-da   otur-uyor.

   Tall   *a*   man   room-LOC sit-IPFV.3sg.

(9) Bir   uzun adam oda-da   otur-uyor.

  One tall   man   room-LOC sit-IPFV.3sg.

As can be seen in the first example, when "bir" is positioned between an adjective and a noun, it is interpreted as the indefinite article "a". When it precedes the adjective, on the other hand, it gives the meaning of numeral "one".

Erguvanlı (1984, p. 18) further states that "bir" can be interpreted as the numeral "one" as long as it is stressed. Otherwise, "bir" is considered to be the indefinite article "a". For example:

(10) Bir adam oda-da   otur-uyor.

  A   man   room-LOC sit-IPFV.3sg.

(11) BİR   adam oda-da   otur-uyor.

   ONE man   room-LOC sit-IPFV.3sg.

Specific to definiteness in Turkish, there are different mechanisms to indicate definite noun phrases. According to Chesterman (2005, p. 3), if a language has no article system, then a variety of other sources such as word order, accusative case, stress and tense-aspect-modality govern definiteness. How these different mechanisms determine definiteness in Turkish is shown below.

Word Order: Word order is the first mechanism determining definiteness in Turkish, which has a flexible word order due to its rich variety of morphemes inflecting nouns. Depending on the position of a bare noun in a sentence, it may be either a definite or an indefinite noun.

(12) Adam   oda-da   otur-uyor.

   The man room-LOC sit-IPFV.3sg.

(13) Oda-da   adam otur-uyor.

    Room-LOC *a* man sit-IPFV.3sg.

As it is obvious from the example (12), if there is no overt indefinite article "bir" or other quantifiers indicating indefiniteness, a nominative noun phrase given in the subject position – at the beginning of a sentence – is marked as a definite noun (Erguvanlı, 1984, p. 18). However, the same noun "man" turns out to be an unknown man, that is, indefinite when preceding a verb immediately.

Case Marking: Another pragmatic factor marking definiteness in Turkish is the use of a direct object in accusative case -(y)I (Erguvanlı, 1984, p. 19; Göksel and Kerslake, 2005, p. 323). As Öztürk (2004, p. 17) further claims case marking is the quintessential

expression of definiteness in the absence of articles. In languages lacking an article system such as Turkish it is the case assignment that fulfills (in)definite article functions.

(14) Çocuk adam-ı   gör-müş.

    Child *the* man-ACC see-PFV.3sg.

(15) Çocuk adam gör-müş.

    Child *a* man see-PFV.3sg.

The noun "man" inflected with the accusative marker in the sentence (14) is known by the interlocutors, whereas without the accusative case in the sentence (15) the noun "man" has an indefinite interpretation. Overall, both nominative nouns in the subject position and the accusative-marked noun phrases in the object position express definiteness in Turkish.

Stress: Göksel and Kerslake (2005, p. 334) highlight the fact that if there is only a plural noun phrase and a verb in a sentence in which the sentence stress falls on the verb, this makes the noun phrase definite. On the contrary, without any stress on the verb but with a stress on the plural marker, the plural noun phrase has an indefinite reading. For example:

(16) Adam-LAR gel-di.

    Man-PL   come-PAST.3pl.

(17) Adam-lar   gel-Dİ.

    The Man-PL   come-PAST.3pl.

Tense-Aspect-Modality: Finally, tense-aspect-modality is one of the most significant indicators of whether a noun phrase has a definite or generic interpretation (Göksel and Kerslake, 2005, p. 336). It is asserted that an NP has a generalized reading if its verb is conjugated with the aorist morpheme -(A/I)r / -mAz. This is because this morpheme gives

the meaning of general truths. However, generic reading is excluded when its verb is inflected with the past tense marker -DI / -mIş or future tense marker -(y)AcAk (Erguvanlı, 1984, p. 28).

(18) Çocuk-lar   dışarda oyna-mak-tan   mutlu ol-du.

   The child-PL outside play-INF-ABL happy be-PAST.3pl.

(19) Çocuk-lar   dışarda oyna-mak-tan   mutlu ol-acak.

   The child-PL outside play-INF-ABL happy be-FUT.3pl.

(20) Çocuk-lar dışarda oyna-mak-tan   mutlu ol-ur.

   Child-PL outside play-INF-ABL happy be-AOR.3pl.

2.3.2 Genericity in English and Turkish

In English, generic reference to a noun phrase is achieved in four different ways, namely indefinite singular, definite singular, indefinite plural and indefinite mass nouns. They cannot be used interchangeably in all generic contexts because they have subtle semantic differences, which make them difficult to attain for learners of L2 English. Below NP-level and sentence-level genericity will be described in reference to these four types of noun phrases.

Indefinite singular generic (sentence-level): Generic interpretation of characterizing sentences is not derived from the subject NP, but from an operator at the sentence level. This feature makes characterizing sentences different from generic sentences at NP-level described below in reference to definite singular and bare plural noun phrases. With the example sentences below how indefinite singular NPs in the subject position have different forces is shown.

(21) a. A dog barks. [characterizing sentence]

b. A lion is dangerous. [characterizing sentence]

c. A dog is barking. [particular sentence]

d. A lion is in the room. [particular sentence]

Adapted from Krifka et al. (1995)

The sentences (21a) and (21b) are not referring to a specific dog and a specific lion respectively, but they show their attributes shared by all their types. More specifically, the sentence (21a) expresses what dogs do in general and the sentence (21b) describes how lions are in general. These show that characterizing sentences are postulated with a generic operator which generalizes individuals or events as discussed by Krifka et al. (1995, p. 43). In contrast, the subject noun phrases in the sentences (21c) and (21d) are understood existentially, thereby describing a particular situation. To sum up, although the two kinds of sentences include the same noun phrases in terms of having the same semantics of indefiniteness, they are different in that the indefiniteness feature is bound by genericity in the sentences (21a) and (21b), while existential assertions are done in the other sentences.

Definite singular generic (NP-level): A noun phrase accompanied with the definite article "the" denotes NP-level genericity as long as it is used with a kind predicate, such as "be extinct" (Krifka, Carlson and Pelletier, 1995, p. 78).

(22) The panda is protected by law in China. (Ionin, Montrul, Kim and Philippov, 2011)

As can be understood from the example sentence above, the noun phrase "the panda" is used to refer to the entire species of panda, thereby being characterized as a generic noun at NP-level. What makes it an NP-level generic is the kind predicate which is "be protected". This predicate cannot refer to a single panda or a sub-group of this species, but to the entire kind (Ionin, Montrul, Kim and Philippov, 2011). Therefore, a sentence in

which "panda" is accompanied with the indefinite article "a" would be infelicitous as can be seen below.

(23) *A panda is protected by law in China.

In the sentence (23), the noun phrase "a panda" does not capture the interpretation of the entire species, thereby being deemed as an ungrammatical sentence. Snape (2018) gives some more examples of kind predicates, such as "be cultivated", "be extinct", "be widespread" and "be common", all of which can provide a generic interpretation of a countable noun appearing with the definiteness article in the subject position of a sentence.

Indefinite plural generic (NP-level): The definite singular "the panda" shown in the sentence (22) as well as indefinite plural "pandas" can be unambiguously used as a kind-referring noun.

(24) a. Pandas are protected by law in China.

b. The pandas are protected by law in China.

The sentence (24a) does not indicate an interpretation about a specific panda, but states a generalization based on all the individual pandas in China. The sentence (24b), on the other hand, does not capture a generalization about pandas, but captures a sub-species reading. To put it another way, uniqueness is apparent in this sentence denoting contextually salient set of pandas in the discourse.

Indefinite mass nouns (sentence-level): Unless a noun is a countable one, genericity can only be achieved with a bare noun phrase. This means if an indefinite article precedes a mass noun, it results in ungrammaticality as can be seen in (25a) and if it is accompanied with the definite article, it results in a specific reading as can be seen in (25b). In its bare form, on the other hand, a mass noun is interpreted as a generic reference as shown by (25c) below.

(25) a. *A gold is expensive.

  b. The gold is expensive. [specific reading]

  c. Gold is expensive. [generic reading]

<div align="right">Adapted from Krifka et al. (1995)</div>

In Turkish, generic reference to a noun phrase is employed in three different ways, namely indefinite singular (bir-phrases), plural phrases and bare noun phrases. Just like in English, it is possible to employ a generic interpretation at both NP-level and sentence-level in Turkish. These two types of genericity in reference to singular and plural phrases will be described below.

NP-level Genericity in Turkish: Kind denoting genericity can be achieved with either singular noun phrases without selecting the indefinite article "bir" or plural noun phrases.

(26) a. Kuş uç-ar.   [generic reading]

    Bird fly-AOR.3sg.

  b. Kuş-lar uç-ar.   [generic reading]

    Bird-PL fly-AOR.3pl.

  c. Bir kuş uç-ar.   [specific reading]

    A   bird fly-AOR.3sg.

<div align="right">Adapted from Göksel & Kerslake, p. 380</div>

As can be seen in the sentence (26c), Turkish does not employ the indefinite article "bir" with kind-denoting noun phrases occurring at the NP-level. Only bare nouns can achieve a generic reference as can be seen in the sentences (26a) and (26b). In these sentences, the singular and plural noun phrases indicate a generic statement about individuals belonging

to the kind of birds denoted. The statement regarding their ability to fly is not attributed to a specific bird but it is true of birds in general.

However, the construction of singular or plural bare nouns can also represent another meaning besides a kind-denoting meaning. Depending on the nature of predicates used in sentences these constructions can represent an existential meaning.

(27) a. Kuş uç-uyor.   [specific reading]

    Bird fly-IPFV.3sg.

  b. Kuş-lar uç-uyor.   [specific reading]

    Bird-PL fly-IPFV.3pl.

In both of the sentences above bare nouns make an existential statement of one specific individual and more than one individual of the kind respectively. Although the intrinsic meaning and the structure of these sentences are the same as (26a) and (26b), the sentences (27a) and (27b) represent an existential reading, which is attributed to the nature of the predicate.

Sentence-level Genericity in Turkish: Different from NP-level generics, in sentence-level generics it is possible to use a noun phrase accompanied with the indefinite article "bir" corresponding to "a" in English. Besides indefinite singulars, bare singular nouns can also carry the feature of characterizing sentences. However, plural nouns are not selected in sentence-level genericity because it brings about ungrammaticality.

(28) a. Bir patates C vitamin-i   ve amino asit içer-ir.

     A potato C vitamin-ACC and amino acid contain-AOR.3sg.

  b. Patates C vitamin-i   ve amino asit içer-ir.

   Potato C vitamin-ACC and amino acid contain-AOR.3sg.

31

c. *Patatesler C vitamin-i   ve   amino asit içer-ir.

Potato-PL C vitamin-ACC and amino acid contain-AOR.3pl.

As can be seen in the sentence (28a) indefinite noun phrase is employed to give a generic reference. Even though it selects for the indefinite article, it does not refer to a single potato, but the meaning of potatoes as a whole is evoked. Besides this, Turkish also selects bare nouns to give the same meaning as can be seen in the sentence (28b). This shows us that bare nouns can be used in order to carry genericity both at NP-level and sentence-level. Plural nouns, on the other hand, are not felicitous at sentence-level generics as shown by the sentence (28c), whereas NP-level generic interpretation is allowed with plural nouns as discussed under the previous category.

2.3.3 Subject Realization in English and Turkish

In English, which is a non-pro-drop language, subjects have to be overtly mentioned regardless of pragmatic conditions. In other words, a phonologically empty subject makes a sentence ungrammatical as it is shown below.

(29) *Am a teacher.

The pro-drop parameter in a language emerges with a cluster of properties - null subjects, subject-verb inversion, absence of expletive pronouns and that-trace effect. Thus, non-pro-drop languages such as English do not allow these properties. Each of them is shown with one example below.

Null subjects: (30) *(We) love reading a book.

Subject-verb inversion: (31) *Came John to school.

32

Absence of expletive pronouns: (32) *(It) seems that he is happy.

That-trace effect: (33) *Sarah told that (she) is happy.

In Turkish, verbs obligatorily take agreement marker according to the subject of the sentence. This results in the redundancy of subject pronouns based on truth conditions. Zimmer (1976) also adds that this situation gives important communicative functions to overt and null subjects in pro-drop languages. While null subjects indicate the given information in the preceding context, overt subjects are employed when topic change is necessary. To clarify, just as an overt subject has the pragmatic function of introducing a new topic, a null subject indicates the continuation of an interaction.

Although using an overt subject could be redundant in some contexts based on the truth functional point of view, in some other certain contexts, it is necessary to use an overt subject. The assumption in this regard is that pro-drop languages depend heavily on discourse-pragmatic considerations while allowing the use of overt subjects (Enç, 1986). Some of these pragmatic conditions are contrast, emphasis, and old/given information. The example below requires the overt use of subject pronoun because of the contrastive function of it to the referent in the previous clause.

(34) Ev-i   Ahmet temizle-me-di,   ben temizle-di-m.

     House-ACC Ahmet clean-NEG-PAST.3sg., I   clean-PAST-1sg.

It would not be possible to show contrastive meaning without the overt pronominal subject which is stressed in the sentence (34). This is because the only indicator of person, which is the first person singular suffix "–m", is not enough to stress the contrast.

In addition to these pragmatic conditions, overt subject is necessary to change the topic being discussed. When people start to communicate, the topic of the conversation must be agreed on and familiar to interlocutors. While the dialogue is going on, if the intended referent can be recovered from the discourse, the speaker may leave out the subject

completely. When the topic of the conversation has been made clear to the interlocutors, the following sentences with omitted subjects comment on this. However, to change the topic, the pronoun that is obligatorily omitted in the previous context is needed overtly.

Paradis and Navarro (2003) identified another category of subjects, which is the low informativeness category (LOW INFO). To clarify, the subject does not serve any pragmatic function but it is used overtly. Such sentences could be grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate because of the redundancy of the subject. This is shown in the example below:

(35) A: Yarın   okul-a   gid-ecek mi-sin?

      Tomorrow school-DAT go-FUT Q-2sg?

   B: *Yarın   ben okul-a   gid-eceğ-im.

      Tomorrow I   school-DAT go-FUT-1sg.

2.4 Earlier Research on the Acquisition of Articles

Ionin et al. (2008) assert that it is hard to achieve a target-like acquisition of English articles especially for L2 learners whose L1 is article-less. Studies including L2 learners of English from different L1 backgrounds have commonly found out that learners make mistakes regarding articles in the form of misusing and/or overusing them. The common hypothesis inferred from these studies is that learners who have an article-less L1, such as Turkish, Korean, Persian and Japanese, omit the articles in English more than the ones whose languages possess an article system, such as Spanish and Italian.

According to Master (2002), there are three features of the article system, which make it hard to attain. Firstly, articles are the most frequently used function words in English; thus, it is difficult for English learners to sustain the accurate use of articles in their productions. Secondly, it is hard for learners to notice the articles as input since they are not stressed function words in conversations. The final feature making the articles hard to

acquire is the multiple functions they carry. Learners of English must put a great effort in order to decide on the correct article depending on the context. Considering Turkish does not have such an article system to convey definiteness, the challenge in relation to the acquisition of the articles gets tremendous. For Turkish learners of English, especially the definiteness article "the" is quite problematic because Turkish does not have a definiteness article despite having the indefiniteness article, which is "bir".

In the following part of the literature review, the most recently conducted studies on the two distinct properties of articles in English, which are the non-generic and generic uses, are given. Firstly, the studies in relation to in(definiteness) feature of article acquisition through the four non-generic features are summarized. Secondly, it is worthwhile to illustrate studies focusing on genericity feature since the current study is relevant to the comparison of learner difficulties in these two features of the article system in English in order to test the IH. In addition to these two distinct properties, studies focusing on the role of semantic notions, which are specificity and definiteness, in the article system of English are given a place. Although the distinction between these two semantic notions is not the focus of this study, they can still provide a discussion point regarding these notions' representation in the language use. In other words, possible fluctuation between the use of "the" and "a/an" could be a point to discuss in comparison to the current study. The studies carried out with Turkish learners of English were particularly chosen under the three sub-headings in order to discuss the results of the present study more conclusively.

2.4.1 Earlier Research on the Acquisition of the 4 Non-generic Articles

Upon Liu and Gleason's study (2002) with Chinese learners of English, some recent studies have been conducted with Turkish learners of English following their model and the data collection instrument. Liu and Gleason (2002) came to the conclusion that the more proficient the learners become, the more correctly they apply the definite article depending on the contexts; namely textual, structural, situational and cultural contexts.

They have also found out that there is a natural order of acquisition of the non-generic uses of "the"; the cultural context as being the most problematic one followed by textual, structural and situational contexts.

Depending on the model confirmed by Liu and Gleason (2002) about the four categories of the non-generic uses of the definite article, Dikilitaş and Altay (2011) conducted a study in order to investigate the order of acquisition of these four categories by Turkish speakers of English according to three proficiency levels. While doing so, the question was to what extent the proficiency level could affect the use of the definite article in the four non-generic categories. The researchers asked the participants to find out the missing definite articles and place them where necessary in 91 sentences including the distractors, which were developed as a questionnaire by Li and Gleason (2002). The results of the study partially supported the hypothesis regarding the natural acquisition order of the four non-generic articles posited by Liu and Gleason (2002). To clarify, in upper-intermediate and advanced learners' performance, the order of difficulty of non-generic definite articles was similar to the one found by Liu and Gleason (2002), whereas the difficulty hierarchy changed at the proficient level, which showed that this natural order could be true up to a certain level of proficiency or simply there is not such a natural order of accuracy of the non-generic definite articles. Besides the last group's deviation from the posited natural order, they did not show an extremely successful result in the use of definite articles indicating that there is no linearity in the progression of article use in accordance with the participants' proficiency level.

More recently, Koç (2015) conducted a study with intermediate and low-advanced level Turkish learners of English. This study investigated the participants' non-generic uses of "the" in their written productions in terms of the overuse of the definiteness article in null-article contexts and/or their omission in the obligatory contexts. The results revealed that the learners of both groups made omission errors more than they overused the definite article. This was analyzed as an interlingual error considering that Turkish does not have an article system. However, compared to the low-advanced group, the intermediate

learners omitted "the" more suggesting that the acquisition of the definite article is positively correlated with the increasing proficiency level. When the researcher analyzed the dependent variables – four non-generic uses of "the" – the significant difference between the two groups was found in only the structural and textual uses of the definite article. This means the intermediate learners omitted more in these categories than the low-advanced group. As for the overuse of the definite article, the intermediate learners overused the general use type of "the" significantly more than the more proficient group, whereas the low-advanced group overused the cultural definite article more than the intermediate learners suggesting that in the cultural category, the intermediate level learners used "the" more cautiously maybe because they were not developed enough in the language.

Another study about the four non-generic uses of the definite article by Turkish learners of English was conducted by Yıldırım (2015). To have a better understanding about whether non-generic uses of the definite article was a problem for prospective English teachers, the researcher used a GJT adapted from Liu and Gleason's (2002) data collection tool. In this task, the subjects were asked to find out the missing obligatory uses of the definite articles in the sentences given. The researcher investigated whether there was a difficulty order of the four non-generic uses of "the" and whether this order varied depending on the grades of the participants (freshmen and senior). The results showed that there was no significant difference between the advanced learners of English from different grades. However, overall it was found that the acquisition of the non-generic "the" was problematic for these learners regardless of the grade. Of all the non-generic uses of "the", the cultural use of it constituted the biggest problem for the participants, which corroborates with Liu and Gleason's result suggesting that in the natural acquisition order of the non-generic uses, the cultural context is the most difficult one to apply.

2.4.2 Earlier Research on the Acquisition of the Generic Articles

Although the article studies relevant to the generic representations have started to be studied quite recently, it is possible to find some prominent research conducted. One of these recent studies was carried out by Ionin, Montrul, and Crivos (2009) with both English learners of Spanish and Spanish learners of English. This bidirectional study aimed to investigate to what extent L2 Spanish and English learners could acquire the restrictions on generic references in their second language. The second question posed is in which direction of language learning recovery from L1 transfer is easier. As for the methodology of this particular study, people from various proficiency groups in both of the languages participated by doing two tasks, namely an Acceptability Judgement Task and a Truth-value Judgement Task. The results of these tasks showed that the interpretation of definite plurals is pervious to L1 transfer for both language groups. This means the lower level English learners of Spanish did not always accept generic interpretation of definite plurals although it is possible to denote kind-referencing with a definite article in Spanish as opposed to English. In addition, the Spanish learners of English who were at a lower proficiency level accepted the generic interpretation of definite plurals although it does not denote a generic but a specific reading in English. Regarding the second research question, recovery from L1 transfer was easier for the English learners of Spanish. To be more specific, even the lower level learners of Spanish performed quite well with regards to learning the generic reading of definite plurals in Spanish. However, it is only the higher proficiency group in English who could show a better performance with regards to accepting definite plurals with a specific reference but not as a generic one.

With similar aims to the previously mentioned study, Ionin and Montrul (2010) conducted research in order to investigate the role of L1 transfer in acquiring the article system in English operating at the syntax-semantics domain. Another similarity with the previous study was relevant to observing recovery from L1 transfer of the two groups of learners. It was carried out with learners of L1 Korean, which has no articles, and L1 Spanish with

articles. The aim was to compare acquisition behaviors of Korean and Spanish speakers of English particularly concerned with the interpretation of plural noun phrases. The learners participated in a Truth Value Judgement Task and an Acceptability Judgement Task. The findings yielded congruent results with the previous study in the sense that L1-induced transfer was apparent in the lower level learner context in both language pairs. Korean learners performed more accurately than Spanish learners while interpreting definite plurals. This is because Spanish speakers of English accepted definite plurals with generic reference suggesting that they were affected from their L1, which allows generic reading with definite plural noun phrases. Secondly, the L1-Spanish learners interpreted bare plurals with generic reading correctly more than the L1-Korean learners who sometimes interpreted them as specific noun phrases. It was possible for the researchers to attribute the behavior of the Korean learners to their first language considering in Korean specific notions can be denoted with bare plural noun phrases. As for the second research question, the performance of the advanced proficiency groups from both L1 languages proved evidence for recovery from the L1 transfer. More specifically, the advanced Korean learners of English performed target-like by accepting bare plurals with generic reading as opposed to their lower level counterparts. In addition, the advanced Spanish learners of English assigned specific reading to definite plurals only with a small number of incorrect instances.

In a more recent study, Ionin, Montrul, Kim, and Philippov (2011) included all the generic interpretation types - definite singulars, indefinite singulars and bare plurals. The aim was to see whether L2 English learners whose L1 (Russian & Korean) is article-less could differentiate the two types of generics - NP-level and sentence level generics, which are indicated with bare singulars in their native language. Another aim was to investigate the possible L1-induced effects. In order to test these, an Acceptability Judgement Task was done with both groups of learners. The results were actually congruent with the prediction of the researchers in the sense that among the three types of generic references in English, both L1 Russian and Korean speakers could distinguish the differences between NP-level

and sentence-level generics. More specifically, both groups showed a target-like performance in the interpretation of bare plurals at the NP-level and indefinite singulars at the sentence-level generics. Their performance on the definite singular noun phrases, on the other hand, demonstrated that they could acquire the interpretation of definite singular generic at NP-level incompletely. This is because both L1-groups assigned bare plurals with NP-level genericity at a considerably higher rate than definite singulars although both syntactic configurations can indicate NP-level genericity. Overall, these results showed that the learners could overcome L1-induced transfer and acquire how genericity in two types is encoded differently in their second language suggesting that the generic features are universal. However, the less success they achieved in definite singular generics showed that the success in genericity depends on particular semantic specifications to be learned.

In another quite recent study, Snape, Mayo, and Gürel (2013) examined whether learners of English from different L1 backgrounds (Spanish, Turkish, and Japanese) could recover from the effects of their first language and could make a correct distinction between different generic contexts that are achieved with (in)definite singular, indefinite plural and mass nouns in English. The researchers used a FCET in which the participants were asked to fill in the blanks with their choice of article or a null article. Their mistakes in the article selections suggested that the choice of articles is determined with how one's first language realizes genericity. In NP-level generics marked with definite singular noun phrases in English, Spanish learners performed better than the other two groups suggesting that the absence of the definiteness morpheme "the" in their L1s caused Turkish and Japanese learners to have difficulty. In contrast to the definite singular generic "the", Turkish learners chose the indefinite singular generic article "a" accurately. Their high accuracy with the indefinite article could be explained with positive L1 transfer since an indefinite article exists in Turkish, and it has similar functions to "a". In case of the bare plural noun phrases, the results of Spanish learners revealed some evidence of L1 transfer as the advanced level learners chose the definite article "the" incorrectly at the rate of almost

10%. Although definite plurals indicate genericity in Spanish, it has a specific reading in English. Thus, L1 transfer effects were expected to persist into performance even at advanced level. Finally, in the indefinite mass generics context, three groups were similar in terms of the rate of incorrect choice of the definite article for mass generic noun phrases, which are normally not marked with any article. Incorrect selection of the definite article for mass generics could be attributed to L1 transfer for Spanish learners considering the acceptability of definite mass generics in this language. As for the other two groups, their incorrect selections were predicted to be an artifact of the task or the result of difficulty in the differentiation between mass and countable noun phrases.

The most recent study including genericity was conducted by Snape (2018) with L1-Japanese learners of English. The aim of this study was to see whether Japanese learners of English could distinguish between the two functions of the definiteness article "the", namely definite unique and definite generic interpretations. Although Japanese is an article-less language, it was thought by the researcher that the two different meanings associated with the definiteness article "the" in English should be accessed by the learners if they have full access to these universal meanings. Two tasks, namely a Picture Matching Task (PMT) and a FCET, were done with the learners in order to compare their performance on these tasks testing both definite generic and definite unique interpretations. With this comparison, it was aimed to investigate whether the task type determines the performance of learners. While one group of participants were employed for the PMT, another group participated in the FCET since the same items were used in both of the tasks. The results of the PMT were in line with the researcher's prediction because their selection of the pictures was similar to the control group. However, this distinction remained more perplexing to the learners in the FCET. The difficulty of the learners arose in the definite generic context in which both proficiency groups selected an article incorrectly at the rate of 83 percent. However, the accuracy for selecting the definite article for definite unique contexts was higher across all the items and individuals. Based on these results, the researcher came to the conclusion that the learners were able to

differentiate between the two different interpretations, both of which are associated with the definiteness article when sentences were provided with pictures. The findings from the FCET, on the other hand, confirmed the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis of Lardiere (2009) regarding the plausible challenges L2 learners face while mapping features from their L1 to a new L2 morphology. In the case of this study, the difficulty lies in mapping the [+species] to the definiteness article in order to have a generic meaning. This comparison also confirmed that the task type definitely had a role in producing different outcomes regarding the choice of articles.

2.4.3 Earlier Research on the Acquisition of the Semantic Notions of Articles

Specificity and definiteness are the two semantic notions in an article system and both are represented as semantic universals. These two semantic universals are represented in all languages, but with different mechanisms. While these notions are assigned with the article system in English, in Turkish, where there is no article system, they are represented with case markers, word-order and stress. In the recent studies on the acquisition of the two semantic representation of the article system by L1 Turkish learners of English, the Fluctuation Hypothesis associated with the ACP (Ionin et al., 2004) was followed. According to this hypothesis, L2 learners have full access to UG principles and parameters; however, they fluctuate between the particular parameters until they reach a proficiency level. It is also suggested that until L2 learners set the appropriate parameter value, the errors they make are systematic rather than random (Ionin, 2003, p. 23). When this hypothesis is adapted to article choice of L2 English, it is predicted that L2 learners of English fluctuate between the two semantic representations of the ACP until they set the correct parameter.

Depending on the relevant predictions above-mentioned, one of the recent studies was conducted by Atay (2010) as the MA thesis. The aim of the study was to investigate whether L1 learners of English fluctuate between specificity and definiteness. She also aimed to see the potential effect of the proficiency level on the correct use of articles in

English. Learners from elementary, intermediate, and upper-intermediate level were employed for this study. To collect data, the participants were asked to complete a FCET in which they were supposed to fill in the gaps in 40 dialogues with an appropriate article. The results showed that the participants, especially the intermediate level learners overused "the" in indefinite but specific contexts and overused the indefinite article "a" in definite but non-specific contexts. This result suggested that L2 learners associate definiteness with specificity resulting in the fluctuation between the two semantic universals. However, the prediction regarding the development of the article use according to the proficiency has been partially confirmed. Contrary to the predictions, elementary learners used the articles more correctly than the intermediate level learners did. Nevertheless, the upper-intermediate learners performed quite well in assigning the target articles for different parametric values in almost all the defined contexts. This showed that the proficiency level might help learners in setting the ACP appropriately. Another striking result was that the learners did better at assigning the indefinite article "a" than the definite article "the". This was explained through positive transfer suggesting that the learners could transfer their L1 knowledge on their English and could show mastery in the use of the indefinite article in the right context.

Similar to Atay's (2010) study, Dağdeviren (2010) conducted a study in order to see the article choice of L1 Turkish speakers in L2 English and whether their acquisition of the article system varies depending on the proficiency level of the learners. In addition to two semantic features, namely specificity and definiteness investigated in Atay's MA thesis (2010), Dağdeviren (2010) also investigated the learners' article choice in partitivity. The participants in this study consisted of low-proficiency and high-proficiency Turkish learners of English. As the data collection instrument, a gap-fill test was administered with the participants. The task included six types of contexts in which the participants were asked to fill in the blanks with an appropriate article. As the result of the investigation, the researcher found out that the participants used the articles accurately to a higher extent than overusing them. This result also demonstrated that the learners did not associate the

definite article "the" with specific and the indefinite article "a" with non-specific contexts. This result was not in line with the predictions of the Fluctuation Hypothesis expecting learners' fluctuation between definiteness and specificity features. When it comes to the research question regarding the role of the proficiency level, it was revealed that proficiency level helped the learners in their acquisition of the article system considering that the high-proficiency learners had performed significantly better in three contexts.

One of the most recent studies with the aim of testing the Fluctuation Hypothesis (Ionin, et al., 2004) on Turkish-English bilingual context was conducted by Çimen (2013). In order to investigate how Turkish learners of English acquire the article-related parameters the researcher worked with high-proficiency level EFL freshman students. The researcher adapted the FCET and the written production task used in Ionin et al.'s (2004) study in order to examine the validity of their hypothesis. By comparing the data collected from these two different tasks, the researcher aimed to see whether the rate of errors made as well as their types in the two tasks differ. Their performance in the production task was found to be more successful than the one in the gap-fill task. The learners associated the definite article "the" with specificity and the indefinite article "a" with non-specificity at 42 percent in the FCET, whereas they did not misuse "a" at all and misused "the" at only 3.5 percent in the production task. This suggested that the rate of the (in)accurate use of articles may depend on the task type. As for the types of errors made, the participants' overuse of "the" and "a" was observed in the FCET, whereas they overused only the definite article "the" in their written productions, which suggested that the types of errors also vary depending on the task type. However, the various types of errors made in both the forced-choice elicitation and the production tasks were found to be random. Thus, there was no systematicity in the errors of high-proficiency EFL learners, which was not parallel to what the Fluctuation Hypothesis predicts.

As an interim summary, the researchers had owned the assumption that learners of English would have difficulty in acquiring the article system to indicate (in)definiteness, genericity and specificity. As can be seen from the recent studies summarized above, they commonly

reached the conclusion that L2 learners with an article-less L1 background have various difficulties in the choice of articles shown through different types of tasks. Their difficulties were discussed with various attributes, mainly through the effect of their first language and universality of these features. Another common characteristic of these studies is the potential effect of proficiency in the acquisition of the English article system and most of them revealed that as the proficiency of L2 English learners rises, they gain a better command over the choice and/or use of articles although there could be a persistent difficulty even among advanced learners.

2.5 Earlier Research on the Pro-Drop Parameter

A major issue in the field of SLA has been around the access of second language learners to the parameters of UG in the initial and beyond the initial states of language acquisition (Cook, 2003). Investigation of such issues is of crucial importance regarding to what extent they can reset the parameters, such as the pro-drop parameter, in their L1 while learning another language. From the empirical research conducted on the pro-drop parameter, two different views have been reached. The first one is learners of non-pro-drop languages like English and French reset their active pro-drop parametric value to their L2. The other view is on the retention of the pro-drop parameter in the beginning stages of L2 learning, but turning it to be off as learners progress in the language.

One of the studies on the pro-drop parameter was conducted by White (1986). The participants were Spanish and Italian learners of English. The aim of the study was to investigate whether the participants' L1 knowledge would affect the use of subject pronouns in English. It was identified through three properties of the pro-drop parameter; null subject, subject-verb inversion and that-trace effect. Grammaticality judgement and question formation tasks were administered on the experimental group and the control group consisting of French learners of English. In the GJT, Italian and Spanish learners were found to be different from the French group only in one of the properties of the pro-drop parameter which was null-subject. In the question formation task, on the other hand,

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Italian and Spanish learners made more mistakes in that-trace sequences than the French group. It was then concluded that the pro-drop parameter is not turned off completely because it was partially transferred to L2.

Another study on the pro-drop parameter conducted by Phinney (1987) was done with participants from both directions; English learners of Spanish and Spanish learners of English. Their free written compositions were analyzed as the data collection tool through which one property of the pro-drop parameter was investigated: the use of null or overt subject pronouns. The results showed that Spanish learners of English could not manage to reset the parameter in the sense that they omitted subjects while writing in English and could not use the referential subject pronouns in embedded and conjoined sentences successfully. It was concluded that the Spanish learners produced the target language based on the pro-drop values of their native language.

Yılmaz (1996) conducted a study with the same aim as the above-mentioned studies. In this study, one Turkish and one Spanish learner of English participated. They were asked to complete a GJT including the three properties of the pro-drop parameter which were null subject, subject-verb inversion and that-trace effect as in White's (1986) study. Although the Turkish learner of English showed more success in the task than the Spanish one, the findings showed that both learners of English more or less transferred the pro-drop parametric value of their native language to the target language. Yılmaz (1996) further concluded that the difference between the Turkish and the Spanish participant might have been because of the different amount of input the students received in the target language.

Reaching beyond the year 2000, Wakabayashi (2002) worked with Spanish and Japanese learners of English as their L2 to investigate the possible transfer of null subjects to the target language, which only allows for non-null subjects. As a control group, native speakers of English were employed in the study. The participants were asked to do three tasks; namely, reading a text shown on the screen, answering a comprehension question

and doing a GJT. The analysis of the data demonstrated that the Japanese learners acquired the target form of non-null subjects faster than the Spanish learners did. Accordingly, the Spanish group's difficulties in acquiring the obligatory use of subjects in English were attributed to their retention of the pro-drop parameter applied in their L1 Spanish.

In a more recent study, Kuru Gönen (2010) aimed to investigate whether Turkish learners of English reset their pro-drop parameter while learning a non-pro-drop language. To do that, participants from three different levels were worked with and asked to do a GJT. The findings demonstrated that learners from initial, intermediate and advanced levels transferred the pro-drop parametric value to the target language although the frequency of errors decreased as the students approached the later stages of their interlanguage development. The influence of Turkish accounted for their errors committed in the target language.

The latest study found in this field of research was conducted by Antonova-Ünlü (2015) with the purpose of investigating the acquisition of non-referential *it* in English by L1 Russian speakers. This study aimed to find which domains in the use of non-referential *it* could be problematic for the pre-intermediate and upper-intermediate learners of English. The secondary aim was to investigate how error patterns in this structure change with further exposure to the target language. Both comprehension and production tasks were administered. The results revealed difficulties encountered by all the participants while using non-referential *it*. In addition, errors the participants committed were not limited to omission errors and the error pattern was found to be significantly different between the two groups. While the pre-intermediate group's error pattern seemed to have derived from their L1, the upper-intermediate group was unable to distinguish between the use of non-referential *it* and *there*.

In the appreciation of the studies investigated in the domain of subject realization, the common point is that in all levels participants have a tendency to make mistakes regarding the use of overt subjects in English; however, the number of mistakes decreases as the

level of the participants gets higher. This domain was chosen as the control domain in the present study because of two main reasons. The first reason is its being a purely syntactic structure in the target language. The second reason is that although it is governed with narrow syntactic requirements, it was reported to be difficult for L2 learners, thereby being a valid domain for comparison with external interface for validating or rejecting the IH.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The methodology section revisits the purpose of the present study. It is followed by four major sections consisting of the detailed description of the participants, data collection tools, data collection procedure and data analysis respectively.

3.1 The Purpose of the Study

This study aims to understand whether proficient Turkish learners of English can interpret and produce subjects under that-trace effect and articles in English accurately. Based on their performance regarding these structures, it is also aimed to discuss whether the Interface Hypothesis (IH) could predict the results. The rationale behind explaining the relationship between the interface phenomenon and accuracy of these structures is that differences between the mother tongue and the target language may not always lead to difficulty. To put it in other words, if the difference between the languages is easily perceivable, then it makes the target language acquisition easier. The grade of difficulty in acquiring a structure must actually be depending on whether the structure is solely syntax-governed or involving internal or external domains. In the former, the acquisition is expected to be problem-free, whereas in the latter it is harder to attain structures since internal and external factors are interfering. More specific to the structures at the interface domain, internal interface is easier to acquire compared with the external one according to the IH.

Another purpose of the study is related to methodological implications. Some teachers tend to correct written or oral errors and/or mistakes without seeking the underlying reasons for these by attributing them to learners' ignorance or simply because of the time

constraints within a course. However, it has been discussed for a long period of time that it is essential to identify the causes of errors to detect the learning process and remedy the problems occurring frequently in language production. This is because errors are seen as the evidence of learners' development in the target language but not as an unwanted problem to be eradicated. To put it in other words, language learners cannot avoid making errors, so the analysis of the potential easiness in acquisition and the causes of potential errors must be one of the central aspects in language acquisition studies to pave the way to appropriate and feasible remedies for the problematic structures in a target language. Thus, this study also aims to highlight which structures are likely to be acquired incompletely and which ones are more likely to be problem-free by demonstrating the possible reasons. As a result, it might shed light on methodological actions to be taken by teachers on the job and also prospective English language teachers.

Overall, this study has both acquisition and the linguistic aspects. It has an acquisition aspect in terms of investigating the interpretation and production of certain structures by the participants who are in the process of learning how to read, write and communicate with the target language. Concerning a theoretical explanation about how these particular structures work in the mother tongue and the target language, how the learners develop these structures and certain factors accounting for accuracies and inaccuracies in their uses, this study is also including a linguistic aspect.

3.2 Participants

The subjects having participated in this study comprised of 54 adult L1-Turkish learners of English aged between 19 and 39. Of a total of 58 participants four of them were eliminated from the study since their native language is not Turkish, which was understood from the demographic information provided prior to the data collection. Among the rest of the participants, only one of them reported himself being Turkish-Kurdish bilingual.

The participants who voluntarily participated in the study were from the sophomore student population of the ELT program of a state university in central Turkey since we wanted to make sure that the participants are proficient in English. They were also asked to give information about their most recent proficiency grade. Some of them gave their score on the other English language exams such as IELTS and TOEFL and their equivalence to the proficiency exam administered in the university was taken into account. As a result, as can be seen from Table 1, their average score was almost 83 showing that they were quite proficient even before starting to study in the department.

Table 1. *Demographic Information of the Participants (n=54)*

	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	19-39	21.04	3.44
Age of Onset	3-17	9.69	2.18
Years of Exposure	7.22	11.28	2.78
Proficiency	69.75-96	82.62	6.17

The reason why this study was conducted with high level of learners is that if any difficulty faced by the proficient learners is found in the particular structures, then we could argue for the paramount effects of the interface domain in language acquisition. Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008, p. 99) also endorse the idea that as learners gain more proficiency in the target language, they can adopt L2 cue preferences at a higher rate while showing less reliance on L1-based cue weightings. On the other hand, it is already quite normal for low-level learners to have difficulty and transfer from their first language to build on their previous knowledge since it is the only source for them to depend on while forming their default interlanguage.

As a pilot study, transferability of the pro-drop parameter and word order (verb position) in English by Turkish learners had been conducted by using a GJT and a DCT. In that study, learners from three levels, namely pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate, were involved. The findings revealed that as the proficiency level increases, the transferability from the mother tongue decreases. Based on that pilot study, the methodology of the current study was constructed. To discuss the role of the language structures themselves in language learning difficulty, only proficient learners were included in order to avoid the potential effects of the proficiency level in language acquisition. There are different ways to tease apart the potential effects of mediating variables in the cross-linguistic influence phenomenon (Jarvis and Pavlenko, 2008, p. 53). The way used in the present study is to cancel out the potential effects of an outside variable, which in this case is the proficiency level. It is believed that the proficiency level can constrain language learning. Therefore, this variable was held constant and the data collection tools were administered to the group having the same proficiency level so that any potential difficulties in language learning could not be attributed to their differences in language proficiency.

Each participant took part in all the tasks in their own time. Their participation was on a voluntary basis and they were given bonus course credit for their participation. The data were collected over a fortnight period and all the participants were provided information with respect to the purpose of the study through the information given on the consent form.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

It is quite hard to detect whether or not the data collected from a single tool are simply an artefact of that particular data collection method and results could be obscured if a researcher does not make use of multiple sources of data. Thus, many researchers opt for multiple data collection methods in order to "triangulate" the results found from data analysis (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). This triangulation helps data collected from different materials to have reliability and validity. It also allows researchers to differentiate the

potential impacts of the method employed on learners' linguistic knowledge and competence. Thus, patterns of language can be better investigated across different types of data collection tools. In Ellis's (1994, p. 50) words, good research gives recognition to the limitations of the sources of data being used. For these reasons, three different tasks were used in this study.

Specific to the properties of each parametric value being investigated, that-trace effect property was taken for investigation in the scope of the pro-drop parameter. Since this is the most complex structure among the other properties, it was chosen to reach more solid results regarding subject realization in the target language. As for the use of articles, definite and indefinite articles were both included in order to better understand the use of articles based on contextual clues. Among the non-generic uses of the definiteness article, only the textual and structural uses of it were investigated because these two uses of "the" are determined based on pragmatic constraints apparently shown in immediate contexts. Besides these non-generic uses of articles, generic article use in reference to definite singular, indefinite singular, bare plural and indefinite mass noun phrases was included in order to have a solid discussion regarding the role of the two types of interface domains in the acquisition of articles.

3.3.1 Grammaticality Judgement Task (App. C)

In order to elicit the participants' knowledge on the pro-drop parameter, (in)definite and generic articles in the target language, they were given a GJT in which 50 items were included. 15 of these items were grammatical and 15 were ungrammatical resulting from missing or wrong use of articles (10 items) and missing subject pronouns after the complementizer "that" (5 items). The rest of the items were placed as distractors. The participants were asked to read each item carefully and determine how good or bad they are on a scale of 1 to 7 in their estimation.

Although GJTs have been criticized because of some lacking points, they are still commonly used to interpret the intuitions of participants about different parametric values.

As McDaniel and Cairns (1996) note, a GJT can be used in any area of syntax and this type of task also allows researchers to investigate different linguistic phenomena through a single task as it was also aimed in the present study. Another advantage of this task is to see evidence regarding tacit intuition of learners on the second language. According to Ortega (2009, p. 111), grammaticality judgements of learners are serving like a better window into learners' underlying linguistic competence, that is, learners' metalinguistic knowledge, compared to what discourse data reflect. Although it is advantageous in terms of yielding information in a controlled way making it easy to administer and score, its being too controlled could lead to artificiality (Cook, 1986, p. 13). In order to alleviate this lacking aspect, all the items in the task were given in context instead of isolated sentences.

The GJT was our main task in this study; however, relying on only one task may not have been enough to reach valid results regarding the learners' potential difficulties. To investigate the interlanguage factors better, it was necessary to add a variety of tasks to see the participants' other skills, as well, such as productive skills. Relying only on tasks offering some options just as in a GJT means to disregard some other factors affecting participants' performance. Some of these factors could be the boredom caused by too many questions to be answered, attention problems and the possibility of attributing the ungrammaticality of some sentences to other structures rather than the actual ones tested. Thus, to achieve a better cross-task validation of findings and assess the participants' production as well as perception, two more data collection tools, a DCT and a FCET, were added to the study. Subject realization, which is a purely syntactic domain, was discretely assessed in the DCT, while the FCET was administered in order to elicit their choices on the two interface domains; (in)definite articles (syntax-discourse interface) and generic articles (syntax-semantics interface).

3.3.2 Discourse Completion Task (App. D)

The DCT was administered to elicit the participants' productive language performance in subject realization. In this task, the participants were asked to respond to 10 prompts given. Through their responses, the instances of overt subject use after the complementizer "that" were examined. It seems that the participants were led to use a subject by placing the complementizer, so the bias could not be fully avoided. However, the study area is not discourse-pragmatics, such as the investigation of politeness, but it pertains to the form of a particular structure. In order to elicit production in a more focused and concentrated way, the context was restricted and the DCT was designed accordingly. Although it was tailored to elicit a specific form, naturalistic production is still apparent relative to more decontextualized experimental measures.

3.3.3 Forced Choice Elicitation Task (App. E)

In order to investigate the use of articles discretely, the FCET was administered. The participants were asked to read a context about colors carefully and fill in the blanks with an article (a / an / the). If no article was needed, they were supposed to fill in the gap with Ø. This elicitation technique was administered in order to invoke the participants' metalinguistic knowledge on the generic and non-generic interpretations in the target language. The task consisted of 20 items including 12 articles that must be chosen by relying on the definiteness parameter. The other 8 gaps entailed the use of the definite article or zero article to give a generic reference. The rationale behind administering such a direct elicitation task depends on the fact that adult learners are considered to be ready to fulfill complex tasks in which they make active decisions about any present linguistic stimuli (Chaudron, 2003).

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Before administering the tasks, the validity of the GJT and the FCET, and the possible responses to the given prompts in the DCT had been checked by two native speakers of

English. Upon having the native speakers' feedback on the items, the necessary revisions were made. Then, these tasks were piloted with a group of upper-intermediate students in the preparatory program of a private university in central Turkey. Upon piloting the tasks, one of the instructors of the 2nd graders studying in the ELT program of a state university in central Turkey was asked to announce the students they could participate in the study by doing the tasks in their own time. The participants were totally informed about the procedure and the content of the tasks. They were announced that if they would like to be informed about the results of the study, the results could be shared with them via e-mail at the end of the research. After making sure that the participation was voluntary, the subjects were given a consent form and a language background questionnaire in order to reach biodata of the subjects. Then, they were asked to complete the three data collection tasks successively.

Obviously, no time limit was set while administering these data collection tasks since the respondents completed all of these tasks individually in their own time not to create any unreliability due to the time constraints. However, they were instructed to do the tasks without referring to any other materials.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

First, it is necessary to note that while analyzing the data in the production task regarding the non-pro-drop parameter, it was disregarded whether the participants could shift the subjects properly or not (e.g. 'You say to the cleaner that **I** need it to be ready before Saturday night.') For the purpose of this task, it was enough for them to start with a subject after the complementizer "that". In addition, embedded clauses starting with exclamations such as "excuse me", "hi", "thank you" used after the complementizer were excluded from the analysis (e.g. 'You say to the waiter that **Excuse me**, these must be another tables orders since...') Another way of starting a "that clause" which was excluded from the analysis is the ones beginning with greetings such as "good morning", "sir/madam", or the name of the addressee (e.g. 'You say to your neighbor that **Hello**, my name is Eda,

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I'm living next door.') However, the instances of using imperatives or questions, which prevent an overt subject from following "that", were evaluated as wrong (e.g. 'You say to the professor that ***Is** there any other way I can take this course?') In addition, the second or third sentences in the form of questions or imperatives were not counted wrong as long as the first sentence following the complementizer "that" starts with a subject (e.g. 'You say to the teacher that **I** am so sorry, ***may** I come in?'). Finally, the sentences starting with time adverbials such as "until", "for", discourse markers like "although", "since", or the ones with frequency adverbs such as "sometimes" were regarded as true as long as the participants could come up with a sentence with a subject after those (e.g. 'You say to your father that **for the time being** I will work there.')

As to the data analysis procedures, the data were analyzed with descriptive statistics as well as one-way ANOVA tests. To be able to answer the questions regarding whether competent Turkish learners of English could perform well in the acquisition of subjects, discourse-based articles and generic articles in English, each participant received a score based on each error committed and correct judgement / use of the structures in the tasks mentioned above separately. In order to calculate the mean score and standard deviations in the two structures in these three tasks, their scores were entered in SPSS.

After demonstrating their performance regarding the use of subjects and articles in the three separate tasks through the descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA tests were conducted for the perception and production tasks separately in order to do within group analysis. To be more specific, this test was essential because there was one group tested on three different variables which were their score in subject realization, the one in the use of (in)definite articles and the one in the use of generic articles. This test was used in order to determine whether there was any significant difference between the means of these three independent variables in each type of tasks. In order to give their score in subject realization, their performance on the GJT items relevant to the use of subjects and on the DCT was taken into account. As for their score in the use of articles, their performance on the article-related items in the GJT and on the FCET was checked.

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Upon the data analysis in the form of comparing their performance in the three structures, three different paired-samples t-tests were conducted in order to see whether the learners' performance changes according to the task type. In order to investigate this, subject realization performance in the GJT and the DCT, (in)definite article and generic article performances in the GJT and the FCET were compared separately for each structure under investigation.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this study, three sources of data were collected to examine the acquisition of English subject, (in)definite article and generic article by L1 Turkish speakers. These data collection tools are a GJT on a Likert scale from 1 to 7 including all the three grammar structures, a DCT in order to elicit the use of subjects in production and a FCET to elicit the choice of articles with (in)definite and generic interpretations. In this section conisting of three main parts, first, the results of the quantitative data analyses regarding these tasks are reported. The results of the three domains in the perception task and the controlled production tasks are reported separately through descriptive statistics analyses. Second, the comparative results of the three domains are given through the examination of the perception task and controlled production tasks respectively. Finally, the results regarding the task type differences for each structure are reported separately.

4.1 Results of the Three Domains

4.1.1 Results of (In)definite Articles (External Interface Domain)

The descriptive statistics were used in order to describe the participants' performance in the use of (in)definite articles in both the perception and controlled production tasks. Table 2 indicates their average choices on the grammaticality scale from 1 to 7. Their mean score in the judgement of 5 grammatical (in)definite article uses was 5.56 and the one in the judgement of 5 ungrammatical (in)definite article uses was 5.40, which was found to be quite close to the average mean score in the grammatical ones. As for their average score on the choice of (in)definite articles elicited through the FCET, they could use approximately 82% of them correctly in the given context as can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. *Descriptives of (In)definite Articles (n=54)*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
GJT Score (Grammatical Items)	5.56	.95
GJT Score (Ungrammatical Items)	5.40	.97
FCET Score	81.83	11.33

4.1.2 Results of Generic Articles (Internal Interface Domain)

The use of generic articles was investigated through the same perception and controlled production tasks administered for the use of (in)definite articles. The descriptive statistics analysis of this particular domain on the perception task shows that the participants identified 5 grammatical dialogues with generic reading correctly at an average rate of 5.27 and 5 ungrammatical ones were judged in the grammatical band, which was 5.08 in average. In the choice of generic articles, they showed performance at an average rate of approximately 78% as can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. *Descriptives of Generic Articles (n=54)*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
GJT Score (Grammatical Items)	5.27	.86
GJT Score (Ungrammatical Items)	5.08	.91
FCET Score	77.91	20.74

4.1.3 Results of Subject Realization (Pure Syntax Domain)

The final descriptive analysis statistics was computed in order to see how the particpants judged and produced subject realization. Among the 5 grammatical dialogues including the subject use in the embedded clauses, the participants scored 5.67 in average and they identified the ones with missing subjects as erroneous at an average rate of 3.84. According to the same descriptive statistics shown in Table 4, the participants could perform the use of subjects in the embedded clauses at about 89% correctly.

Table 4. *Descriptives of Subject Realization (n=54)*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
GJT Score (Grammatical Items)	5.67	.90
GJT Score (Ungrammatical Items)	3.84	1.34
DCT Score	88.94	11.79

4.2 Comparative Results of the Three Domains

4.2.1 Comparative Results of the Three Domains in Perception

With an attempt to test their perceptive skills in the three domains investigated, tha same GJT had been administered. As indicated through the descriptive analyses shown in the previous section, the participants could realize the grammaticality of the three groups of sentence structures by choosing a grade from the grammatical band in average on the scale from 1 to 7. When the sentences testing the three different structures were compared, the ones including the subjects grammatically after the complementizer "that" were found to be better noticed (M = 5.67) followed by the ones with the (in)definiteness articles (M = 5.56) and generic articles (M = 5.27) as the last one.

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As for the erroneous sentences involving the same three structures, on the other hand, the sentences that are problematic due to the incorrect use of articles could not be noticed well. This was understood from the fact that the participants chose the numbers from the grammatical band in average. This shows us that the participants seem to be tolerant with the mistakes regarding the article use considering the close averages between the grammatical and ungrammatical sentences with articles. As opposed to the ungrammatical sentences with articles, the ones with the subjects could be recognized as erroneous because the answers in average drop in the ungrammatical band (M = 3.84).

The final point noteworthy to mention is the different order between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences with the use of (in)definite and generic articles. Contrary to the grammatical ones, the ungrammatical sentences with generic articles (M = 5.08) could be noticed more than the ones with (in)definite articles (M = 5.40) since the former ones were chosen to be more ungrammatical in average than the latter ones.

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted in order to compare the scores of the participants on the three different groups of sentences structured grammatically; namely subject use, (in)definite article use and generic article use. As shown in Table 5 Test of Homogeneity of Variances, I assumed that the null hypothesis regarding the absence of a significant difference between the three groups of questions could not be violated (p = .46), meaning the variances are approximately equal. The ANOVA test endorsed my assumption by turning out to be not significant (F (2,159) = 2.77), p > .05) as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. *Test of Homogeneity of Variances & ANOVA Values of the GJT (Grammatical Items)*

Scores on the Grammatical Questions (GJT)	Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA	
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	F	Sig.
	.79	2	159	.46	2.77	.07

*p<.05

Another one-way ANOVA test was conducted in order to compare the scores of the participants on the same three sentence types structured erroneously; namely subject use, (in)definite article use and generic article use. As can be seen in Table 6 Test of Homogeneity of Variances, I assumed that the null hypothesis regarding the absence of a significant difference between the three groups of questions could be violated ($p = .002$), meaning the variances are not equal contrary to the grammatical sentences. The ANOVA test also turned out to be significant ($F (2,159) = 30.81$, $p < .05$) as can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. *Test of Homogeneity of Variances & ANOVA Values of the GJT (Ungrammatical Items)*

Scores on the Ungrammatical Questions (GJT)	Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA	
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	F	Sig.
	6.59	2	159	.002	30.81	.000

*p<.05

In order to see where the significant difference comes from, a post hoc Bonferroni test was conducted as can be seen in Table 7. This analysis showed that one difference stems from the mean difference between the scores on the ungrammatical use of subjects – as a result of the absence of a subject after the complementizer "that" – and the ungrammatical use of (in)definite articles – as a result of either the absence of an essential article or the wrong use of articles (p = .000). Another difference stems from the mean difference between the ungrammatical use of subjects and the ungrammatical use of generic articles (p = .000). The other pair, on the other hand, was not found to be significantly different. In other words, there was not a significant mean difference between the wrong use of (in)definite and generic articles (p = .38). As a result, the significant ANOVA skewed from one structure, which is the ungrammatical use of subjects as can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7. *Multiple Comparisons Values for the Variables*

Dependent Variable: Scores on the Ungrammatical Questions (GJT)				
Bonferroni		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Subject	(In)definite Article	-1.56	.21	.000
	Generic Article	-1.24	.21	.000
(In)definite Article	Generic Article	.32	.21	.38

4.2.2 Comparative Results of the Three Domains in Production

In order to further investigate the use of subjects and the use of articles, their performance on the DCT and the FCET was compared. The DCT was administered to elicit the use of subjects discretely and the FCET was conducted to elicit their choices of articles used to give the meaning of either (in)definiteness or genericity. In order to figure out the given scores of the participants, their answers on both tasks were checked. Depending on their correct answers regarding these three structures, the percentages of them were calculated manually and were entered on the SPSS for the relevant comparative tests. One grammatical and one ungrammatical example of the subject use, (in)definite article choice and generic article choice are shown in order below;

You say to your friend that **it** might be someting serious and **she/he** should check it.

*You say to your child that **don't worry** darling you'll do better next time.

Light yellow, on the other hand, can lift **a** person's mood.

*Bright orange walls in **the** bedroom, for instance, may keep a sensitive person awake.

Certain colors can improve **Ø** emotions dramatically.

*It is widely known that colors have a direct impact on **the** feelings.

According to the descriptive statistics shown in the previous section, the participants could perform by far the best in the use of subjects in the embedded clauses (M = 88.94). This result is actually similar to their performance on the GJT, in which the students could recognize the (un)grammaticality of the sentences with the particular subject use more compared to the ones with articles. As for their scores on the choice of articles elicited through the FCET, they could have better scores on the (in)definite use of articles (M = 81.83) compared to the generic use of articles (M = 77.91).

In order to compare the scores of the participants on the three structures elicited with the DCT and the FCET, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted. Considering the results shown in Table 8 Test of Homogeneity of Variances, I assumed that the null hypothesis regarding the absence of a significant difference between the three variables could be violated (p = .002), meaning the variances are not equal. The ANOVA test also turned out to be significant (F (2,159) = 7.26, p < .05) as is evident in Table 8.

Table 8. *Test of Homogeneity of Variances & ANOVA Values of the DCT and the FCET*

Scores on the DCT and FCET	Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA	
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	F	Sig.
	6.38	2	159	.002	7.26	.001
*p<.05						

In order to see where the significant difference comes from, a post hoc Bonferroni test, which is shown in Table 9, was conducted. This analysis showed that one of the differences stems from the mean difference between the scores on the use of subjects in the DCT and the use of (in)definite articles tested through the FCET ($p = .05$). Another significant difference derives from the mean difference between the use of subjects and the use of generic articles ($p = .001$). The other interaction, on the other hand, is not significantly different. To put it differently, there is not a significant mean difference between the use of (in)definite and generic articles ($p = .55$). As a result, the significant ANOVA skewed from one structure, which is the use of subjects, as can be seen in Table 9. This result is similar to the participants' choices on the ungrammatical items put in the GJT, from which only the subject use was found to be significantly different from the other structures. Thus, the results of the two tests validate that the participants could do significantly better in the use of subjects compared to the use of articles regardless of the type.

Table 9. *Multiple Comparisons Values for the Variables*

Dependent Variable: Scores on the DCT and FCET

Bonferroni		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Subject	(In)definite Article	7.11	2.93	.05*
	Generic Article	11.03	2.93	.001
(In)definite Article	Generic Article	3.92	2.93	.55

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

4.3 Results of Task Type Differences in the Three Domains

Investigating the possible task type differences was thought to be an important discussion point respecting one of the aims of this study, which is to understand the source of difficulty/easiness in acquiring a structure in a new langauge. It is well-known that learners of a second langauge may not perform a particular structure as expected or they may show a greater performance than expected due to the task type. In order to understand whether there is a significant difference between the performance of the partcipants in the three structures depending on the task type, a paired-samples t-test was conducted for each.

The difference between the subject realization grammaticality judgement and production in the discourse completion was tested with a paired-samples t-test. As shown in Table 10, the participants have considerably done better in the production task (t (53) = -16.22, p < 0.05).

Table 10. *The difference between the GJT and the DCT scores in subject realization*

Subject Realization	Paired Samples Test					
(GJT-DCT)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	-33.28	15.08	2.05	-16.22	53	.000

Another paired-samples t-test was conducted to see the task type difference in the use of (in)definite articles. As can be seen in Table 11, the performance of the participants were found to be significantly better in the choices of (in)definite articles than in judging the grammaticality of the sentences with (in)definite reading (t (53) = -18.63, p < 0.05).

Table 11. *The difference between the GJT and the FCET scores in (in)definite articles*

(In)definite Articles	Paired Samples Test					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
(GJT-FCET)	-32.5	12.82	1.74	-18.63	53	.000

The final paired-samples t-test was conducted to see the task type difference in the use of generic articles. Similar to the previous two structures, the participants performed significantly different in the two tasks administered in an attempt to measure generic article use. These people performed significantly better in the elicitation task compared to the judgement task (t (53) = -10.5, p < 0.05) as can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12. *The difference between the GJT and the FCET scores in generic articles*

Generic Articles	Paired Samples Test					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
(GJT-FCET)	-30.13	21.1	2.87	-10.5	53	.000

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aims to expand the testing grounds of the Interface Hypothesis (IH) by investigating the acquisition of English subjects operating with pure syntax and the article uses of (in)definiteness and genericity in English governed with external and internal interfaces respectively by the proficient L1 Turkish learners. To achieve this aim, the research questions answered were whether proficient Turkish speakers of English could interpret and use subjects and articles accurately and whether the findings could be attributed to the IH. To this end, a GJT, a DCT and a FCET were used. The GJT included both subject-related and article-related questions as well as the distractors, whereas the DCT was used to elicit the use of subjects in production and the FCET was used to elicit the choice of articles discretely.

The first research question regarding the subject use was found to be affirmative. This is because the participants did quite well in judging the grammaticality of the subject use and in producing subjects in the embedded clauses. The second research question regarding the article use, on the other hand, was not found to be affirmative because the participants had certain difficulties in judging the grammaticality of the sentences including both article meanings and in the choice of them. These results could be partially attributed to the IH. Having found a significantly better performance in the judgement and use of subjects compared to the article interpretation and choice, the IH could validate it because narrow syntactic structures are resilient to acquisition difficulties according to this hypothesis. However, the results on the article uses of (in)definiteness and genericity appeared to have similar accuracy rates, which could not provide clear evidence for the

latest accounts of the IH supporting that external interfaces are more difficult to attain compared to the internal interfaces.

This last chapter comprises three major sections. In the first three sections, the three structures under investigation are discussed separately in relation to the previous predictions based on the IH and to the previous research conducted in this field. Under the second major section, a general conclusion in which the research questions are directly answered is provided together with the methodological implications. Finally, the limitations of this study and future directions are reported.

5.1 The Acquisition of Subject Realization = Pure Syntax

Subject realization is one of the studied phenomena to investigate the interface issue. A subject in Turkish can be null in finite clauses and possessive noun phrases (Kornfilt, 1988). When the subject is to be overtly expressed in such languages with pro-drop parametric value, it is bound to pragmatic considerations. In other words, using a subject overtly in such languages occurs when syntax is interfaced with pragmatics (Haznedar, 2010). In languages like English, on the other hand, subject realization is driven syntactically. If it is not pronounced and the subject position noun phrase is left incomplete, it makes the sentence ungrammatical. Hence, subject requirement is purely syntactic in English, which might account for an easier and problem-free acquisition of subject realization by English-as-a-foreign-language learners.

Drawing on the notions of the Interface Hypothesis (IH) in SLA, the present study predicted that subject realization by the proficient Turkish learners of English would not be problematic, but attainable. This prediction lies in the recent theory of the IH, which explains the acquisitional implications associated with pure syntax as less challenging for advanced or near-native speakers than the ones governed with interfaces. However, the notion of pure syntax was revisited by Sorace (2012), suggesting that structures that are governed with narrow syntax might be computationally complex. In light of this later claim of the IH, SLA researhers have been promoted to investigate the acquisition of

narrow syntactic properties since then, one of which is subject realization examined in the present study. This grammar structure provides a ground to test probable unproblematic narrow syntax. If the interface vulnerability accounts are correct and purely syntactic features are not challenging, target acquisition of subjects would be expected from the proficient Turkish learners of English regardless of the different parametric option in their L1.

In light of these two claims, we acknowledge that computational difficulty must be hinging on the languages being invloved under examination. In this regard, learners whose native langauge is more impoverished may encounter more difficulty in acquiring a language which is more robust syntactically. Given that English is not as robust as Turkish in terms of subject use, it is worth studying to what extent subject realization in English is challenging for advanced or near-native speakers of L1 Turkish. Thus, English-as-a-foreign-language learners' acquisition of subject must be almost error-free considering that they are acquiring a more rigid structure in the target language compared to their native language which requires pragmatic knowledge besides syntax.

In order to measure the degree of accuracy in subject realization, the data results were collected through the mean rating in their grammaticality judgements of the statements given and secondly through their accuracy percentages in a production task. In the GJT, their mean rating in the grammatical sentences drop in the grammatical band and ungrammatical ones drop in the ungrammatical band. This result has yielded that proficient learners of English could well recognize when they are presented with grammatical or ungrammatical sentences. They are well aware of the obligatory use of subjects regardless of the paramatric conditions, which determine the absence or presence of a subject in their native langauge. This result, in essence, shows us that the lack of interface may account for the easy recongnition of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences.

As for their performance in the production task – the DCT – 89% of the sentences were completed correctly with the provision of a subject after the complementizer "that". Even though 11% of erroneous sentences show that subject realization in that-trace-effect might still constitute some form of difficulty for the proficienct learners, the presence of sigficantly higher number of grammatical subject tokens compared to the grammatical choice of articles governed by interfaces is consistent with the predictions projected at the onset of the study. The proponents of this hypothesis made it clear that learners gain ultimate attainment in narrow syntactic properties. Because the L2 learners who are in their later stages of language development displayed a significantly ceiling performance, it could be proposed that their interlanguage respresentation in subject realization could converge on L2 grammar although some proficient learners exhibit infelicitious interpretations and/or productions to some extent.

According to the literature, learners of a non-pro-drop language omit subjects more in complex sentences (Mitkovska & Buzarovska, 2018). Subject omission is believed to happen owing to processing difficulties. This type of omission does not happen arbitrarily. It is expected that they resort to subject omission when the omitted subject is predictable; that is, subjects can be interpreted in an embedded sentence when the learners rely on the discourse. However, in the present study, subject omission in embedded clauses corresponds to the 30% of the problematic discourse completion sentences. The other 70% of their ungrammatical sentences occurred because of lack of inversion. In other words, although the learners did not omit their subjects in the majority of embedded clauses, they completed the discourse with a question, which made those completions wrong. The less occurrence of subject drop after the complementizer "that" could be explained with the rigidity of the target language. As it had been already projected before, learning a more rigid structure seems to have made the learning process easier for the participants (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008, p. 12). English always requires an overt subject, which makes it more predictable than Turkish, in which the use of overt or null subject is determined through pragmatic considerations. Therefore, in the present study, it is not surprising for Turkish

learners of English to acquire subject, which has more rigid and less marked rules in the target language compared to their native language.

It is difficult to compare the results of this study with the previous studies conducted with L2 English learners at large. This is because they discussed the acquisition of subjects in L2 English from the UG perspective suggesting that learners' correct or incorrect use of the target language lies behind the their accessibility to UG. Following such a framework, the focus of this line of research was on partial or full transfer from their L1 and possible recovery from transfer in the course of language development. However, the current study does not allow us to discuss the possibility of L1 transfer, making this study incomparable with the previous research at large. Nevertheless, the difficulty found to some extent in using subjects in English (e.g. 11% of the discourse completions' being erroneous) can be taken into account. In this case, we should acknowledge the parallelism between the current study and the earlier research in which subject realization was reported to be problematic for L2 English learners (White, 1986; Phinney, 1987; Yılmaz, 1996; Wakabayashi, 2002; Kuru Gönen, 2010; Antonova-Ünlü, 2015).

5.2 The Acquisition of (In)definite Articles = Syntax-Discourse Interface

The recent theory of the IH, which centers around the "interface" phenomenon, falls into two categories as "internal and "external" interfaces (Sorace, 2011, 2012) whose acquisitinal implications are described as easy and difficult respectively. (In)definite interpretations of articles in English belong to one of the external interfaces. Should the constraints in a structure be related to discourse, this structure falls into external interface category, which is considered to be more challenging than internal interfaces and purely syntactic structures. Sorace and Filiaci (2006) also advanced this hypothesis arguing that external interfaces at syntax-discourse domains are inherently more compex; therefore, more difficult even for near-native speakers because of the integration and coordination of syntactic information and discourse in real time. For this reason, external interfaces are more permeable to vulnerability, indeterminacy or optionality. This later account is

investigated through (in)definite use of articles in English by proficient L1 Turkish speakers in this study.

Definiteness function of the article use involves external interfaces because discourse is concerned while choosing the definite, indefinite or null article in English (Irwin, Bock and Stanovich, 1982). For this reason, it is a syntax-discourse interface structure that is hypothesised to be challenging for learners according to the IH. This hypothesis is actually proved to be true by the data in the present study. This is because the prospective English langauge teachers who are at the high level even failed to integrate the two domains – syantx and discourse – to a certain extent while interpreting and choosing articles in the relevant function.

The manifestation of difficulty in interpreting and performing (in)definiteness was yielded by two sources of data, which are the overall mean rating in the GJT and the choice of correct article (a/an/the) and null article in the contex-based elicitation task. The results of the former task demonstarted that the participants are well aware of the grammaticality of the felicitious sentences. They, however, could not notice the ungrammaticality of the erroneous sentences well since their mean scores on the scale dropped on the grammatical band. This elucidated that even the proficient speakers are quite tolerant towards errors regarding (in)definiteness, meaning they, in average, did not evaluate those statements as ungrammatical.

When their overall mean rating in (in)definite article use was compared to the one in subject use, it was found that there was a significant difference between their grammaticality judgements of erroneous sentences in these two structures, which are governed with discourse conditions and narrow syntax respectively. Although there is no significant difference between their judgements on the grammatical statements, their overall performance in the particular task suggests that English articles could still constitute some forms of difficulty for the proficient speakers of English.

Despite their close mean scores in the grammatical subject-related and definiteness-induced items, their overall performance in these two structures with the inclusion of the other tasks (the DCT and the FCET) yielded that significantly fewer grammatical definiteness tokens were chosen compared to their grammatical productions in subject realization. While about 82% of the definiteness article choices were grammatical in the elicitation task, the presence of significantly more grammatical production of subjects governed with pure syntax implies that the integration of an external domain, which is the discourse concerned costraint, makes acqusition more challenging even for the proficienct speakers of English. This result is in line with the predictions of this study and with the IH. Interpreted from the perspective of this hypothesis, this phenomenon would support the claim that the external interface, in the form of English (in)definite articles, is still challenging even for the proficient speakers of the target language and so they would exhibit non-target mastery of the pragmatic features of the relevant structure.

Meanwhile, the difficulty of English articles has been much discussed in the literature. Most of the studies focusing on the non-generic use of articles are comparing the performance of participants from diffferent proficiency levels in order to investigate whether proficiency level affects learners' acquisition of non-generic articles. However, it is commonly asserted that even if learners are at a high proficieny level, acquiring English article system is notoriously difficult for all L1 groups alike (Miller, 2005; Atay, 2010). As Ionin et al. (2008) put it, it is even harder to achieve a target-like acqusition of English articles for the learners if the article system does not exist in their native language. This hypothesis is actually in line with the present study considering the challenge the prospective English teachers encountered in the realization of ungrammatical sentences and their significantly more problematic choice of (in)definite articles compared to their performance in a purely syntactic structure.

Besides Ionin's series of discussions, as reviewed in the literature review chapter, some other recent studies conducted with Turkish L1 learners of English, such as Dikilitaş and Altay (2011) and Yıldırım (2015), reiterate that the use of non-generic articles in English

still constitutes a problem even among advanced level of learners. Dikilitaş and Altay (2011) conducted their study with the participants from three proficiency level groups. They found no linearity in the progression of article use according to the learners' proficiency level, which tends to suggest that even if the proficiency level is increasing, the learners of English could still not show a ceiling performance because of having difficulty in the use of non-generic articles. A comparison of the present study results with Yıldırım's (2015) study, on the other hand, could provide us with a more conclusive discussion in the sense that Yıldırım (2015) also conducted her research with the prospective English teachers. Different from the present study, she investigated the non-generic interpretation of articles by the two groups of students, namely freshmen and seniors, in order to see the potential difference between the two grades. Although no significant difference between the two groups of learners was found, the acquisition of the non-generic article "the" was found to be problematic regardless of the grade. Considering that both of the groups were consisting of advanced learners of English, we can argue that this result is parallel to the ones found in the present study. Evidence accumulating from a myriad of studies strongly endorses the conclusion that English articles are difficult to learn for all proficiency levels.

As for the types of wrong choices of articles administered through the FCET, approximately 60% of the mistakes were made in the form of misusing, that is, by susbstituting the definite and indefinite articles for each other. The remaining 40% of wrong choices, on the other hand, were in the form of omission. The common hypothesis in the recent studies is that learners whose native langauge is article-less, such as Turkish, Korean, Persian and Japanese are supposed to omit the articles in English more than they misuse them (Robertson, 2000). Dikilitaş and Altay's (2011) results are in line with this hypothesis because they found that the participants made omisison errors more than they overused them. On account of this analysis, they discussed this overweight of ommision errors with the first langauge effects. Considering that Turkish does not have an article system, it impedes upon learners' choice of articles in the form of omission. Thus, they

analyzed this situation as an interlingual error rather than an intralingual one. In other words, being affected from the lack of articles in their L1, the learners may not have used the definite article in the contexts it had to be overtly placed in. The results of the present study are incongruent with Dikilitaş and Altay's (2011) in this regard although they are parallel in the discussion regarding the effect of proficiency level. Having found that most of the mistakes were made on account of substituting the definite article "the" for the indefinite article "a" or vice versa (60%) more than the omission errors (40%), we could argue that L1 influence could not be the only reason for the acquisition difficulty. This outcome, especially the more overuse of the definiteness article, on the contrary, has yielded that Turkish might not actually interfere with their acquisition considering that definiteness is not marked in Turkish with an article corresponding to "the". It appears to be the integration and coordination of syntactic properties and discourse which impede upon the participants' correct choices. The underspecification (Sorace, 2011) of articles in Turkish might have given rise to ambiguity and optionality in English because it allows a wider range of possible mappings for L1 Turkish learners of English.

Nevertheless, the high rate of substitution errors led us to consider that this result is in line with the two recent studies focusing on the learners' article use through the Fluctuation Hypothesis. For example, the present study is in line with Atay's (2010) study in the sense that fluctuation between the definite article and indefinite article was found in both of the studies. In other words, the participants in both studies overused the definite article "the" in non-definite and overused the indefinite article "a/an" in definite contexts. They are also parallel in the sense that the Turkish learners of English in both studies overused the definite article "the" more in non-definite contexts, which constitutes almost 90% of all the substitution errors in the present study. In line with those, Çimen (2013) had also observed such a fluctuation between the definite and indefinite article in the FCET at 42 percent. Therefore, the observation regarding the fluctuation between the two types of articles is common in the three studies. In contrast to this common result in Atay's (2010), Çimen's (2013) and the present study, Dağdeviren's (2010) study did not demonstrate

fluctuation since the learners assigned the articles in the correct place with a ceiling performance.

In line with the discussion above, the problems that L1 Turkish proficient learners encounter in the acquisition of (in)definiteness have been emphasized in recent studies. Without native knowledge of such an article system representing (in)definiteness, as well as with the difficulty in integrating and coordinating syntactic and discourse-related information at the same time, the participants unsurprisingly had the acquisition of (in)definite articles deviated from the target language norms to a large extent. Regarding this structure we can draw the conclusion that the syntactic properties of (in)definite articles might have been well established. Discourse constraints regarding when to use the definite article, indefinite article or null article, however, might be remaining as a persistent problem. To this end, it may be speculated that the fated vulnerability of syntax-discourse structures might be due to the processing accounts considering this structure is problematic even for proficient speakers of English.

Sorace (2011) proposed that there might be two reasons why near-native speakers exhibit divergence from the L1 norms. These are processing and representational accounts. This vulnerability might actually be assumed to stem from insufficient processing resources owing to using less automatised syntax-discourse processing strategies used to integrate and coordinate syntax and external type of information at a cognitive domain. As Sorace and Filiaci (2006) also propose, learners are required not only to have relevant syntactic information and discourse constraints but also to coordinate the two, which creates a computational burden on even advanced speakers. As a matter of this fact, structures such as (in)definite articles are harder to acquire than the ones governed with exclusive syntactic knowledge, for example the use of overt pronouns in English.

5.3 The Acquisition of Generic Articles = Syntax-Semantics Interface

In line with the IH, internal interfaces are assumed unproblematic just like purely syntactic structures. As Sorace (2012) puts it, interaction between syntax and another language-

internal domain, such as syntax-morphology, syntax-semantics and morphology-phonology is fully acquirable among advanced or near-native speakers of a target language. Given this information and learners' greater difficulty in external interfaces, internal interfaces were not the primary concern of the earlier discussions of the IH. SLA researchers have recently been in pursuit of interest in internal interfaces involving the subsystems of a language by centering their discussions around how different modules' interactions have an effect on interlanguage. As Sorace (2005) suggests, investigating such interactions between different modules provides a more fine-grained analysis of syntactic variations than the current syntactic theories, such as UG accessibility, UG sanctioning and resetting L1 parameters while acquiring L2.

In the literature, genericity has been categorized as a syntax-semantics interface (Park, 2013) suggesting that this function of article use belongs to an internal interface. The syntax-semantics interface occurs when a syntactic structure has an impact on meaning composition and this particular meaning has an effect on the syntactic structure. In this regard, depending on the use of article or null article, genericity meaning is given or when generic meaning of a noun phrase would like to be shown, users choose the correct article or null article accordingly.

Similar to the (in)definiteness function of articles, the accuracy of generic articles was measured through the overall mean rating in the participants' grammaticality judgements and their choices of articles or null articles in the elicitation context in which (in)definite use of articles was also measured. Among the two tasks, the performance of the participants in genericity was not found to be significantly different from (in)definiteness. This performance tends to suggests that English generic articles might still constitute a form of difficulty just like (in)definite articles as opposed to what has been predicted based on the IH.

Starting with their grammaticality judgement in generic sentences, it is quite similar to the ones with (in)definite use of articles. While they were well aware of the felicitous

sentences with generic meaning, their mean scores of the erroneous sentences dropped in the grammatical band. This showed us that the proficient speakers were tolerant towards the grammar errors regarding genericity similar to (in)definiteness meaning. When their overall judgements in generic article use were compared to the ones in (in)definite article use, no significant difference was found in their performances. In addition to their close mean scores in the grammaticality judgement, their average performance in the elicitation task yielded no significant difference, as well. In this particular task, through which both instances of article use were measured, approximately 82% of article choices giving the meaning of (in)definiteness was grammatical, and almost 78% of articles were chosen correctly in order to give a generic meaning. Although there were fewer grammatical tokens of genericity, this result did not yield any significant difference between the grammatical choices of both types of articles of the same group of participants. Such a close performance shows that one type of interface is not more challenging than the other considerably. The significant difference between subject realization and the two uses of articles, on the other hand, makes us consider pure syntax is definitely less challenging for the learners compared to the ones at interface domains regardless of the type.

The results of this article type do not totally support the IH in the sense that 22% of their choices of generic article in average deviated from the monolingual norms, suggesting that the syntax-semantics interface leads to certain difficulties for Turkish learmers of English even at the high proficiency level. In contrast to the IH accounts claiming no difficulties in syntactic structures integrating with semantics, no significant differences between the learners' performance in syntax-discourse and syntax-semantics interfaces showed that internal interfaces might also be problematic even among proficient speakers. As far as their language development is concerned, interaction between language sub-systems also causes difficulties despite no discourse extensions. This is the place where the accounts of the IH regarding the lack of difficulty in attaining internal interfaces as opposed to external ones could be rejected. The absence of significantly less wrong judgements and choices of generic articles compared to the (in)definite ones would

support the claim that internal interfaces are still difficult to attain for the proficient Turkish participants in this study. This may be the result of reduced exposure to the relevant input, in the form of generic articles, compared to the non-generic ones. As Whitman (1974) puts it differently, the reason why generic use of articles is problematic could be due to the delayed teaching. Obviously, the syntactic differences between Turkish and English about how to indicate genericness are not the main focus in teaching articles; thus, even the proficient learners encounter difficulties while using articles in generic contexts. As Sorace (2011) also puts, reduced integration ability of bilingual speakers could be the result of the quantity and quality of exposure and input.

Montrul (2009) hypothesizes that incomplete acquisition could be more pronounced at an interface domain. No differentiation between the types of interfaces was specified with this hypothesis, but pure-syntax versus any interface domains is a matter of accuracy measurements. This hypothesis is in line with this study in the sense that acquisition difficulties are not constrained by one type of interface structure versus the other in the participants' interpretations and choices of articles. Thus, the syntax-semantics and the syntax-discourse interfaces do not pose different challenges to L1 Turkish learners of English at a high proficiency level. In other words, the syntax-semantics interface is not inherently privileged (O'Grady, 2011) contrary to the IH claims.

Although the article studies concerning generic representations has been under investigation, it is possible to find some recent research conducted on it. However, all these studies, which were also placed in the literature review, were conducted in order to investigate whether learners could recover from their L1 effect while acquiring genericity in English and/or whether the learners could differentiate between different generic contexts that are achieved with (in)definite singular, indefinite plural and mass nouns in English (Ionin, Montrul & Crivos, 2009; Ionin & Montrul, 2010; Ionin, Montrul, Kim & Philippov, 2011; Snape, Mayo & Gürel, 2013). Since both of these aims are irrelevant to the present study, it is not plausible to compare the present study's results with the previously conducted research on genericity. However, Park's (2013) study is quite

appropriate to be compared with the present study in the sense that the acquisition of genericity feature was discussed in comparison to the (in)definiteness feature. Moreover, one of the aims was to test the IH by comparing the performances of the highly proficient Korean learners' of English in these two meanings of articles.

The results of her study did not support the IH in the sense that the learners demonstrated difficulty in the acquisition of generic articles. Although it must be easily learned according to the attributes of the IH, the difficulty of the learners in the generic contexts did not support the claim that internal interfaces are problem-free. In addition, although there was no significant difference between the (in)definiteness and genericity functions of articles, the learners performed better in the use of (in)definite articles. This showed that external interfaces were not the only criteria which make a structure more difficult to attain. These results are in line with the results of the present study due to the no statistically different performances of the learners in the use of articles in the two contexts. Their performance in the choice of (in)definite articles was even slightly better in the FCET compared to the generic contexts, which is another similarity between the current study and Park's study (2013). To this end, the participants' non target-like performance could not be explained with the latest version of the IH in both of the studies, but actually it is the number of variables included in a structure which is the locus of difficulty for learners.

In addition to Park's (2013) study, the present study's results are partially congruent with Özçelik's (2018) study. The claim regarding not all internal interfaces are equally unproblematic was also acknowledged in his study because the Turkish learners of English were found to have problems in the use of quantificational scope construction represented at internal interface. In addition, he reported less difficulty in the external domain governing the quantificational scope. In this regard, the present study is incongruent with his because of the identical difficulties found in the external and internal domains in the current study.

5.4 Conclusion and Methodological Implications

This study aims to expand the ground of the IH (e.g. Serratrice, Sorace, & Paoli, 2004; Sorace, 2005; Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006; Sorace & Serratrice, 2009) by testing prospective English language teachers on subject realization operating with pure syntax and the article uses of (in)definiteness and genericity governed with syntax-discourse and syntax-semantics interfaces respectively.

The first research question regarding whether proficient Turkish learners of English interpret and use subjects accurately turned out to be affirmative. The participants did quite well in the judgement of grammaticality and in the discourse completion. Having found a significantly better performance compared to the one in article interpretation and choice, we came to the conclusion that the IH could account for this result. This is because the structures which are governed by narrow syntax are resilient to acquisition difficulties according to this hypothesis.

As for the second research question, however, the results of the data collection yielded that the participants even at a high proficiency level have certain difficulties in both the interpretation and choice of articles. In addition to this, the presence of a significant difference between (in)definiteness, which is governed with an external interface, and genericity, which is governed with an internal interface, would have provided clear evidence for the newest version of the IH. According to the latest claims of this hypothesis, internal interfaces are easy to acquire as opposed to external interfaces, which cause more vulnerability and target-variant language use. However, the results on the article uses of (in)definiteness and genericity appeared to have similar accuracy rates, which could not be attributed to the IH. This has invoked the notion that properties at external interface, which is (in)definite article use in the case of this study, are not necessarily more problematic than the structures involving internal interface, which is generic article use in the case of this study. Overall, this result is not in line with the predictions made on the

difficulty distinction between external and internal interfaces within the scope of the IH lending support to the findings reported in Park's (2013) study.

Another point which is noteworthy mentioning is the task type differences in subject realization. In the DCT, a significantly improved performance was found, whereas in the grammaticality judgement, a higher percentage of subjectless sentences were accepted as grammatical and the ones with subjects were accepted as problematic. The reason for the participants' significantly different performances on the two tasks could be due to the nature of the tasks. The GJT represents receptive knowledge, whereas the DCT represents productive understanding of the particular structure. It has been suggested that recognition of (un)grammaticality is highly demanding cognitively, which could be the reason why the participants showed a lower accomplishment. Orfitelli and Grüter (2013) also note that L2 grammaticality judgements can be impacted from general processing restrictions regarded as extragrammatical factors.

It is also interesting to note that, similar to subject realization, significantly more difficulty in English articles was detected in the judgement task compared to the elicitation task. This discrepancy between different task type performances might be again relevant to the different nature of the tasks administered. The latter task in the study presented a context for the participants and they were asked to fill in the gaps with one article or null article, which gave the participants a lucky guess - almost 33% chance of choosing the correct option. Moreover, they were asked to focus their attention on only one context per se. In the judgments of grammaticality, on the other hand, some extragarramatical factors must have come into stage. The number of statements they were supposed to evaluate might have caused boredom resulting in attention problems. In addition, considering that other structures were also displayed in the given statements, they could have created a possible attribution of grammaticality or ungrammaticality rather than the actual structures tested. These might have made the participants make use of their English article knowledge in a more controlled manner in the FCET compared to the grammaticality judgement. Overall, this result could also lend support to the findings regarding task type variences found in

Snape's (2018) and Çimen's (2013) studies, which analyzed the differentiation between definite uniqueness and definite genericity, and the one between definitiness and genericity respectively.

Despite the task type differences in all the structures tested, the overall performance of the participants in the use of these structures yielded the same result in the sense that they performed the best in subject realization, the second best in (in)definite article use and the least in generic article use. The differences in the use of all the structures depending on the task type could not be a coincidence, but the level of challenge may be subject to the nature of tasks. This in turn might cast a doubt on the interface phenomenon. When proficient English-as-a-foreign-language speakers are asked to judge a structure on the internal / external interface or narrow syntax, they could experience more difficulty because they could be tolerant towards infelicitous statements. However, when they are given more control over their use of the target language through their own choices and production, they might perform closer to native speakers. To put it differently, the nucleus of acquisition difficulty might not be the interaction between the domains but the task type considering that the same language structure could be generated at different degrees of difficulty within or without an interface.

In conclusion, drawing on the data from Turkish EFL learners, it is demonstrated that narrow syntactic properties are less problematic and interpreted correctly in L2 acquisition to a gerater extent. The features that require the integration of syntactic knowledge with other sub-modules or external domains, however, present more difficulty even for proficient learners. These results of the present study could be well supported with Yuan's (2010) arguments, proposing that acquisition difficulty of interfaces is variable-dependent, rather than domain-dependent. More specifically, it could be argued that the acquisition of L2 structures is bound to the number of variables, including interfaces, regardless of the type. This indicates that the easiness in acquiring subject realization and difficulty in the acquisition of articles are not domain-wide; that is, whether an external or internal domain is involved. They instead depend on how many variables are involved.

Even though no statistical difference was found between the two article uses, it appears that the participants performed slightly better in the choice of articles in the (in)definite contexts than the generic ones. Unpredicted difficulty in the generic contexts in comparison to the (in)definite contexts could lead us to assert that the English-as-a-foreign-language Turkish learners are more familiar with (in)definiteness property than genericity as a result of instruction although (in)definite article use is still problematic. The reason why even the proficient speakers of English who are majoring at the ELT Department have not fully acquired the English article system could be that the article use, especially the one in generic contexts, is delayed to the final stage of language development, which might then cause certain difficulties. As opposed to Whitman's (1974) view suggesting that generic article use is to be taught at a final stage since this use of articles is the least found, we suggest that teachers show different article usages at earlier stages. Nevertheless, teaching genericity might cause extra difficulties for EFL students because of the subtle semantic differences between different article usages, so the optimum level to teach those could be the intermediate level at which learners are supposed to have acquired the article use in non-generic contexts.

More specific to the non-generic article teaching, we should be aware of the fact that the discourse determines whether to opt for a definite or indefinite article for the non-generic contexts. Therefore, the errors committed in the choice of articles are not due to the lack of grammatical knowledge, but due to the lack of merging this grammatical knowledge with the discursive knowledge. Regarding this, teachers should be made aware that students need time and experience in the target language to acquire this feature fully upon deductive teaching. As for the implications for the context of teaching and learning, comprehensively contextualized input is a necessity in EFL classes. Exposing learners to contexts with different mediums and length depending on the level of the learners can help them to internalize the structure in time and with accumulating experience.

However, we believe that when the appropriate time to teach genericity comes, the best method to teach articles is a traditional explicit teaching because of the subtle semantic

differences in generic contexts, which might take quite a long time to teach through implicit teaching methods. This is because it is quite challenging for learners to understand the differences between NP-level and sentence-level genericities and accordingly decide on which article to assign - indefinite singular, definite singular, indefinite plural and indefinite mass nouns. These four ways cannot be used interchangeably; depending on the generic context, we have to assign the correct article. This emerging difficulty can be compensated for by exposing the learners to authentic language use for each scenario and by instructing them about which ways are suitable for which generic context. Again, the learners would definitely need time and experience to master in this feature, as well. Thus, teachers should also be patient with the plausible misuses and misinterpretations in this process.

Another noteworthy implication is regarding the task types to be used in teaching and learning process. Considering the differing performances according to the task type in the present study, teachers should be aware that their students' performance may change based on the task and that they should provide their students with a variety of tasks, give feedback and do remedial teaching accordingly. Regarding the acquisition of articles, it is better to start with sentence-level tasks and then provide them with cloze tests in which they are supposed to fill in the gaps with the correct article. These activities assist learners' comprehension and foster their learning. As they master more on the use of articles, teachers can give error correction activities to the students for them to pretend like a teacher to correct the mistakes in the text. This helps raise their awareness of the different types of article uses. At the last step, teachers should use written production tasks to see which articles have been acquired and which ones still constitute a problem. While doing so, it is important for teachers not only to check the presence or absence of articles depending on the context, but also to analyze the semantic notions represented through their article use. In this way, they can understand whether the students encounter difficulties in generic and/or non-generic contexts. As a result, they can adjust their

instruction according to the types of errors or difficulties and do remedial teaching if need be.

5.5 Limitations and Future Directions

This study has its own limitations that are aimed to be improved in future studies. The first limitation is the number of participants, which might be argued to be not enough to reach firm conclusions. Due to the time constraint and the pandemic disease, we could only collect data from 58 participants, four of whom were eliminated because of their native language. Larger samples tend to be more reliable; therefore, this study might be considered not generalizable due to the number of participants. However, in the statistical tests, the values obtained from 30 participants are believed to be similar to the ones obtained from a large group (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008, p. 57). Considering that 30 is thought to be the minimum group size in empirical research, the data results were computed with the tasks administered to this number of participants.

Another methodological limitation of this study is the absence of evidence regarding intergroup heterogeneity, which means that speakers of different source languages show different performances in the language structures being tested in the recipient language (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008, p. 229). In order to ensure methodological rigor, the study should have rested on intergroup relationships by including another group of participants whose L1 is operated differently than Turkish in the particular structures tested. In this way, the motivation for acquisition difficulties in the target language could have been discussed in relation to the source language of the participants. However, the absence of a different group of learners prevented us from attributing the results to any potential impact of the participants' L1.

In addition, there could have been a discussion over the conceptualization of processing cost regarding certain structures where interface is involved. Although we could not find any significant difference between the two article functions governed by the internal and external interface, costly operations seem to exist in these structures compared to subject

realization not governed by interface. However, there is a gap in this study regarding why more erroneous linguistic derivations occur when the interface structures are involved. In order to explain it more firmly, tasks measuring language processing should have been included, so this is set as a goal for further studies.

Finally, to the best of our knowledge, there is no study conducted according to the IH considerations aiming to reveal the difficulty pattern of language structures, one of which is governed with pure syntax, another with internal interface and the other with external interface. This made it impossible to compare the present study results with the previous studies at large; therefore, comparison with the previous research was made discretely for each language feature tested.

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APPENDICES

A: APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

Sayı: 28620816 /

20 Şubat 2020

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. Çiğdem Sağın ŞİMŞEK

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız **Ecem GEYDİR'in** "**Testing the Interface Hypothesis: L2 Acquisition of English Subjects and Articles by Turkish Learnes**" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **445-ODTU-2019** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY

Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN
Üye

Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL
Üye

B: LANGAUGE BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age: _____

2. Country of origin: _____

3. What is your native language(s)?: _____

4. What are the other languages you speak and at what level?: _____

5. At what age did you start learning English?: _____

6. How long have you been learning English?: _____

7. How have you learned English up to this point? (check all that apply)

_____ Through formal classroom instruction

_____ Through interacting with people

_____ Online chatting and/or messaging

_____ From TV, music, or movies

_____ Others, specify:

8. How frequently do you use English every day? (1=almost never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=very often)

( ) 1   ( ) 2   ( ) 3   ( ) 4   ( ) 5

9. If you have lived or traveled in other countries for more than three months, please provide the name of the country and the total length of stay: _____

10. Have you ever taken TOEFL, IELTS, YDS or METU proficiency exam? If yes, please provide your most recent score: _____

C: GRAMMATICALITY JUDGEMENT TASK ITEMS

Dialogues	This dialogue is…						
	poor						perfectly fine
1. A: I have finished cleaning the living room. **B:** But picture on the wall isn't clean. Can you please dust it off?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. A: What do you know about cats? **B:** The cat likes mice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. A: Why are you worried? **B:** I can't find anyone to order the files. Everybody thinks that are not responsible for it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. A: Have you ever been abroad? **B:** Yes, I've been to five countries so far.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. A: I don't want to sleep now. **B:** It's bed time. Turn off the television and go to sleep.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. A: Give an example of an important invention in history. **B:** A telephone is a very useful invention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. A: Why are the children still in their rooms? **B:** It seems that they haven't completed their homework yet.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. A: Warm colors can make people feel hungry. **B:** Mr. Matt, research assistant at METU, has conducted a study about it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. A: Rabbits can cause problems for gardeners. **B:** Do they harm crops?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. A: Why do you have to so fast drive? **B:** Because I can't be late to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. A: What type of music do you like listening to? **B:** I like listening to different kinds of music.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. A: This company is a good place to work. **B:** I think the biggest role belongs to its president.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. A: Why are you watching this movie again? **B:** Because it always makes laugh me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. A: If you have any questions about grammar, I can always help you. **B:** Thank you. Actually, our teacher explained all the rules clearly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. A: What is the definition of ideal spouse? **B:** It depends on what qualities you look for in your partner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. A: Where would you like to go for lunch? **B:** I think we should go to that new restaurant.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. A: Can you tell me where are the books? **B:** They are right over there.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. A: Which shirt should I buy? **B:** The red one looks better on you.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. A: Recent research has shown that we are affected by the colors. **B:** Which colors affect our mood positively?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. A: Why does everybody seem nervous today? **B:** Nobody believes that they will pass the test.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. A: Why are you working while studying? Do you need money? **B:** I actually started working for pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. A: Shall we go to a concert this weekend? **B:** That sound good. Let's buy the tickets online.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

23. A: I have an important exam next week, so I feel nervous. **B:** If you enough study, you will be successful in the exam.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
24. A: How much does this green vase cost? **B:** It costs 500 dollars.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
25. A: What is the most important reason for global warming? **B:** Some people hold the human activities responsible for this problem.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
26. A: This is an informative article. **B:** I know. Information in it explains a lot about the power of dreams.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
27. A: What did John say in the court? **B:** He explained that was not guilty.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
28. A: What is your biggest dream? **B:** If I were rich one day, I will travel all over the world.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
29. A: What happened to your eyes? **B:** I couldn't sleep well last night.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
30. A: What do you know about Turkish customs? **B:** Turkish people welcome their guests warmly.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
31. A: What is this book about? **B:** It gives interesting facts. For example, the potato was first produced in South America.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
32. A: Why do Americans work hard? **B:** Many Americans believe that must work hard in order to be happy.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
33. A: Have you ever been to a party before? **B:** No, because I have been never invited to a party.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
34. A: Gosh! What's this crowd for? **B:** Professor Jenkins announced that invented a new machine.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

35. A: What is the most important key to a successful advertisement? **B:** If advertiser uses famous people in his advertisement, consumers can remember it.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
36. A: I took an interesting class last semester. **B:** What was the class about?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
37. A: What do you think about Microsoft's new policy? **B:** Well, it seems that Microsoft won't spend money on their customers.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
38. A: Water scarcity is the biggest issue in the world. **B:** Because water is essential for the life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
39. A: What kind of trouble do you have in class? **B:** Some students use their cell phones, so I have to warn all the time these students.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
40. A: Shall I take my umbrella? **B:** Yes, you should because the weather forecast shows that is going to rain.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
41. A: I'm having a party on Friday. **B:** Nobody has told me nothing about your party.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
42. A: What do you do in your free time? **B:** I usually go for a walk.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
43. A: Why was Jane so happy yesterday? **B:** She told me that she won the lottery.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
44. A: Paper clip comes in handy. **B:** I still prefer to staple my documents, though.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
45. A: Vacation time is a key benefit that attracts people to a company. **B:** What are the other benefits?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
46. A: I need some flowers for my wife. It's her birthday. **B:** Very well. We have some fresh red roses.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

47. A: Why don't you come to the board? I'm waiting for a volunteer. **B:** I think nobody believes that they are intelligent enough to solve the problem.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
48. A: Where were the children when the accident happened? **B:** In the garden they were playing.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
49. A: Why have you chosen this department? **B:** Language is a great invention of humankind. This fact has always attracted my attention.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
50. A: Some architects will redesign the interior decor of the library on the main campus. **B:** I am excited about the new design.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

D: DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASK ITEMS

1. You have just bought a new house. You are walking around the garden with your husband and discussing what to plant.

You say to your husband that _____

_____

2. You take your dress to the dry-cleaner. You particularly want to wear it to a party on Saturday night.

You say to the cleaner that _____

_____

3. Although you are highly qualified, you have been unemployed for a long time. Your father finds you a job in a factory. You know the work will be boring, but you are also very short of money.

You say to your father that _____

_____

4. Some new people have moved into the house next to yours. You have seen them through the window. You decide to go and introduce yourself.

You say to your neighbors that _____

_____

5. You are in a café with a friend. The waiter gets your order wrong. You have ordered an orange juice and a cup of tea, but he brings a cake and two cups of coffee.

You say to the waiter that _____

_____

6. Your professor suggests you to take a course during the summer. However, you prefer not to take classes during the summer.

You say to the professor that _____

_____

7. You are late for an important class and the teacher is very punctual and principled. You want to apologize for this situation when you enter the classroom.

You say to the teacher that _____

_____

8. A friend of yours is insistent that you go to her birthday party, but you don't want to go, so you find an excuse.

You say to her that _____

_____

9. Your child comes home upset with the result of an important exam. When you see her sad, you try to comfort her.

You say to your child that _____

_____

10. A friend of yours has had a bad cough for several months. You think it is time for her to go to a doctor about it and you decide to tell her to take the matter seriously.

You say to your friend that _____

_____

E: FORCED CHOICE ELICITATION TASK CONTEXT

It is widely known that colors have a direct impact on **(1)** _____ feelings. Therefore, it makes sense for people to surround themselves with colors which make them feel good.

It is beneficial to choose colors that make people feel comfortable, relaxed or energized. Bright orange walls in **(2)** _____ bedroom, for instance, may keep a sensitive person awake, whereas light blue seems to have **(3)** _____ relaxing effect. Maya Romero, New York, suffered from **(4)** _____ chronic insomnia. His friend suggested that **(5)** _____ orange walls in her bedroom might be contributing to **(6)** _____ problem. Maya listened to her friend's advice and painted **(7)** _____ walls light blue. Since then, she has had much less trouble sleeping.

(8) _____ colors affect **(9)** _____ moods in a variety of ways. Yellow is a cheerful color for many people. However, strong shades of yellow can be overwhelming when it is used for **(10)** _____ entire room. Light yellow, on the other hand, can lift **(11)** _____ person's mood. Typically people experience **(12)** _____ color blue as comforting; however, it is better to avoid using too much blue. A room with blue walls and blue furniture can seem cold and overly formal. Christopher and Marie Wang, Washington, moved into a new home and painted **(13)** _____ walls in their living room blue. Then they filled **(14)** _____ room with furniture of varying shades of blue. They loved it, but one day they noticed that they were unhappy when they sat in the room. They asked advice from a decorator to see if the problem was related to **(15)** _____ decor. The decorator suggested that they replace their icy blue carpet with **(16)** _____ carpet in warm colors, such as dark red or warm beige. She also recommended replacing their classic style furniture with more comfortable pieces. The Wangs reported that after they made **(17)** _____ changes, their living room quickly became their favorite room for **(18)** _____ entertainment.

Clearly, colors in an environment have a tremendous impact on the people who live or work there. Certain colors can improve **(19)** _____ emotions dramatically, while others can actually bring **(20)** _____ sadness or loneliness.

Adapted from Grammar and Beyond Essentials 3

ARAYÜZ HİPOTEZİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: ANADİLİ TÜRKÇE OLAN İNGİLİZCE KONUŞUCULARININ ÖZNE VE TANIM EDATI EDİNİMİ

Giriş

Dilbilimsel arayüzlerin ikinci dil edinimindeki etkileri son zamanların araştırma konusudur ve bu çalışmanın temelini oluşturmaktadır. Sorace ve Filiaci (2006) tarafından ileri sürülen Arayüz Hipotezi (Interface Hypothesis) bir dilbilgisi yapısı söylev veya pragmatik gibi dilbilgisinin dışında kalan faktörlerle etkileşime geçtiğinde (external interface) bu durumun yetersiz dil edinimine sebep olacağını savunmaktadır. İkinci dil konuşmacıları üst seviyelere geldiklerinde bile bu problemin sürebileceği düşünülmektedir. Bu durumda salt sözdizimi kurallarıyla oluşturulan bir dilbilgisi yapısı, sözdizimi kurallarının dış bir modülle bir araya gelmesiyle oluşturulan başka bir dilbilgisi yapısına göre daha kolay edinilebilir (Sorace, 2005; Sorace & Filiaci 2006).

Arayüz Hipotezi (AH) daha sonraları evrilerek bu alanda yapılan çalışmalarda dış arayüz (external interface) ve iç arayüz (internal interface) alanlarında oluşturulan yapıların farklı zorluk derecelerine yol açıp açmadığı üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu hipotez çerçevesinde savunulan, dış arayüz alanındaki yapıların iç arayüz yapılarına göre daha zor edinildiği yönündedir (Tsimpli & Sorace 2006; Sorace 2011). İç arayüz yapıları bir dil içerisinde iki alt modülün (örneğin, sözdizimi ve semantik) bir araya gelmesiyle kurallaşırken, dış arayüzdeki yapılar bir dil alanından bir de dil dışından iki modülün (örneğin, sözdizimi ve pragmatik) bir araya gelmesiyle oluşturulmaktadır. Dolayısıyla dış arayüz yapılarının dilbilgisi modüllerinin dışında kalan bir faktörün dahil olması sonucunda oluşmasından dolayı bilişsel açıdan daha zorlayıcı olduğu düşünülmüştür. Öte yandan iç arayüzünde oluşturulan kurallar dilin kendi içindeki iki modülün bir araya gelmesiyle ortaya

çıktığından tıpkı salt sözdizimi kurallarıyla oluşturulan yapılar gibi daha kolay öğrenilebilmektedir.

Ancak bazı araştırmacılar (örneğin, White (2009b) ve Montrul (2011)) AH'nin arayüz çeşitleri arasındaki zorluk farkını açıklamada fazla geniş olduğunu öne sürerek bu hipotezi eleştirmişlerdir. Bu araştırmacılara göre dış arayüz alanında kurulan her dilbilgisi yapısı eşit ölçüde zor ya da iç arayüz alanında oluşturulan her yapı eşit oranda problemsiz olmayabilir. Bu alanda yapılan araştırmaların sonuçları da birbiriyle çelişmektedir. Bir grup araştırmacı (örneğin, Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006; Iverson et al., 2008; Slabakova et al., 2012; Massery & Fuentes, 2014; Antonova-Ünlü, 2015) inceledikleri dış arayüz yapılarının iç arayüz yapılarından ve/veya salt sözdizimi kurallarıyla yönetilen yapılardan daha zor öğrenildiği sonucuna ulaşarak AH'yi desteklemişlerdir. Öte yandan, bir grup araştırmacı (örneğin, Ivanov, 2012; Park, 2013; Özçelik, 2018) hedef dili konuşanların dış arayüz alanında olsa dahi bir yapıyı kolaylıkla öğrenebildiğini ve/veya iç arayüz alanında olmasına rağmen bir yapıyı öğrenirken zorluk çektiklerini kanıtlayınca AH'ye karşı çıkmışlardır. Bu çalışma da AH üzerindeki bu tartışmaya katkı sunmayı amaçlamıştır. AH'yi doğrulayabilmek ya da ona karşı çıkabilmek amacı bu hipotez çerçevesinde tartışılan üç dilbilgisi alanından birer yapıyı incelemeyi gerekli kılmıştır. Bu bağlamda anadili Türkçe olan İngilizce kullanıcılarının sadece dilbilgisi kurallarına bağlı olarak kullanılan özne yapısı, sözdizimi-pragmatik arayüzünde (dış arayüz) kullanılan belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve sözdizimi-semantik arayüzünde kullanılan (iç arayüz) kapsamlı tanım edatı edinimleri incelenmiştir. Bu üç yapının ne oranda doğru/yanlış kullanıldığı karşılaştırılarak, AH'nin araştırma alanını genişletmek hedeflenmiştir.

Anadil Türkçede ve hedef dil İngilizcede bu üç yapının nasıl çalıştığı aşağıdaki gibidir:

1. Özne

'*(We) love reading a book.'

'(Biz) kitap okumayı seviyoruz.'

Yukarıdaki örneklerde görüldüğü üzere İngilizcede özne pozisyonu boş bırakıldığında cümle hatalı olurken, Türkçede özneyi düşürmek mümkündür. Ancak Türkçede gizli özne kullanılıp kullanılmayacağını bağlam belirler. Öte yandan, İngilizcede bağlamdan bağımsız şekilde dilbilgisel kural olarak özneyi her zaman cümle içersinde tutmak gerekir. Bu sebeple hedef dilde özne kullanımı salt sözdizim kurallarıyla belirlenir.

2. Belirli/Belirsiz Tanım Edatı

a. '**The** man is sitting in the room.' = '**Adam** odada oturuyor.'

b. '**A** man is sitting in the room.' = 'Odada **adam** oturuyor.'

Yukarıdaki örneklerde görüldüğü üzere, bir ismi belirli (a) ya da belirsiz (b) yapmak için İngilizcede ismin önüne bir tanım edatı gerekir. Bu durumda isimlerin önüne hangi edatın getirileceğini (sözdizimi) içinde bulunduğu bağlam (söylem/pragmatik) belirlediği için bu yapı dış arayüz alanında kullanılır. Türkçe karşılıklarında ise böyle bir tanım edatı sisteminin olmadığını görüyoruz. Belirlilik ya da belirsizlik anlamı Türkçede farklı yöntemlerle verilebilecekken yukarıdaki örneklerde cümlenin sözdizimine göre de bu anlamların verilebileceği gösterilmiştir.

3. Kapsamlı Tanım Edatı

'**The** dinosour went extinct.'

'Dinazor**lar**ın nesli tükenmiştir.'

Yukarıdaki örnekler gösteriyor ki bir isme kapsamlılık anlamı verilmek istendiğinde İngilizcede yine tanım edatlarından faydalanılır. Dolayısıyla tanım edatının gelip gelmeyeceğini, gelecekse hangi edatın kullanılacağını (sözdizim), kelimeye yüklenmek istenen anlam (semantik) belirleyeceği için bu kullanım iç arayüz alanında değerlendirilir. Türkçede ise tanım edatı sistemi olmadığı için kapsamlılık anlamı vermenin bir yolu örnekte de görüldüğü gibi ismi çoğul halde kullanmaktır. Ancak iki dilde de daha farlı şekillerde bu anlamı isimlere yüklemek mümkündür.

Sonuç olarak, çalışmanın başında AH çerçevesinde bakılarak bir tahminde bulunulmuştur: Katılımcılar kayda değer bir farkla dış arayüz yapısında (belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı) iç arayüz yapısından (kapsamlı tanım edatı) daha düşük bir performans gösterirse ve salt sözdizimi kurallarıyla kullanılan özneyi özellikle dış arayüz yapısına göre önemli ölçüde bir farkla daha doğru kullanabilirlerse ancak o zaman bu çalışmada çıkan sonuçlar AH'yi destekler niteledikdedir diyebiliriz.

Amaç ve Araştıma Soruları

Bu çalışmanın iki temel amacı vardır. İlk olarak, ana dili Türkçe olan üst düzey İngilizce konuşucularının özne ve tanım edatı kullanımlarının doğruluk derecesine bakarak bulguların AH ile açıklanıp açıklanamayacağını test etmektir. Bu bağlamda temel amaç bu hipotezin ikinci dil edinimi alanındaki geçerliliğini test etmektir.

Çıkan bulgulara yönelik olarak bir yapıyı öğrenmedeki zorluk derecesinin hangi sebep veya sebeplere dayandırılabileceğini ortaya koyduktan sonra ikinci temel amaç İngilizce dili öğretiminde yöntembilimsel tavsiyelerde bulunmaktır.

Bu amaçlar doğrultusunda oluşturulan araştırma soruları aşağıdaki gibidir:

1. a. Anadili Türkçe olan ileri düzeyde İngilizce konuşucuları hedef dilde salt sözdizimi kurallarıyla yönetilen özneyi doğru bir şekilde değerlendirebilmekte ve kullanabilmekte midir?

  b. Evet ise, bu sonuç Arayüz Hipotezi ile açıklabilir mi?

2. a. Anadili Türkçe olan ileri düzeyde İngilizce konuşucuları hedef dilde hem sözdizimi-pragmatik hem de sözdizimi-semantik arayüzleri ile kurulan tanım edatlarını doğru bir şekilde değerlendirebilmekte ve kullanbilmekte midir?

  b. Evet ise, bu sonuç Arayüz Hipotezi ile açıklabilir mi?

Katılımcılar

Bu çalışmada anadili Türkçe olan Türkiye'nin merkezindeki bir devlet üniversitesinde İngiliz Dili Öğretimi bölümünde ikinci sınıf öğrencisi olan yaşları 19-39 aralığında değişen 58 birey yer almıştır. Bunlardan 4 tanesinin demografik bilgiler kısmında anadilini Türkçe dışında bir dil olarak bildirmesi üzerine çalışmanın seyri için bu bireylerin verileri elenip bulgular geriye kalan 54 birey üzerinden değerlendirmeye alınmıştır.

Çalışmanın amacı gereği İngilizce dilini ileri düzeyde konuşan bireylere ihtiyaç duyulduğundan seviyelerinden emin olmak adına katılımcılara en son girdikleri İngilizce yeterlilik sınav sonuçlarını rapor etmeleri istenmiş ve ortalamaları 83 bulunmuştur. İleri düzeyde İngilizce konuşucuları oldukları tespit edilince tüm katılımcıların bu çalışmanın amacına uygun bireyler olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Sadece ileri düzeyde İngilizceyi bilen katılımcıların dahil edilmesinin sebebi ise geçerliliğini soruşturduğumuz hipotezin hedef dilde dış arayüz yapılarının ileri düzeyde dili öğrenenler için bile zorluk yarattığını savunmasından kaynaklıdır. Katılımcıların gösterdiği zorluk veya kolaylıkların onların dil seviyelerine atfedilmesini önlemek adına bütün veriler bu ileri düzeydeki öğrenci grubundan toplanmıştır.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Bu çalışmadan off-line Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi, Söylem Tamamlama Testi ve Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testi kullanılmıştır. Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi bu çalışmanın ana veri toplama aracı olup katılımcıların, özne, belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve kapsamlılık bildiren tanım edatı yapılarında doğru ve hatalı kullanımları ne oranda algıladıklarını çözümlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Toplam 50 tane diyalogtan oluşan bu yargı testinde yan cümleciklerdeki özne kullanımından kaynaklanan 5 tanesi doğru 5 tanesi ise yanlış olan diyalog vardır. Aynı dağılım belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı yapısında ve kapsamlılık bildiren edat yapısında da takip edilmiştir. Geriye kalan 20 tane diyalog ise çeldirici olarak sorulmuş olup veri

analizinden çıkartılmıştır. 1'den 7'ye kadar olan ölçekte katılımcılardan diyalogları dilbilgisellik açısından değerledirmeleri istenmiştir.

Katılımcıların verilen bir cümlenin dilbilgisel açıdan doğruluğunu fark etme yetisinin yanı sıra üzerinde çalışılan yapıları verilen bir bağlam içerisinde kullanabilme becerilerini tespit edebilmek amacıyla iki farklı test daha uygulanmıştır. İngilizcede salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre kullanılan özne yapısının nasıl kullanıldığını incelemek için Söylem Tamamlama Testi ve sırasıyla dış ve iç arayüz kurallarına göre kullanılan belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve kapsamlı tanım edatı tercihlerini inceleyebilmek için Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testi kullanılmıştır.

Söylem Tamamlama Testinde katılımcılara 10 tane durum verilip bu durumlara karşı ne cevap verecekleri sorulmuş ancak özne kullanımına yönlendirmek amacıyla ana tümcenin kendisi verilip yan cümleyi kendilerinin tamamlaması beklenmiştir. Böylelikle yan cümleyi yazarken özneyle başladıkları durumlar doğru olarak, özneyi düşürdükleri veya ikincil öge olarak kullandıkları durumlar ise yanlış olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Son olarak sadece tanım edatları seçimlerinin ölçüldüğü Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testinde katılımcılara renkler konusu ile ilgili bir metin verilmiş olup bu metindeki boşlukları doğru bir edat (a/an/the) ile ya da edatın gerekmediğini düşündükleri durumlarda hükümsüzlük sembolü (Ø) ile doldurmaları istenmiştir. Bu metinde toplam 20 tane boşluk olup 12 tanesi belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı seçimlerini (dış arayüz alanı: sözdizimi-pragmatik), diğer 8'i ise kapsamlılık yorumu veren edat seçimlerini (iç arayüz alanı: sözdizimi-semantik) ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Yöntem ve Veri Analizi

Yukarıda belirtilen bütün testler off-line olarak uygulanmış olup zamandan kaynaklı veri güvenilmezliğini önlemek için verileri toplarken zaman ve mekan kısıtlaması yapılmamıştır. Ancak katılımcılardan verilen testleri konulduğu sıraya göre tamamlamaları ve testleri yaparken herhangi bir kaynaktan faydalanmamaları istenmiştir.

Sonuç analizi SPSS istatistiksel analiz programı kullanarak yapılmıştır. Öncelikle katılımcıların üç ayrı yapıdaki performanslarını göstermek amacıyla her bir veri toplama aracı için betimsel analiz testleri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Özne kullanımına yönelik betimsel analiz tablosunda katılımcıların Dilbilgisel Yargı Testindeki özne kullanımı ile alakalı olan sorulardaki ortalama yargı değeri ve Söylem Tamamlama Testindeki ortalama performans yüzdeleri gösterilmiştir. İki farklı tanım edatı yapısının betimsel analizinde ise katılımcıların bu iki tip edatı içeren Dilbilgisel Yargı Testi sorularındaki ortalama yargı değeri ve Zorunlu-Seçme Çıkartım Testindeki doğru yanıtlarına göre hesaplanan ortalama performans yüzdeleri gösterilmiştir.

Betimsel analiz yöntemlerinin ardından bu üç değişkeni (özne, belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı, kapsamlı tanım edatı) karşılaştırabilmek ve aralarında önemli bir farklılık olup olmadığını saptayabilmek için iki tane tek yönlü varyans analiz testi (one-way ANOVA) uygulanmıştır. Bu testlerden ilki katılımcıların yargı testindeki performanslarını karşılaştırmak, ikincisi ise bu yapıları kullanırkenki performanslarını karşılaştırmak için yapılmıştır.

Son olarak, her bir değişkeni ölçmek için verilen iki test arasında önemli bir performans değişikliği olup olmadığını saptamak amacıya 3 ayrı eşleştirilmiş gruplar t-testi (paired-samples t-test) yapılmıştır.

Tartışma ve Genel Sonuçlar

Bu araştırmanın amacı İngilizcede salt sözdizimi ile oluşturulan özne kuralıyla birlikte sırasıyla dış ve iç arayüz temelinde çalışan belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ve kapsamlılık bildiren tanım edatının Türkçe anadilli ileri düzeyde İngilizce konuşucuları tarafından edinimine bakarak AH'nin test alanını genişletmektedir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda katılımcıların hedef dilde bu yapıları yargı biçimlerine ve bağlam içerisinde kullanımlarına bakılmıştır. Yapılar arasında karşılaştırma analizi yaparken yargı ve kontrollü üretim testleri ayrı ayrı değerlendirilmeye alınmıştır. Veri analizi sonucunda ulaştığımız genel bulgular aşağıdaki gibi özetlenebilir:

- Katılımcıların verilen testlerde ortalama performansları göstermiştir ki hedef dilde özne edinimine ilişkin birinci araştırma sorusunu pozitif yönünde cevaplandırabiliriz. Öncelikle dilbilgisel yargı testinden yola çıkarak, katılımcıların öznenin doğru bir şekilde kullanıldığı cümleleri yargılamadaki ortalamasının 1 ve 7 arasındaki ölçekte dilbilgisel bandında olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra öznelerin düşürülerek hatalı bir şekilde oluşturulan cümlelerde katılımcıların ortalama yargıları dilbilgisi dışında bandında görülmüştür. Bu yargı testinin yanı sıra katılımcıların yan cümleciklerdeki özne kullanımını test etmek için yapılan kontrollü üretim testi göstermiştir ki ikinci dil konuşucuları İngilizce cümlelerde özne pozisyonun boş kalamayacağının bilincinde ve bu bilgiyi verilen bağlamlarda çoğunlukla entegre edebilmektedirler (%89). Bu sonuç çalışmanın başındaki tahminlerin doğruluğunu kanıtlamış olup AH çizgisinden bakıldığında hedef dilde salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre kullanılan yapıların sorunsuza yakın bir şekilde edinilebileceği iddiasını doğrulamıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, eğer bir yapı arayüz alanında değilse, o yapının sorunsallığı arayüz alanında oluşturulan yapılara nazaran daha az olmaktadır. Bu sonuca da özne kullanımıyla ilgili performanslarını, dış ve iç arayüz kurallarına göre oluşturulan tanım edatlarını algılama ve kullanma performanslarıyla karşılaştırarak ulaşılmıştır. Özneleri doğru yargıladıkları/kullandıkları durumların dış ve iç arayüz alanındaki yapılardan önemli ölçüde daha fazla olması nedeniyle AH'nin bu bağlamdaki yargısı desteklenmiştir.

- Diğer yandan, Türkçe anadilli İngilizce konuşucularının tanım edatı edinimine ilişkin ikinci araştırma sorusunun yanıtı ise olumsuz olmuştur. Katılımcıların iki edat tipindeki (belirli/belirsiz ve kapsamlı) dilbilgisellik yargılamalarına ve verilen bir bağlam içerisnde doğru edatı kullanmaları istendiğindeki performanslarına bakıldığında, iki alanda da benzer oranlarda zorluk yaşadıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Hem yargı testi hem de kontrollü üretim testi kapsamında özne kullanımı ile karşılaştırıldıklarında aralarında kayda değer farklılıklara ulaşılmıştır. İlk olarak

Dilbilgisel Yargı Testindeki belirli farklılığın hatalı cümleleri tanımada olduğu saptanmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, katılımcılar dış arayüz, iç arayüz ve salt sözdizimi alanlarında işletilen yapılar doğru kullanıldığı takdirde bunların doğruluğunu farkederken, yanlış kullanıldıklarında sadece özne eksikliğinden kaynaklanan yanlışları tespit edip tanım edatlarının yanlış ya da eksik kullanımından kaynaklanan hatalara toleranslı oldukları anlaşılmıştır. Bunun sebebi, verilen cümlelerin yanlış olmasına rağmen katılımcıların ortalama yargılarının dilbilgisel doğruluk bandında olmasıdır. Bu edatların verilen bir bağlamda kullanımı incelendiğinde de benzer bir sonuç karşımıza çıkmıştır. Yine özne kullanımıyla karşılaştırıldığında anlaşılmıştır ki katılımcılar iki tip tanım edatını benzer doğruluk oranında, özneye göre ise önemli ölçüde daha fazla oranda yanlış kullanmıştır. Bu sonuç bir kez daha göstermiştir ki salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre oluşturulan yapıların edinimi arayüz kapsamında oluşturulan kuralların edinimine göre çok daha kolaydır.

- Tanım edatlarının kullanımında yapılan hatalar ilk bakışta anadil etkisi olarak yorumlanabilir. Türkçede isimlerin belirli ya da belirsiz olduğunu göstermek için kullanılan bir tanım edatı sistemi yoktur. Belirlilik ya da belirsizlik anlamı Türkçede ancak sözcük dizilişi, hal-durum ekleri ya da vurgu ile verilebilir. Dolayısıyla anadili Türkçe olup İngilizce öğrenenlerin anadillerinin etkisi altında kalarak İngilizcedeki tanım edatlarını öğrenemede zorluk yaşadıkları ve bu edatları cümlelerinden düşürdükleri gözlemlenmiştir. Ancak bu çalışmada kontrollü üretim testindeki hata örüntülerine bakıldığında yanlış kabul edilen edat seçimlerini katılımcıların yalnızca anadiline atfederek açıklamamız olanaksızdır. Çünkü hata tiplerinin oranlarına bakıldığında edatı düşürme şeklinde yapılanlar tüm hataların sadece yüzde 40'ını oluştururken, geriye kalan büyük orandaki hatalar katılımcıların belirli ve belirsiz tanım edatlarını birbirinin yerine kullanmasından kaynaklanmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, belirli tanım edatı kullanmaları gereken yerde belirsiz tanım edatı ya da bunun tam tersi şeklinde

kullanım sağlamışlardır. Bu bağlamda Türkçede belirlilik ya da belirsizlik gösteren morfolojik ögeler olmadığı için hataların çoğunluğuna bakarak Türkçenin etkisi altında olduklarını söyleyemeyiz. Bu da gösteriyor ki İngilizcede tanım edatlarını öğrenmede güçlük yaşanmasının başka bir sebebi ya da sebepleri vardır.

- Öte yandan, dış arayüz bağlamında kullanılan belirli/belirsiz tanım edatı ile iç arayüz bağlamında kullanılan kapsamlılık bildiren tanım edatını kullanırken ikinci dil konuşucularının benzer zorluk göstermesi AH ile açıklanamamaktadır. Arayüz hipotezinin en yeni iddiasına göre dış arayüzdeki yapıların edinimi iç arayüzdeki yapıların ediniminden daha zor olup iç arayüz yapılarının salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre oluşturulan yapılara benzer olarak sorunsuz bir şekilde ikinci dil konuşucuları tarafından edinilmesi beklenmektedir. Ancak her iki test sonucundan da anlaşılacağı üzere, bu iki tip edatın kullanımında veya yargılanmasında önemli bir farklılık bulunamaması arayüz kuramlarına atfedilemez.

- Bu durumda, AH'nin bu çalışmada çıkan sonuçları kısmi olarak açıklayabildiği savına varabiliriz. Katılımcıların özneleri diğer yapılardan kayda değer bir farkla daha doğru yargılayabilme ve kullanabilmeleri AH'ye bağlanabilirken, iki arayüz çeşidi arasında iddia edilenin aksine önemli bir farklılık bulunamaması bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının tamamen bu hipoteze bağlanamayacağını öne sürmemizi mümkün kılmıştır. Bu sonuçlar ışığında diyebiliriz ki iç arayüz alanında oluşturulan her yapının kullanımı eşit oranda kolay olmayabilir. Öğrencilerin kapsamlılık bildiren tanım edatlarını kullanırken gösterdiği zorluklar, iç arayüzündeki yapıların öğreniminin daha ayrıcalıklı olmadığını göstermiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, İngilizcede hem iç hem de dış arayüzünde kullanım sağlayan tanım edatlarının benzer oranda zorlayıcı olması bir arayüz çeşidinin diğer arayüz çeşidinden daha zorlayıcı olmadığı sonucuna varmamızı sağlamıştır. Özetle, arayüzün türü gözetilmeksizin herhangi iki modülün (iç-iç veya iç-dış) bir araya

gelmesiyle kurulan bir yapı ileri düzeyde olsalar bile ikinci dil konuşucuları için zorlayıcı olabilir.

- Diğer bir tartışma konusu da katılımcıların verilen test tipine göre aynı yapı dahilindeki performanslarının önemli ölçüde değişip değişmediğidir. Bu amaçla yapılan 3 ayrı eşleştirilmiş gruplar t-testi göstermiştir ki İngilizce konuşucuları yargı testiyle karşılaştırıldığında yapıları kontrollü bir şekilde kullandıkları testlerde kayda değer ölçüde daha iyi performans sergilemektedir. Katılımcıların dilbilgisel yargıda bulunurken daha sık hataya düşmelerinin sebebi dilbilgisel bir yargıda bulunmanın bilişsel olarak daha zorlu olmasıyla açıklanmıştır. Öte yandan, ikinci dil kullanıcılarına ilgili yapıları kullanmada bir kontrol verildiğinde daha iyi performans gösterdikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Vardığımız bu sonuca rağmen, üç değişkenin zorluk derecesine göre sıralanışı ister dilbilgisel yargılama ister kullanım testi olsun değişmemektedir. Nihayetinde katılımcılar en iyi performansı kayda değer bir farkla özne kullanımında gerçekleştirirken, tanım edatlarını kullanırken daha çok zorlanmışlar ve iki tip arayüz alanında kurulan tanım edatlarında benzer oranda zorluk çekmişlerdir.

Yukarıda özetlenen genel bulgular ışığında bu çalışmanın sonuç kısmında bazı yöntembilimsel öneriler sunulmuştur. Öncelikle AH çerçevesinde tahmin edilenin aksine kapsamlılık anlamı veren tanım edatlarında katılımcıların zorluk çekmesi, tanım edatlarının bu özelliğinin İngilizce derslerinde yeterli derecede üzerinde durulmadığını göstermiştir. Tanım edatları konusu başlangıç seviyesi derslerinde bile gösterilmeye başlanmasına rağmen, kapsamlı tanım edatlarının öğretimi diğerine göre daha az kullanıldığı için ertelenmektedir. Bu durum, ileri düzeye ulaştıklarında dahi İngilizce kullanıcılarının kapsamlı tanım edatını kavramada ve kullanmada hala sorun yaşamalarının normal olduğunu göstermiştir. Dolayısıyla ikinci dil kullanıcılarının daha az zorluk çekmesi için tanım edatlarının kapsamlılık gösteren özelliği de derslerde ve ders kitaplarında daha erkene çekilmelidir.

Dahası İngilizce öğrenenlerin tanım edatı yapılarını içselleştirebilmesi için uzun bir zaman ve dili kullanma tecrübesi kazanması gerektiği unutulmamalıdır. İleri düzeyde olmalarına rağmen hala bu yapıyı kullanırken sıkıntı yaşamaları dilbilgisel eksiklikleri olduğundan değil, dilbilgisi ile birlikte diğer iç veya dış modüllerin deveye girmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu yüzden içselleştirebilmelerini sağlamak için öğrencilerin bu yapıyı seviyelerine göre oluşturulmuş bağlam içerisinde kullanılmış haliyle görmeleri büyük önem taşımaktadır.

Dikkat edilmesi gereken bir diğer unsur ise öğrencilere bu yapıları kullanabileceği çeşitli görevler verilmesidir. Bulgular kısmında belirtildiği üzere bu çalışmada katılımcılara verilen iki ayrı testte büyük ölçüde performans değişikliği olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bu yüzden, öğrencilerin gerçek performansını anlayabilmek için tek tip testler yeterli olmayabilir. Dolayısıyla farklı tip etkinliklerle sıkıntının asıl kaynağının öğretilen yapıdan mı yoksa verilen etkinlik çeşidinden mi kaynaklandığı daha kolay anlaşılacaktır.

Kısıtlar ve Gelecek Çalışmalar

Bu çalışmada bulunan bazı kısıtların gelecek çalışmalarda telafi edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Yöntembilimsel açıdan bu çalışmada iki temel kısıt bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle, zaman kısıtı ve veri toplama sürecinde ortaya çıkan pandemi nedeniyle katılımcı grup 54 kişiyle sınırlı kalmıştır ve bu kısıtlı katılımcı sayısı sonuçların genellenmesi için yeterli sayılmayabilir. Bu gruptan toplanan veriler katılımcılar arasında tutarlılık göstermesine ragmen ileriki çalışmalarda ikinci dil konuşucu sayısının artırılması hedeflenmektedir.

Bir diğer yöntembilimsel kısıt gruplar arası heterojenliğin sağlanamamış olmasıdır. Yöntembilimsel anlamda kesinliğin sağlanması için, çalışma çerçevesinde ölçülen yapıların anadili Türkçenin işleyişinden farklı çalışan grup ya da gruplar tarafından kullanımına bakılıp bu grupların birbirleriyle karşılaştırılması beklenmektedir. Ancak bu çalışmada sadece anadili Türkçe olan İngilizce konuşucuların yer alması bu yapıları kullanırken katılımcıların karşılaştığı zorlukların anadillerine atfedilerek tartışılabilmesini engellemiştir.

Yöntembilimsel kısıtların yanı sıra, bu çalışmada eksik kalan bir diğer nokta ise katılımcıların özellikle neden arayüz alanlarındaki yapılarda zorluk çektiğini tartışabilmemizi sağlayacak bu yapıların bireylerde işlemleme sürecini gösteren online bir deneyin yapılamamış olmasıdır. Bu sebeple, bu yapıların ikinci dilde işlemlenmesini gösteren online deneylerle devamını getirmek gelecek çalışmalarda bir hedef olarak düşünülmüştür.

Son olarak, Türkçe-İngilizce veya başka dil kombinasyonlarında AH'yi doğrulamak veya reddetmek için hem salt sözdizimi kurallarına göre oluşturulan, hem dış arayüzünde işletilen hem de iç arayüz alanında kullanılan yapıların hepsinin bir arada oduğu başka bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu durum sonuçların diğer benzer çalışmalarla geniş kapsamlı olarak tartışılmasını imkansız kılmaktadır. Bu sebeple, her bir yapı grubu kendi içerisinde daha önceden yapılmış çalışmalara atıfta bulunarak tartışılabilmiştir.

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